

Research Lesson Plan: Why Accounts of Historical Events May Differ

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Targeted Grade Level: 5th Grade

Essential Question: How can there be more than one explanation of the same event in history?

What questions should I ask before I use a source?

How does one know if a source is credible?

Why might a source be considered not credible?

Formative Assessment Prompts:

Instructional Chunk #1: How could there be two explanations of the same historical event?

Instructional Chunk #2: What questions should I ask before I use a source?

Instructional Chunk #3: Why might a particular source be considered credible or not credible?

Standard Addressed- History Standard 3:

Students will explain why historical accounts of the same event sometimes differ and will relate this explanation to the evidence presented or the point-of-view of the author.

Problematic Prior Knowledge (PPL) Addressed Students have difficulty grasping the concept of what a credible or non credible source is. They also have problems grasping the concept that an author's point-of-view has a direct effect on how a historical event might be presented or perceived.

Activating Strategies: identify the strategy(ies) you will use to tap prior knowledge, activate schema, warm the students up for the lesson.

Strategy 1: : How could there be two explanations of the same historical event?

Upon entering the classroom, students will be asked to write what they think the definition of the 3 vocabulary words.

We will discuss the fact that sometimes historical accounts of the same event may vary. This can be due to bias or varying motives of a witness, or it can be due to a different perspective viewed by a witness. The example I will use will be based on the Revolutionary War. After this war you may have asked a British soldier about a

Key Vocabulary to preview

Bias-a tendency to be prejudice in one's ability to reason
Credible-capable of being believed
Incredible-so extraordinary as to seem impossible, hard to believe

particular event or battle. The description this soldier might give you could be quite different from that of a soldier on the opposite side of the event or battle. This could be due to the two soldiers viewing the events with a bias toward their armies' side of things.

Strategy 2: : **What questions should I ask before I use a source?**

At this time, I will pass out the “Cheating Scandal” (Visual 1) which students will be reading as a description of the classroom scandal . A student (Bob) in a social studies class is suspected of cheating by the teacher. Groups will be given descriptions of four sources (witnesses) who the teachers have identified as possibly being valuable, as the scandal is investigated. (Visual 2) As a class we will brainstorm a short list of questions that could be asked in uncovering the truth about the cheating scandal in the social studies class. The questions might include things such as:

Is this source credible? How do I know?

Where does the witness sit in relation to Bob?

What is this person's feelings or relationship with Bob?

Strategy 3: Why might a particular source be considered credible or not credible?

Students will be asked to use a piece of graph paper to map the scene of the “Classroom Cheating Scandal” (example: where Bob, Erin, Katie, Sean, and Ryan would sit.

At this time students will be asked to work in groups of two or three to compare their maps with their partners. They will be asked to analyze the quality of the witnesses or sources. Which ones appear most credible? Which ones appear least credible? The students will be asked to make a list of

“GOOD”(credible) Witnesses, and “BAD” (incredible) witnesses or sources for the teacher to consider. They must be able to explain why they considered each source/witness as “GOOD” or “BAD”.

After partners have made their lists and decided upon their explanations of each, the class will begin to explain their analysis and conclusions about each witness (beginning with ERIN).

Teaching Strategies:

Strategies used in this lesson will include the following:

***vocabulary warm-up**

***whole group discussion**

***Small groups reading, discussing, and analyzing a scenario of “ the cheating scandal”**

***Whole class brainstorming a list of questions that will asked to uncover the truth about “the cheating scandal”**

Graphic Organizer(s) Used:

- Graph paper to help students map out a visual of where students were seated in the classroom when the scandal occurred .
- T-chart for students to list “GOOD” (credible) WITNESSES” and “BAD (incredible) WITNESSES”

Materials Needed:

- Vocabulary Warm- Up Sheet, including the 3 vocabulary words. (Bias,Credible,Incredible)
- The Cheating Scandal Visual 1 (teacher suspects cheating in social studies class)
- Cheating Scandal Visual 2 (Witnesses)
- Handout 1...”Analyzing for Credibility” (listing questions that will be used in investigation)
- * An “Exit Ticket” will be used at the conclusion of the lesson to help determine what individual student learned during this lesson.

Differentiation Strategies:

- One differentiation that is used is the drawing of a classroom map that includes where each student was seated when the cheating occurred. This will be useful to students who are more

visual when trying to solve a problem.

