

LESSON: INTRODUCTION TO HISTORY DAY

Essential Questions: 1. What is History Day? 2. What is a narrative? What are the different parts of a narrative?

Objective: At the end of this lesson students will have the basic understanding of History Day and its expectations.

Grade Level: 6 – 12

Time Needed: 50 minutes

Materials: Computer, Internet connection, History Day sample website (listed below) or an alternative you have compiled

Procedure

Before Class: Choose a children's book or story to read to the students. Though this sounds silly for high school students, the intent is to catch their attention with a story. Try to choose a story that has a connection to the current theme so it can be referenced again in future lessons. This will also familiarize students with the theme words.

1. Read the story to the students.
2. When you have finished reading the story, have students write a few notes about what they thought: *What did they like? What stood out to them? What didn't they like? Was this a story they had heard before?* Expand the discussion to stories in general: *What is the intent of stories? Where do they encounter stories in their lives?*
3. Now have students walk through a sample website: <https://00-47447034.nhdwebcentral.org/home>. Have the students read the titles and text aloud. Have them answer the following questions:
 - *What did you like?*
 - *What stood out to you?*
 - *What did you not like?*
 - *What did you know before about this topic?*
 - *How is this like a story?*
 - *How is this not like a story?*
 - *How can we tell if this story is true or not? What is the evidence? (primary, secondary sources)*
 - *What theme connection did you recognize?*
4. Again, share thoughts on the website repeating the process with the introductory story. *What are the facts of the story? What are the characteristics of the story?*
5. Now, have the students compare the introductory story with the website. *What was alike? What was different? Is history just stories?*
6. Though it may be awkward, point out the documentation/bibliography of the story to note how sources can be checked and to make the students familiar with the terminology that will be used throughout the project.
7. Have a conversation about the following question: *What are the differences/similarities between history and a narrative/story?*

Recommended Story: Ox-Cart Man by Donald Hall, illustrated by Barbara Cooney

Lesson Extension/Alternatives

Pre-Lesson: The History Day staff may be available for a “Dog and Pony” show introduction to History Day. This visit above is intended to touch on all points that will be covered throughout the rest of the History Day process. Contact the History Day office regarding the possibility and if there is a fee involved for a visit.

Lesson Alternative Introduction: (5 min. or 1 scene) Hand out the first scene of a movie script (maybe one you’ve watched in class). Have the students read parts aloud. Ask the following questions: *What do you know about the story? What are some other terms for story?* (guide them to narrative) Where do we see different kinds of stories? (narratives, tall tales, fables, etc.) What makes a narrative/story interesting? Is it the sources?

Lesson Alternative Introduction: Have a student describe a movie they have recently seen. When that student is done, ask other students to add details that were possibly left out. Ask them if what they just described is a story. Ask students, “What is a narrative?” Talk about how movies are visual narratives, and point out that what they did to describe the movie at the beginning of class was telling a narrative. Go back and try to organize the narrative of the movie. Identify background/setting, the building plot, climax, ending/conclusion.