

Facilitation Guide

Context and Corroboration Tableau

Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6



EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

This lesson helps students deepen their understanding of the historical thinking skills of **Contextualization** and **Corroboration** through **tableau and visual analysis**.

Students begin by defining and discussing tableau as a tool for historical interpretation. They then establish ground rules and participate in small group and whole-class tableau exercises, analyzing how body positioning and expression contribute to meaning. Through guided prompts, students examine multiple perspectives, evaluate sources for reliability, and explore how added context can shift interpretation.

The lesson concludes with a visual analysis of Wendy Red Star's annotated portrait, reinforcing the importance of corroborating sources and understanding historical context.

Teachers are encouraged to break the lesson into multiple class periods as needed for deeper engagement and discussion.

Standards

MSDE/BCPSS CONTENT STANDARDS AND INDICATORS

- 6.3.1 Analyze the importance and study of history.
 - 6.3.1.a. Explain the process of historical interpretation
 - Learning about the Past - Types of Sources
 - What is history?
 - Primary vs. Secondary
 - 6.3.1.b. Describe the methodology of source analysis for written and non-written sources
 - How to analyze different types of sources
 - Context
 - Corroboration
 - Reliability of Sources
 - Putting all the skills together

C3 STANDARDS - SKILL DEVELOPMENT

- D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- D2.His.6.6-8. Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- D2.His.9.6-8. Classify the kinds of historical sources used in a secondary interpretation.
- D2.His.10.6-8. Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources
- D2.His.11.6-8. Use other historical sources to infer a plausible maker, date, place of origin, and intended audience for historical sources where this information is not easily identified.
- D2.His.13.6-8. Evaluate the relevancy and utility of a historical source based on information such as maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.
- D2.His.15.6-8. Evaluate the relative influence of various causes of events and developments in the past.

Facilitation Guide



Context and Corroboration Tableau

Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

Standards (continued)

CCSS STANDARDS

- ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1 – Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2 – Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary.
- ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6 – Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author’s point of view or purpose.
- ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.9 – Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- ELA-LITERACY.SL.6-8.1 – Engage effectively in collaborative discussions, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

National Core Arts Standards

Theater Arts Standards:

- TH:Cr1.1.6-8 – Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work (creating tableaux to represent historical concepts).
- TH:Pr4.1.6-8 – Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation (using movement and body positioning to convey meaning).
- TH:Pr5.1.6-8 – Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation (adjusting tableaux based on added historical context).
- TH:Re7.1.6-8 – Analyze how personal experiences influence artistic expression (reflecting on movement and historical interpretation).

Visual Arts Standards:

- VA:Re7.1.6-8 – Analyze how the interaction of subject matter, media, and historical context influence meaning in artworks (examining Wendy Red Star’s annotated portrait).
- VA:Re8.1.6-8 – Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work (discussing how historical context changes understanding).

Getting Ready

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

- Why is history important?
- What questions are important to ask about the past?

SUPPORTING QUESTIONS:

- How do historians use key events, documents, dates, and people to interpret the past?
- How do we evaluate the usefulness and degree of reliability of a variety of forms of historical evidence?

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will use Tableau to deepen their understanding of corroboration and contextualization.
- Students will be able to define corroboration and contextualization and apply these skills while researching to make sure they are using the best sources they can find.

ASSESSMENT:

- Formative: Teacher observation of tableaux and discussions. Use these exercises to check for understanding and redirect when necessary.

Facilitation Guide



Context and Corroboration Tableau Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

Getting Ready (continued)

MATERIALS & SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM SETUP:

- Corroboration and Contextualization Tableau Slides
- Designated “stage” area

KEY SOCIAL STUDIES VOCABULARY:

- Contextualization, Corroboration, Reliable, Unreliable, Interpretation, Context, Analyze, Evidence, Claim, Annotation

KEY ARTS INTEGRATION VOCABULARY:

- Tableau, Energy, Expression, Variation, Levels

TEACHER BACKGROUND

- Review materials
- Practice modeling tableau to build confidence and comfort before facilitating

STUDENT PREREQUISITES

Introduction to Historical Thinking Skills Through Art, Song, & Movement lesson series included in this Arts Every Day Resource Set.

ACCESSIBILITY NOTES

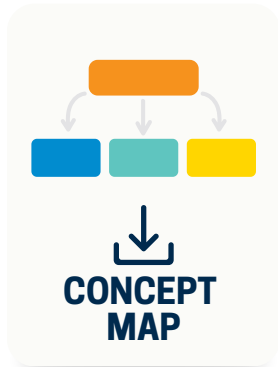
- Sentence Frames & Visual Supports: Provide students with sentence starters and visual cues to help them articulate their observations and analysis of tableaux and artworks (e.g., “I notice that...” / “This image makes me think of...”).
- Modified Participation in Tableau: Allow students who may be uncomfortable performing to contribute by directing the tableau, helping decide poses, or describing the scene instead of physically participating.

