

AP U.S. History
Cooperative Learning Documentaries

Objectives

1. The students will be able to understand how to use Microsoft Photo Story.
2. The students will be able to use the internet to find both primary and secondary source images to use in their documentary.
3. The students will be able to analyze these images in order to decide which images best fit the theme of their documentary.
4. The students will be able to create a Photo Story documentary over their assigned topic using the information gathered from their textbook reading and the primary and secondary source images found online.
5. The students will be able to understand the remaining portions of the chapter through the viewing of other groups' documentaries.

Learning Activities

1. Discuss with students how to appropriately use Microsoft Photo Story.
2. Discuss with students documentary films they may have seen on the History Channel or elsewhere.
3. Discuss with students the concept of intellectual property and copyright issues regarding internet sources.
4. Divide students up into groups of three/four and assign one of the following topics: Immigration, Nativism, Inventors and Inventions, the Transportation Revolution, Workers, Wage Slaves, and Women, and the Market Revolution.
5. Allow students two class periods to work with their group to complete the documentary while answering questions and providing feedback regarding the content and Photo Story.
6. Take one class period to view the Photo Stories.
7. Take one class period to both discuss the content and images included in the documentaries, and to assess the knowledge students gained through both creating and watching each others.

Laptop Implications

This activity could not be completed in the manner it is without the laptop classroom. Everything about this lesson requires students have access to a computer with Microsoft Photo Story and the internet. The laptops are used in a variety of different ways in this multi-day lesson. Application and usage of Photo Story is probably the most basic way this is done. Viewing the documentaries and taking an assessment over their content is next. The most engaging way in which the laptops are used is through the students' usage of the internet to both find and analyze primary and secondary source images. In a sense, the laptop classroom and student access to the internet allows the students to "do the history" instead of simply learn it through written or spoken word.

Role of the Teacher

My role in this lesson is one of a facilitator. During the four to five days in which this lesson is performed, there is very little direct instruction or presentation done on my part. Most of this revolves around my discussing the objectives/requirements of the assignment and appropriate intellectual property policies. Once I have done these, the students are on their own to utilize the resources available to them. I am there to answer their questions or point them in the right direction if need be.

Student Reaction

The vast majority of the students who participated in this lesson had a positive reaction. AP U.S. History is very content-oriented, which leaves very little time for multi-day lessons or projects. Doing something like this every once in awhile mixes up the class a little bit.