

1900's

SS 140

Introduction

This unit emphasizes writing and critical thinking. There are basically three types of activities. The news stories, writing exercises and telegrams require students to evaluate, prioritize and write about historical events. They must **use** the information rather than just passively memorize it.

The chronology and data analysis activities require students to detect trends and draw conclusions.

The viewpoints and issues activities present different views of the same event rather than just the single view often presented by textbooks. The critical thinking exercises require the students to evaluate information.

Many of the activities deal with popular news stories of the decade that are usually not covered in textbooks.

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Creative Activities for Teaching Critical Thinking and Writing U.S. History: The 20th Century

There are nine units in this series.

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Directions

Chronology Logic Puzzle

Events must be placed in chronological order. Each event has internal clues which place it between other events. Students must read carefully and evaluate what they read.

Chronology

The major events of the decade are listed year by year. Students must categorize events, detect trends and decide on the ten most important events of the decade.

Decisions

Major decisions of the decade are presented and students are to discuss and decide the best possible choice.

People and Terms

Students can categorize the people and decide who was the most important or influential in each category.

Crosswords

Puzzles reinforce the items on the people and terms lists.

Viewpoints

Events and personalities are viewed from two different points of view. A page of questions and activities that accompanies the two viewpoints emphasizes critical thinking. Students should discuss and compare answers.

News Stories

The facts of major news stories of the decade are presented in random order. The students must write a news story using the inverted pyramid –mention the most important facts at the beginning of the story and the least important facts at the end. The stories should be limited in the number of words, e.g., 75 words. Students must prioritize information. Students can read and compare their stories.

News Writing

Several primary resources are provided for students to write a story. The sources and events are fictional but are typical of the decade. The student must assess the information and write a news report. Students should be reminded to cover who, what, when, where, why and how. They should also write the story placing the important facts first and the least important last.

Telegrams

Major news stories of the decade are described and students must condense the information into telegrams of no more than 10 or 20 words. Complete sentences are not required. Emphasis is upon selecting the important details.

Data Analysis

Data is presented for students to interpret and graph.

Critical Thinking

Students must critically evaluate statements about the decade, select the most precise and general statements, detect emotional words and write generalizations.

Directions

Below is a series of statements. Select the statement that you think is most precise in each group.

Group 1

- A. Roosevelt was a "trustbuster."
- B. Roosevelt broke up the Northern Securities Corporation.
- C. Roosevelt was an energetic president.
- D. Roosevelt believed in government action.

Group 2

- A. Roosevelt believed in conservation.
- B. Roosevelt wanted to help the American people.
- C. Roosevelt doubled the size of national forests and parks.
- D. Roosevelt believed in protecting natural resources.

Group 3

- A. Congress passed laws to protect consumers.
- B. Congress and Roosevelt wanted to protect consumers.
- C. Congress passed several laws to protect consumers.
- D. Congress passed the Pure Food and Drug Act.

Directions

From the statements below select the most general statement in each group.

Group 1

- A. Congress passed the Hepburn Act.
- B. Roosevelt believed the government should take an active role in helping people.
- C. Roosevelt had Congress pass laws to help people.
- D. Roosevelt believed the government should protect the environment.

Group 2

- A. Roosevelt feared the Japanese.
- B. Roosevelt built the Panama Canal.
- C. Roosevelt believed that the U.S. should act like a world power.
- D. Roosevelt built new ships for the Navy.

Directions

Write a general statement that is supported by all of the facts in each group.

Group 1

- A. Roosevelt proposed the Newlands Act.
- B. He wanted to bring water to the West.
- C. He increased the size of the national forests.
- D. He appointed Gifford Pinchot as Chief Forester.

Group 2

- A. The U.S. sent troops to China to protect Americans.
- B. Chinese called Boxers attacked Americans.
- C. The U.S. wanted an Open Door policy in China.
- D. An Open Door means that any country could trade in China.

Directions

Emotional words are used to influence how people think about events. They also are used to distort reality. Select what you think might be the emotional word in each of the statements below.

1. Roosevelt was a trustbuster.
2. Roosevelt was an energetic, vigorous president.
3. Roosevelt promised much and delivered little.
4. Big business didn't like Roosevelt. It was narrow-minded.