

Facilitation Guide



Introduction to Historical Thinking Skills Through Art, Song, & Movement Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

This lesson introduces students to historical thinking skills—Sourcing, Contextualization, Corroboration, and Close Reading—through a combination of discussion, music, movement, and visual representation.

Students begin by exploring why history matters, engaging with primary and secondary sources, and learning key historical analysis strategies.

Using a rap song, students reinforce their understanding of these skills through lyrics and movement, creating their own choreographed gestures to embody each concept.

The lesson culminates in students selecting and analyzing a historical source and applying the skills they've learned. To enhance retention, teachers are encouraged to revisit the song and activities throughout the year.

This lesson is designed to be flexible and can be broken up over multiple class periods at the teacher's discretion.

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



Introduction to Historical Thinking Skills Through Art, Song, & Movement Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

Standards (continued)

CCSS STANDARDS READING/WRITING

- Anchor Reading Standards 1-10
- Anchor Writing Standard 7
- Anchor Speaking and Listening Standard 1
- Anchor Language Standard 6

NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

- Music E:6 – 8:3: With increasing independence, make connections between music and other common core subjects, including the arts, through creating, performing, or responding to music.
- Dance E:6 – 8:3: Improvise using the information from a given phrase to create contrasting sections.
- Dance I:6 – 8.1: Use fundamentals of composition to create dance in a variety of forms and explain reasons for movement choices and organization.

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:

- I will be able to choose a source and identify it as primary or secondary. I will be able to analyze this source by using sourcing, context, corroboration, and close reading.
 - *Engaging with music, movement, and visual arts will prepare students to achieve the objective.*
- I will be able to use Historical Thinking Skills to select reliable, information-rich sources that effectively support my claim when writing.

ASSESSMENT:

- Formative:
 - Slide 7: Primary or Secondary Source?
 - Optional Primary/Secondary Source Jeopardy game
 - Historical Thinking Chart icons and illustrations
 - Historical Thinking Song group choreography
- Summative:
 - Source Analysis Chart

Facilitation Guide



Introduction to Historical Thinking Skills Through Art, Song, & Movement Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6

Getting Ready (continued)

MATERIALS & SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM SETUP:

- Historical Thinking Slides
- Why Do We Learn History Song (Video)
- Historical Thinking Chart
- Historical Thinking Song (audio embedded in slides, video included in this Arts Every Day resource set)
- Historical Thinking Song Lyrics
- Source Analysis Chart

KEY SOCIAL STUDIES VOCABULARY:

- Sourcing, Primary, Secondary, Contextualization, Corroboration, Close Reading, Reliable, Unreliable, Interpretation, Context, Analyze

KEY ARTS INTEGRATION VOCABULARY:

- Embodied Gesture, Verse, Intent, Icon, Illustration

TEACHER BACKGROUND

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



VIDEO TUTORIAL

STUDENT PREREQUISITES

Because this is an introductory lesson, no specific background information is required.

ACCESSIBILITY NOTES

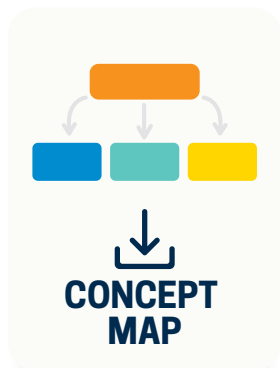
- Scaffold up to the choreography for an entire verse by breaking the verse down into specific vocabulary that might be new to students.
- Create a simple tableau (frozen picture) or hand gesture to represent the term and deepen understanding.
- Offer 2-3 sources for students to practice applying each historical thinking skill set of questions to.

Facilitation Guide

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Song, & Movement
Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6



ARTS INTEGRATION MATERIALS



Facilitation Guide

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TEACH

Engage

- Begin with a divergent thinking question to activate curiosity.
 - Example: *If you could travel back in time and witness any historical event, what would it be and why?*
 - Facilitate a brief discussion, encouraging students to think creatively and share their reasoning.



VIDEO TUTORIAL

Objective

- Slide 3
 - Have a student read the objective: *I will be able choose a source and identify it as Primary or Secondary. I will be able to analyze it by using sourcing, context, corroboration, and close reading.*
- Slide 4
 - Discuss students' prior experiences with research.
 - Ask: *Does researching history feel overwhelming? Why or why not?*
- Explain: Today, we will simplify the process and learn key strategies for analyzing historical sources.



SLIDES

Context

- Ask: *Why do you think we study history?*
 - Record student responses in an idea web on the board.
- Slide 5
 - Share the "Why Do We Learn History?" music video and discuss key takeaways.



