

Lesson Plan Micronesia Milestones: Connecting Personal History to the Histories of Others

By Terry Perez

Subjects: History, Language Arts/Composition, Technology

Grade-level: High [9-12]

Time required: 80-90 minutes for 2 days

Related links: Micronesia Milestones timeline (<https://www.guampedia.com/guampedias-historical-timeline/>)

Common Core State Standards

- **ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1** (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R/1/) Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- **ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2** (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/CCRA/R/2/) Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
- **ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9** (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RH/9-10/9/) Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.
- **ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.7** Analyze various accounts of a subject told in different mediums (e.g., a person's life story in both print and multimedia), determining which details are emphasized in each account.

Description

This mini unit introduces students to an idea that storytellers can be different and that timelines can be broadened to include all sorts of stories/narratives that co-occur in time. Using timelines as the medium of study, in this three-day mini unit (with optional enrichment activity), students will analyze past events; they will use the Guampedia Micronesia Milestones timeline as a model to craft their own personal history timelines and to fill out the timeline with events that stem from family and community, region, nation, and the world. Each lesson is set up for 80-90 minute blocks.

Previous Knowledge

Introducing this mini unit in a world history course after discussing the early western civilizations is suggested. Students should have had some experience summarizing information (stories, historical narratives, etc.), although a refresher lesson is included in Day Two lesson.

Objectives

This type of activity encourages students to look for different perspectives and to be aware about how time, location, and other variables, affect the presentation of history in texts, in the media, etc. Other objectives include students learning to:

- Use simple digital resources and reference material (online encyclopedias, region-specific databases like Guampedia, Micronesian Seminar)
- Use primary source research
- Learn about credible source and perspective of source
- Position themselves as researchers, including learning about public information and private information
- Engage in contrastive analysis of primary and secondary sources using an historical event or a time frame as a common point of information. In other words, compare or contrast different versions of the same event or same time period and draw conclusions as to the differences that exist (as well as the similarities).
- Summarize information

Questions or Assessment

- Did students create a timeline with multiple perspectives?
- Did students discuss sources?
- Did students analyze through reflection and discussion what the timeline represented?

Measuring the quality of these projects may require a rubric. The goal is to have students engage in the activities in the first place without necessarily assigning a letter grade.

Procedure

Create a multi-perspective timeline using time as the centering point (eg. What happened to me in August 2010? What was going in my community? What was happening in the world?).

To do this timeline students will:

1. Research and gather information from sources specific to their time period.
2. Interview a source:
 - carefully create questions that respect private and public information
 - include source background information
3. Read and summarize sources to draw contrasts and comparisons between the personal and the local, regional, and or global events in their lives.
4. Include source information

Write a reflective piece that discusses the conclusions drawn from looking at the same time period with multiple events and from multiple perspectives.

Day 1

Materials required:

- Teacher timeline (end product)
- Internet access
- Two sets of guiding questions - for analyzing the timeline and for preparing to ask and interview family members and set up a method to gather information.

Related links:

- Guampedia.com (<https://www.guampedia.com/>)
- Micronesia Milestones (MM) timeline (<https://www.guampedia.com/guampedias-historical-timeline/>)

Procedure

Teacher Discussion/Prep (20 minutes)

1. Teacher timeline: sample of five events
2. Can easily be drawn on a board. If pre-done, then can be projected onto a screen.
3. Go through a demonstration of major events, discuss what happens to parallel, and how I interpret, how I connect.
4. Teacher should introduce the timeline by saying “I was reflecting on the stuff I’ve done in my life and this is what I came up with.”
5. Sample of information (not in timeline form, but the teacher should be ready to present as a timeline mirroring the style in MM).
 - Spring 1995 - I gigged at Seattle club - it was my first time and I opened for a very popular musician friend, so the café was packed with people who had to stand up.
 - That year, around the nation, the Seattle music scene was super popular with bands like Nirvana, Pearl Jam, and Soundgarden topping the music charts.
 - Summer 1995 - On Guam, my friends were meeting for our 10-year high school reunion.
 - Spring 1995 – Timothy McVeigh bombed a federal building in Oklahoma City.

Recap/Questions

1. What are the differences and similarities in these events?
2. What other information is missing?
3. What other information would they like to know?
4. What other conclusions can we draw? Are we accurate in our conclusions? Why or why not?

MM Timeline (20 minutes)

Look at the MM timeline. Introduce it, not as a personal timeline, but as a timeline that represents the experiences of communities. **Note** the regions involved in the first entry, note the actual time frames: Egypt and Marianas

Teacher reads out loud and then directs students to answer:

1. What are the differences and similarities in these events?
 - Differences: from different cultures, different landscapes
 - Similarities: shared goals to maybe improve lives, honor cultural practices
2. What other information is missing? What other information would they like to know?
3. What other conclusions can we draw?
 - The idea of groups working together to achieve a goal, not necessarily just culture based

4. Are we accurate in our conclusions? Why or why not?
 - Discuss reliability of sources

Teams (20 minutes)

Assign pairs or small groups to choose another pairing in the MM timeline to discuss difference and similarities in their groups and then to present.

