

Lesson 2

Using Primary Sources To Investigate the “Gilded Age”

Subject Area: Using Primary Sources to Investigate the “Gilded Age”

Grade Level : Grade 5/6

Time Frame: 1 Week/ 4 periods (50-60 minutes)

Objectives: The students will:

- be able to define and name a number of primary sources used to research of the “Gilded Age”. (NCSS 2,5)
- use primary sources to make conclusions about the 1900’s (NCSS Standards 1,2,5)
- answer questions related to included primary sources (enclosed)
- research primary resources related to the “Gilded Age” and present individual sources to the class (NCSS 1,2,5)

Materials:

- Jackdaws Kit (enclosed)
- Questions based upon photographs (enclosed)
- Website for Newport Mercury
- Website for Newport Historical Society <http://www.newporthistorical.com/>
- Definitions and Lists of Primary Sources (enclosed)

Learner Factors:

Open-ended questions related to the 1900’s photos will be incorporated in the lesson. Students may work in cooperative groups to discuss primary sources. Written work may be completed on the computer.

Motivational Activities: Students will look at the Jackdaws photos. Using Prior knowledge from the timeline activity each student will formulate a question about one of the assigned photos.

Lesson Development:

*****Teachers may use 1 or more of the suggested developmental activities included during this week of instruction.**

Day 1:

1. Teacher will complete the motivational activity.
2. Teacher directed instruction (enclosed) will provide a definition and list of primary sources.
3. Students will discuss how they use these primary sources in everyday life.

4. Question: Why are primary sources important when recording history?
5. Homework will be assigned—Using the newspaper or a magazine, bring in a primary source which could be compared to one of the Jackdaws photos.

What Are Primary Sources?

Definition: A primary source can be any firsthand account that was recorded in some manner by a person taking part in or witnessing an event (Deitch 5). These documents are often reflected in the following:

Letters
Journal entries
Newspaper or magazine articles
Government documents
Ads
Posters
Poetry
Photographs
Cartoons
Paintings
Graphs
Charts
Cemetery Stones
Recollection of People who lived during the time being studied (tapes/videos)
Collections of Historical Societies
Songs of the time period
Scrapbooks
And more

Where can we find primary sources in our community?

Local museums
Historical societies
Libraries
Internet
Art Galleries
Newspaper Archives
Antique shops
Flea markets
University and College collections

Can you think of additional places for research?

How does the primary source which you chose reflect history?

Day 2:

How do we use primary sources to interpret history?

1. Teacher will explain that photographs are **graphic** documents.
2. Teacher will explain term “**prior knowledge**”
3. Using the questions designed from lesson one and the worksheet (enclosed). The class will be divided into small groups and assigned a specific number of Jackdaws photos to analyze.
4. Students will be told they are to become “History Detectives”. Students must observe the photos carefully and get as much information from the photo as possible.

Day 3: Houses as Primary Sources

1. The teacher will provide pictures of contemporary houses on Aquidneck Island. These are available at Real Estate Agencies.
2. Teacher will review terms **urban, suburban, and rural**. (If architecture lessons have been taught, terms related to “Newport Summer Cottages” will be included.)
3. Students will discuss how different houses are designed to accommodate the needs of families/individual.
4. Suggested needs—money, size of family, climate, specific geographical characteristics of Aquidneck Island.
5. Pictures of Newport Summer Cottages/CD Rom on large screen will be shown to children.
6. Question: *Why do you think these summer cottage/mansions were built?*
7. Student Responses will be recorded.

Day 4: Newspaper Articles/Photographs

1. Using photos and newspaper articles about the photos, students will design a *Questionnaire about the Gilded Age*.
2. Photos will be chosen based on previous instruction in the unit (dress, Architecture, timelines, music, historical events, people of the time)

Closure:

The teacher will type students’ questions about the photos of Newport and return the edited/published versions to the class. Students will have completed an assignment for future students to complete. Students will respond to the edited questions with oral responses. These edited responses to “Primary Sources” will be added to the unit for use by future students.

Follow Up Activities: Students will research more primary sources using the Internet.

Student Assessment:

- Student completion of questionnaires.
- Oral responses
- Independent design of original questions about “Gilded Age Photos”