Facilitation Guide

Context and Corroboration Tableau
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ARTS INTEGRATION MATERIALS



TEACH

Engage

- Explain that today's focus is on Contextualization and Corroboration, two key historical thinking skills.
- Present the Corroboration and Contextualization Tableau Slides.
- Slide 1: Have one student read aloud the objective: *I will be able to define and use corroboration and contextualization while researching to make sure that I am using the best sources I can find.*
- Slide 2: Define tableau as a still image created using only the body.
- Slides 3 - 5: Explain that Tableau can be:
 - A group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from art
 - A group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from a story
 - A group of models or motionless figures representing a scene from history
- Slide 6: Demonstrate an example: Strike a pose that represents a well-known image (e.g., Edvard Munch's *The Scream*).
 - Discuss how body and facial expressions help convey meaning.

Learn

- Slide 7: Review the elements of a strong tableau, asking students reflection questions as you go.
 - Stillness: Students must remain frozen in their pose.
 - *What does it look like to be still?*
 - Silence: No talking or sound effects.
 - *What does it sound like to be silent?*
 - Energy: Use full-body expression, including facial expressions and levels (standing, sitting, crouching, etc.).
 - *What do you think it means or looks like to pose with energy?*
- Assure students they can breathe and blink while in a tableau.
- Set any additional ground rules based on classroom needs.



VIDEO TUTORIAL



SLIDES

Facilitation Guide

Context and Corroboration Tableau Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

- Slide 8: Select 2 volunteers will come up to the front of the classroom (or our class “Stage”). Explain that these two individuals will represent different sources.
- Slide 9: Explain that a prompt will appear on the slide in the form of an image with a brief phrase. Example:



- The performers (or “sources”) will have until the count of 3 to strike a pose and freeze into a tableau.
- The audience will observe and discuss the following questions:
 - What do you see?
 - Do the actors share the same emotion?
 - Do their body positions match?
 - Do they match? Do these “sources” corroborate each other?
- If they do not corroborate, another “source” will join the stage and create a tableau that does. You could also add another student, if the first two volunteers corroborate, to show the opposite reaction. *How has the new source changed the corroboration?*
- Audience members will decide which sources could be used as reliable evidence (which sources best represent the prompt/claim?).
- Slides 10 - 13: Then add in new volunteers for the multiple prompts continued on the following slides. The audience will continue evaluating the corroboration of each.

- Slide 14: Tell students that this round we will follow the same basic idea of seeing a prompt and creating a frozen pose. However, we will also be adding **context**. Explain the steps:
 1. Stand up behind your chair and make sure you have space to move your arms.
 2. We will use the same prompts we did for Corroboration BUT Context will be added.
 3. First, you will create a personal tableau for each “slide 1”.
 4. Then, you will shift your frozen pose once the context, “slide 2,” is added.
 5. Lastly, we will discuss: How does the Context change your understanding of the scene?

Facilitation Guide



Context and Corroboration Tableau Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

Contextualization

Continued:

- Slides 15 - 24: Engage in the activity. Encourage students to create variations in their poses instead of copying others.
- Following the exercise, facilitate discussion:
 - What do you notice about the different perspectives?
 - How do body positioning and facial expressions contribute to understanding?

Analyze, Apply, & Reflect

- Slide 25: Share background knowledge on artist Wendy Red Star's annotated portrait.
- Slide 26: View the portrait with annotations blurred. Ask students to describe what they see **without context**.
 - What do you notice about the people in this image?
 - What do you wonder about this image?
 - What emotions do you think they are feeling? Why?
 - Who do you think these individuals are?
- Slides 26 & 27: Reveal Red Star's annotations that provide deeper meaning. Students will see the image a little closer, revealing Red Star's signature style of annotation. Her red writing details interpersonal relationships, family trees, and materials used at the time. The writing gives the piece context.
- Facilitate discussion on how the added context influences interpretation. Prompt students to consider the context of the time the portrait was taken (1873) as well as the time Red Star enhanced it (2014).
 - *Note: Students can use their previous knowledge from the 5th Grade Wit and Wisdom Module 1: Cultures in Conflict to corroborate and evaluate its trustworthiness. Arts integrated materials for this unit are also included in the Baltimore Arts Integration Project's library of resources.*

Assess & Extend

Assess:

- Observation of Tableaux: Assess students' understanding of contextualization and corroboration by observing their poses, body expressions, and participation.
- Class Discussion & Reflection: Students explain how adding or changing context affects interpretation. They answer guiding questions on corroboration and contextualization during discussions.

Extend:

- Tableaux for Other Historical Events: Have students research a historical event of their choice and create their own tableaux, incorporating sourcing, corroboration, and contextualization to present their scene to the class.
- Comparing Multiple Artists' Interpretations of History: Extend the visual analysis by having students compare Wendy Red Star's work with other artists who incorporate historical context in their pieces, analyzing how different perspectives shape understanding.