My Stories (10 minutes)

Assign class time for students to sketch a timeline of three to five (the amount is important) events in their lives, - major or not that happened at three to five different time frames (one event per time frame). Ask them to keep in mind their reasons for choosing these specific events.

Prep Homework (20 minute)

1. Discuss the difference between public and private information.
2. Ask students what qualifies as public information and what qualifies as private.
3. Discuss who is ok to ask and who should not be approached, if any.
4. Inform them of the goal of the homework: to fill out the timeline similar to the MM timeline and the teacher sample on the board.
5. Some sample interview questions could be:
 - What was happening on the island in 2015?
 - What were you doing in 2015?
 - What was happening in our village/island in summer of 2018?
6. Ask students to write down their methodology answering the following questions
 - Who will you ask?
 - Why will you ask them?
 - Is it ok to ask them?
 - What will you say to them is the reason for the asking?
 - Be sure to include that you will mention them (not by name) in your timeline and reflection to your classmates and teacher. If the family member is not ok with this part, then you should not ask them. Think about asking other friends your age. So who else can you ask?
 - What question(s) will you ask?
 - How will you keep track of their response(s)?

Homework

1. Teacher tells students they are going to collect data for every time period they include in their timeline.
2. They will interview family members about personal events or local/community events that co-occurred with the events on their timeline.
3. They are to remember the rules and guidelines (the questions to help develop a methodology) for interviewing before approaching anyone.
4. They should remember to take notes and write down responses.

Day 2

Materials required:

- 11 X 17 paper
- Day One analysis questions
- Guiding analysis questions for timeline
- Information from family/friend/community sources
- Typed teacher (personal) narrative of an event mentioned in the teacher's personal timeline from Day One
- Internet access
- The class's history textbook

Related link:

- Guampedia.com (<https://www.guampedia.com/>)
- Micronesia Milestones (MM) timeline (<https://www.guampedia.com/guampedias-historical-timeline/>)
- Other sources like the MM timeline (<https://www.guampedia.com/guampedias-historical-timeline/>)

Procedure

Summary Refresher (30 minutes)

1. Teacher uses the personal event noted in the teacher timeline from the day before (in this sample my story of “gigging in Seattle in 1995”) to show key points in summarizing information.
2. Teacher should also project the story on a whiteboard or screen to annotate/underline. Students identify the key points in the story that should be included in the timeline. Teacher underlines or annotates the story on the board, asking students to follow with their hard copy.
3. Students, using the narrative, learn to scan for repeated terms and concepts that indicate important or key point (for example, “Seattle” or ideas like “anxiety” and “butterflies in my stomach” are mentioned frequently in the story). The teacher should emphasize that repeated ideas are important to mention in summaries.
4. After looking at the key terms, the teacher asks students to take out a paper, write down only the key words and then to recreate the story in a shortened form, making sure to include the key terms at least once in their summaries.
5. Compare the two summaries (the one from the timeline yesterday and the one they worked on today using the source story), which one is more accurate and contains the key points. Think about which version contains a more complete picture.
6. Discuss why and elicit that having the complete version of the story to work with from a primary source allowed for a better and more complete picture.

Creating Our Stories (40 minutes)

1. Students start penciling in their timeline
 - Again the teacher models how the MM timeline documents two events that happen near or around the same time period.
2. Students will check their original information to see if they have the key points on the timeline from their interviews and summarizing when necessary.
 - Even if students don’t need to summarize their family interviews (i.e. the information was already in summary form), they will be required to summarize information from secondary sources.
3. Students exchange timelines with at least one other classmate. A small group of three is ideal for multiple perspectives.
4. Classmates read and ask for clarification of ideas if needed. Think of this section as a peer review of their draft timeline. If their peer is asking for more information for the timeline.

Recap (last 10 or 15 minutes of class)

The teacher should practice the homework activity with some sample timelines from students. Teacher ask students to share the timeline and go through the questions/tasks from the first day of class analysis.

Homework

Students start engaging in the reflective process by answering the original questions from Day One using their timeline:

- What are the differences and similarities in these events?
- What other information is missing? What other information would they like to know?
- What other conclusions can we draw? Are we accurate in our conclusions? Why or why not?

Day 3

The students should have a foundation of the personal and community/family-based perspectives on their timeline from which to use secondary sources. By this time, they should also have had experience understanding source information and reading narratives to look for key points and to summarize information.

