

Primary Source Activity Plan

The Constitutional Convention: Who is the man in the red jacket??

I. General Information

Name: Joleen Pillar

Grade-level: 8

Subject Area: Social Studies

Topic: The Constitutional Convention: Who is the man in the red jacket??

Time required: 40 minutes

Description of Activity (in 200 words or less):

Students will examine a black and white photograph of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Using the primary source analysis tool, they will record observations, reflect on what they see, and ask questions about the print. The students will then be given a color copy of the same print and be asked to revisit the analysis tool, noting new observations, reflecting on the differences, and formulating new questions for further investigation.

II. Activity Goals

a. Focus Question

Who were the men behind the Constitutional Convention?

b. Context

After studying the Articles of Confederation and understanding why the Constitutional Convention was necessary, students will investigate the men who participated in the convention and their backgrounds. This introductory activity will lead to subsequent lessons on the events, debates, and plans that led to the drafting of the Constitution.

c. Objectives

Students will be able to identify a delegate involved in drafting the Constitution, what role he played, and if and why he was significant.

d. Assessment

Exit ticket: Students will be able to answer the question, "Who is the man in the red jacket?"

e. Follow-up & Resources for further activities

- Learn more about the painting <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/christy/>
- Library of Congress Interactive
<http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/interactives/constitution/HTML/index.html>

III. Activity Details

a. Primary Sources

Scene at signing of the Constitution of the United States (B&W)

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsc.00181>

Scene at signing of the Constitution of the United States (Color)

http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scene_at_the_Signing_of_the_Constitution_of_the_United_States.jpg

b. Activity Procedure

1. Distribute the B&W print. Ask students (individually or in groups) to look at it closely noting their observations, reflecting on what they observed, and recording questions they may have on the analysis tool. Prompt them to specifically note the more prominent features of the painting or those that they found particularly interesting or eye-catching.
2. Stop the students and ask them to share what they observed. Ask them to identify the purpose of the gathering and the figures in the painting that they are familiar with. Allow time to discuss what they think is going on in the picture, and what some of the men are doing (supporting their answers with evidence from the print).
3. Ask the students to turn the B&W print over and distribute the color print. Instruct them to repeat the steps that they performed for the B&W print, noting new observations, reflecting on the differences, and formulating new questions.
4. Stop the students and ask them to share their new observations. Discuss what they thought were the most prominent or interesting features in the B&W print compared to those in the color. Hopefully, they will have commented on the man in the red jacket!
5. Discuss who they think the man in the red jacket is or what role he may have played emphasizing the need for evidence. Share the biographical information about William Jackson and revisit the discussion.
6. Exit ticket: Who was the man in the red jacket and what role did he play at the Constitutional Convention?

IV. Considerations before Implementation

a. Collaboration: Conference with Social Studies teacher to determine lesson delivery date.

b. Implementation: Conference with Social Studies teacher to determine students' prior knowledge; background information on the painting

c. Resources: Teacher's Guide: Analyzing photographs & prints; Primary Source Analysis Tool;





Howard Chandler Christy
1890