

Lesson Plan: Journal 3

Historical Journals: Practicing differing perspectives (Part 3 of 6)

Subjects: Social Studies, History, Religion, Arts
Time required: 45 minutes

Grade-level: Middle [6-8], High [9-12]
Related links: [Guampedia](#)

Description

In this lesson, students will practice interpreting the same event from a different point of view.

Objectives/Skills

- Students will practice interpreting the same event from a different point of view.
- Students will discuss the complex issues that arise from different perspectives.

Questions or Assessment

- Can people interpret the same event differently?
- Is there a single correct interpretation? Can there be more than one correct interpretation?
- Is it difficult re-interpreting an event from another person's perspective?

Procedure

Teacher prep. None

Listening Exercise (5 minutes)

1. Have students put away any distracting items, and close their eyes.
2. Describe to students the same historical scenario presented during the previous lesson. In the same manner as before, set a scene and restrict it to facts. Be descriptive and thorough.

Analyzing from One Perspective (25 minutes)

1. Have students imagine they are now on the opposite side of the historical scenario presented in the listening exercise. Ask them to ignore the perspective they developed in the previous lesson.
 - Be sure to emphasize that students will be writing from the opposite point of view. Students may be confused or may not be paying attention.
2. Have students write a journal entry.
 - The writing can again take any form: stream of consciousness, structured personal essay, letter to the editor, personal diary. The important issue is that students express themselves through the viewpoint of another individual.
 - Remind students to focus on the facts presented in the scenario, but to interpret them however they would like.
 - Encourage students to include emotions and feelings into their work.
 - Check periodically that students are writing from the point of view opposite to the one focused upon in the previous lesson.

Discussion (10 minutes)

1. Have students share portions of their writing. Ask for short segments.
2. Ask students to discuss the writing samples just shared by their peers. Ask questions that will prompt discussion of viewpoint and perspective. Examples include:
 - What facts could you identify in this students' excerpt?
 - What emotions can you identify?
 - Did emotions change the way certain events and actions are interpreted?
 - [Grades 10-12] Are emotions facts? Is it a fact that people are upset/happy/angry?
 - For this question, guide the discussion toward reminding students that facts can be interpreted differently due to emotion, but that the emotion itself is independently notable as a fact.
3. Ask open-ended questions that will guide students through a critical examination of the differences between today's point of view, and the point of view taken in the previous lesson:
 - What was easy about this assignment? What was difficult? Was it harder now that you have already written from an opposing perspective in the previous class period?
 - Did you gain insights into this person's motivations? Emotions? Stances?
 - How do they differ from the previous perspective?

- Does the scenario seem different to you now? How have you learned more?

Recap (5 minutes)

Recap what we've done and learned in the lesson:

“Today we've practiced approaching the same event from a different point of view. While we'd learned in an earlier class that the same set of facts can be interpreted in different ways, over the previous two lessons actually did this ourselves; we interpreted the same events from two different viewpoints. In the process we learned that motivations can strongly influence how events are understood, but that there's also significant value in understanding another person's viewpoint.”

Ask students for their favorite parts of the lesson.