- Another strategy used will be pairing students in small groups in order to write a list of questions that they will use to help them investigate and analyze whether a witness is credible or not.
- Whole group discussion will be used to wrap up the lesson. The class will share out their conclusions based on the questions they used in their analysis of the cheating scandal.

Instructional Plan:

Instructional Chunk #1: How could there be different explanations of the same event in history?

1. PROCEDURES: I will begin the lesson by asking students to write what they think the definitions for three vocabulary words are (bias, credible, incredible,). Once done we will share some of their thoughts about the words and then I will give them the definitions that we will be referring to in this lesson.

We will then discuss the fact that sometimes, historical accounts of the same event may vary. This can be due to bias or varying motives of a witness, or it can be due to a different perspective viewed by a witness. The example I will use will be based on the Revolutionary War. After this war you may have asked a British soldier about a particular event or battle. The description this soldier might give you could be quite different from that of a soldier on the opposite side of the event or battle. This could be due to the two soldiers viewing the events with a bias toward their armies' side of things.

2. DEBRIEF: ask the students...

What might make an account of a historical event vary ?

3. CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING/SUMMARIZATION ACTIVITY: I will check for understanding through a follow up discussion on the vocabulary words we introduced. I will also check for understanding by asking students why the soldiers may have had different descriptions of the same battle or event that they both witnessed.

Instructional Chunk #2: What questions should I ask before I use a source?

1. PROCEDURES: At this time, I will pass out the “Cheating Scandal” (Visual 1) which students will be reading as a description of the classroom scandal . A student (Bob) in a social studies class is suspected of cheating by the teacher. Groups will be given descriptions of four sources (witnesses) whom the teachers have identified as possibly being valuable, as the scandal is investigated. (Visual 2)

As a class we will brainstorm a short list of questions that could be asked in uncovering the truth about the cheating scandal in the social studies class. The questions might include things such as:

Is this source credible? How do I know?

Where does the witness sit in relation to Bob?

What is this person's feelings or relationship with Bob?

2. DEBRIEF ask the students...

Looking at each witness, students will be asked to consider the questions used above:

Is this source credible? How do I know?

Where does the witness sit in relation to Bob?

What is this person's feelings or relationship with Bob?

- 3. CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING/SUMMARIZATION ACTIVITY :** While groups are discussing and evaluating each witness based on the investigative questions, I will circulate around the room to listen to the discussions being held in their groups.

Instructional Chunk #3: Why might a particular source be considered credible or not credible?

1. PROCEDURES: Students will be asked to use a piece of graph paper to map the scene of the "Classroom Cheating Scandal" (example: where Bob, Erin, Katie, Sean, and Ryan would sit).

At this time students will be asked to work in groups of two or three to compare their maps with their partners. They will be asked to analyze the quality of the witnesses or sources. Which ones appear most credible? Which ones appear least credible? The students will be asked to make a list (using T-Chart) of "GOOD"(credible) Witnesses, and "BAD" (incredible) witnesses or sources for the teacher to consider. They must be able to explain why they considered each source/witness as "GOOD" or "BAD".

After partners have made their lists and decided upon their explanations of each, the class will begin to explain (share out with class) their analysis and conclusions about each witness , beginning with ERIN.

We will end our lesson with a whole group discussion. I will ask students the following questions:

2. DEBRIEF: ask the students...

What would the social studies teacher conclude if he used Sean as the only source of information? (probable response-Bob cheated)

What would the science teacher conclude if he/she used Erin as their only source of information? (probable response- Bob did not cheat)

Why might two different teachers arrive at two different conclusions about the same event? (response-they relied on different sources)

Can you think of other situations in which two people might (or did) arrive at different conclusions because of a reliance on different sources?

3. CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING/SUMMARIZATION ACTIVITY

After we wrap up this portion of the lesson with our whole group discussion, I will ask all students to answer the question, “How can there be more than one explanation of the same event?”

Summarizing Strategy:

I will summarize this lesson by asking students how we can transfer what we have learned through the “Cheating Scandal” scenario, to other historical events that we may have studied in the past or in the future?

What questions might be helpful in determining whether any historical event is being provided by a credible, incredible, or biased witness?

The last thing that I will ask my students to do is to write an “exit ticket” that will give me at least 2 important facts that they learned in today’s lesson.

- Attach Handouts or “Resources” below using page breaks to separate different “Resources.” Be sure to number and label them (e.g. Resource #1: Frayer Model) and refer to these numbers and labels in the procedure section.
- Lessons must be typed.
- Cite sources and do not violate copyright law.