

Lesson A – Learning from Primary and Secondary Sources

Subject: Social Studies, US History 1850-Present

Grade Level: Secondary School

Alignments: Pennsylvania Standards Aligned System

- 8.1. Historical Analysis and Skills Development
- 8.1.U.A. Continuity and change over time
- 8.1.U.B. Fact/Opinion and Points of View

Big Ideas:

- Historical context is needed to comprehend time and space.
- Perspective helps to define the attributes of historical comprehension.

Concepts:

- Learning about the past and its different contexts shaped by social, cultural, and political influences prepares one for participation as active, critical citizens in a democratic society.
- Historical literacy requires a focus on time and space, and an understanding of the historical context of events and actions.
- Historical skills (organizing information chronologically, explaining historical issues, locating sources and investigating materials, synthesizing and evaluating evidence, and developing arguments and interpretations based on evidence) are used by an analytical thinker to create a historical construction.

Vocabulary:

- Primary source – a piece of evidence created by someone at the time of an event
- Secondary source – a work that synthesizes, summarizes, and/or interprets a primary source
- Point of view – the angle of consideration or opinions of an author
- Context – circumstances that form the setting for an event

Competencies:

- Analyze the interaction of cultural, economic, geographic, political, and social relations for a specific time and place.
- Articulate the context of a historical event or action.

Objective:

- Students will analyze primary and secondary sources, identify points of view, evaluate, and explain.

Essential Question:

- Why is time and space important to the study of history?

Duration: 2 hours

Materials: Monumental Mass Marketing website, Worksheet A

Suggested Instructional Procedure:

- Initiate this lesson by asking the students if they have ever visited a cemetery. Lead the discussion by following up with questions that get students to think about context. (For example: Where was the cemetery? What did it look like? How old were the gravestones?) Finish the introduction by asking students what they think can be learned from visiting a cemetery.

- Instruct students to read the ‘Historical Background’ section of the “Monumental Mass Marketing” website and complete Worksheet A. Students should identify two sources from each subtopic in the section, determine if they are primary or secondary sources, and reference a fact or opinion from the resource.
- Conclude by reviewing the worksheet as a group. As students share their answers, make a list of the sources and examples they give.

Formative Assessment: Worksheet A

Related Materials & Resources: “Monumental Mass Marketing” website