Materials required:

- Student draft timeline
- Teacher Day One timeline
- Guiding questions for analysis
- Information from family/friend/community source
- Internet access (a computer lab – or shared computers)
- The class’s history textbook

Related links:

- Guampedia.com (<https://www.guampedia.com/>)
- Micronesia Milestones (MM) timeline (<https://www.guampedia.com/guampedias-historical-timeline/>)
- Digital History (<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>) and other resources like this reference site

Procedure

Recap on Storytellers (15 minutes)

The lesson should begin with teachers reminding students that history is a set of stories very much influenced by who the storyteller is. Teachers can ask students to think about the storytellers in their lives. Teachers can ask this question:

- Is the same story told differently by different people?
- What happens?
- What do they think of these different stories?
- Are they necessary?
- What would it be like if there was only one storyteller that had the right to tell stories and no one else did?
- Remind them that the timeline is a story of time. And that the project is asking them to look at how the perspective of a time period changes depending on the storyteller.
- Then, the teacher presents the teacher timeline and asks the following questions about the information that is
 - Personal: (Gigging at a club)
 - National: (Oklahoma City bombing)

And then asks different questions about source:

1. What do these two events mean?
 - One seems fun, the other is incredibly tragic, one affected more people, the other affected a smaller group.
2. Are they the same? Different?
 - Elicit that one story happened directly to the storyteller, the other one didn't – but it still happened at the same time.
3. How does the storyteller feel about each event?
4. What do you think? In my case, I am the storyteller and I can share my opinions and thoughts on how news of the bombing affected me.
5. What information as a reader do you need?
 - More info about the bombing

At this point the teacher acknowledges that it's easier to write and read about personal stories, but to imagine that for someone in Oklahoma, the bombing was also a personal story.

So maybe we need more information on Oklahoma City and the bombings. The fastest place is to search online.

Secondary Source (25 minutes)

1. Teachers ask students to look at their timeline and select one time period and event (whatever criteria, an important event for you) to explore using a secondary source.
2. The teacher introduces the online resources and gives examples of search terms and follow with a demo using a few reference sites online.
3. The teacher discusses issues with broad results gained from Google and should help students screen sources from those types of search engines.
4. The teacher should also carefully discuss Wikipedia as not necessarily a bad source but a good place to start and find links to resources.
5. The teacher can write a few search terms as well as eliciting ideas from the class.
6. Teachers should emphasize that these terms be used in conjunction with the year and months of these events, use the following search terms, and that search terms are really dependent on the sites they select:
 - World events
 - Pacific events in <insert year>
 - Events in US history for the year
 - Achievements during <insert year>
 - Top ten songs, etc.
7. The teacher should share this example of different categories that can also be search terms.
 - This example framework of headings can be also used to organize their timeline and elicit and write other possible headings (beyond personal).

- Warn students that they should have at least three headings. Again, if the parallel to MM needs to be shown you can say that the headings for the MM timeline could be:
 - Western World
 - Micronesia
- Some other examples of different timeline headings (this one has four)
 - Personal
 - Family
 - Pacific
 - US

Searching (50 minutes)

1. After the demo, students should start their own online searches.
2. The teacher reminds them to focus only on one time period and one event, using one of the reference sites or history text.
3. After students find the information, they read and summarize it, being sure to label and pencil it in the timeline.
4. Students should check in with peers periodically to share their timeline drafts and see if the information is enough for their peer readers.
5. Instructor checks in every 20 minutes to question the class:
 - What are they finding?
 - How are they summarizing?
 - Who are their sources?

Homework (due after about three days)

- Students should finalize the timeline and be ready to present information to the class.
- They will write a reflection on their timeline using the guiding questions from Day One. There is no page requirement, but content emphasis should be on drawing conclusions about how they connect to the events they've researched.

Day 4-5

It's important that a fourth day be scheduled for presentations. You may also need a fifth day for students to finish their work in class, depending on how much guidance your students need. Students may need more time. Whether this lesson extends to a fourth or fifth day, teachers should allot an entire class period for the sharing of timelines, after all, the unit is about multiple perspectives over a time period. Students do not have to share all the events on the timeline, just one. And they should share their reflections on that event.

An Activity for Deep Diving A (hypothetical) Podcast

This activity focuses on ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.3 (www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/3/): Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

Students in small groups can choose to write a script for a hypothetical interview using characters or people from the Guampedia MM timeline. A sample idea would be to take an Egyptian pyramid builder interviewing a Marianas seafarer who has just landed in the Marianas. This activity requires further research into who these people are so that students can find sufficient common ground as well as differences between the two sets of events and people. To allow students to record the interviews and to have these interviews posted on a class Moodle page would be a great tool for sharing with other students.