VIDEO

Define Source Types

Understanding Primary & Secondary Sources

- Activate prior knowledge: Ask: *What do you already know about primary and secondary sources? Why are they important when studying history?*
- Slide 7
 - Review definitions. Walk through the examples on the slides and distribute additional examples if possible.
 - Ask students if they can name additional examples from their own prior knowledge. If so, ask them to name whether they are primary or secondary and explain their reasoning.
- Slide 8
 - Check for understanding: Is this a primary or secondary source?
 - Art as Primary Sources
 - Primary or Secondary source Jeopardy
- Ask: *Why do you think it is important for you to analyze sources firsthand?* Apply this idea to analyzing current events as well as historical ones.

Facilitation Guide

Introduction to Historical Thinking Skills Through Art, Song, & Movement Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6



Build Memory

How do historians use Sourcing, Contextualization, Corroboration, and Close Reading to analyze the past?

- Use Music to Learn the Definitions of Historical Thinking Skills: Pass out the Historical Thinking Song Lyrics Sheets and play the song aloud.
 - The song breaks down the four key historical thinking terms: Sourcing, Contextualization, Corroboration, and Close Reading.
 - *You may opt to use the audio-only recording (included on Slide 11 or play the Historical Thinking Song Music Video (included within these Arts Every Day Resources).*
 - As the song plays, instruct students to follow along with the lyrics and to underline any unfamiliar terms.
- Reinforce: Create Historical Thinking Charts for Student Binders
 - Distribute the Historical Thinking Notes Chart.
 - Present slides 13 – 16 and ask students to record the guiding questions for each of the 4 key historical thinking terms in the second column of the chart.
 - Additionally, students should create an icon or image in the first column that illustrates the term's meaning.
 - *Note: Additional information is included in columns 3 and 4 of the chart that will help guide students throughout the school year when using these skills. It is recommended that this chart be kept in a binder/folder to be referenced throughout the year.*

Brain Connections: Engaging students with these terms through song, visuals, written notes, illustrations, and movement (in the next segment) is an example of using the arts as repeated rehearsal. Repetition in novel and immersive ways helps students retain information long term.



VIDEO



HANDOUT
SONG LYRICS



HANDOUT
NOTES CHART

Apply: Let's Move!

Applying Understanding Through Movement

- Explain using Slide 19 that we'll be developing dance moves for each verse that exemplify the historical thinking skill discussed in that verse.
- Explain that this can be "TikTok-style" choreography, meaning that it should be simple, repeatable, and catchy.
- Demonstrate: Using the chorus to start, model these moves for the students (Slide 20).

| Lyrics | Choreography |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| If you're talking 'bout history | talking puppet hands |
| Ancient or Victorian, | point left, point right |
| Put on your thinking cap | mime putting on a hat |
| and think like a historian | pointing at temple |

Notice how the choreography ties directly to what is being sung, both showing and telling the concept of putting on a thinking cap.

Facilitation Guide

Introduction to Historical Thinking Skills Through Art, Song, & Movement Thinking Like a Historian, Grade 6



Apply: Let's Move!

Applying Understanding Through Movement Continued

- Explain to students that it's clear how the choreography ties directly to what is being sung, both showing and telling the concept of talking or putting on a thinking cap.

Brain Connections: This is an example of embodied cognition: a physical motion tied to a concept that helps students understand its meaning more deeply.

- Break students into four groups to tackle the four historical thinking skills in the song: sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading.
 - Slide 21: Explain that each group of students will develop their own dance moves for their verse, keeping in mind that the moves should embody the concept.
 - *Note: Each verse is 8 lines long, follows an AABB rhyme scheme, and flows in 4/4 time.*
- After each group has developed their dance phrase aligned to their verse, share these dances group by group at the front of the class.
 - If possible, have a clearly defined performance space in your classroom.
 - *Note: While sharing these dances, it's inevitable that students will feel nervous or shy. Feel free to slow the tempo down or talk through the steps.*
 - Once all of the groups have shared their verse, it's time to put it all together. It may be that the students have not memorized the entire song/dance by the end of class, but they should at least know their verse and the chorus.
 - Close this segment with a mini performance of the entire song, with each group taking the spotlight at their table and dancing with their verse.
 - *Note: Keep the emotional environment light and celebratory. Remind students that they are not being graded on their dance technique, but instead their participation and effort.*

Assess & Extend

Select & Analyze a Source

- Slide 23: Revisit the objective. Provide students with a list of sources to select from and distribute the Source Analysis Chart. Ask students to complete the chart, applying what they've learned about each of the 4 historical thinking skills to analyze their selected source.

Extend:

- Create a classroom library of different types of sources.
- Create a scavenger hunt activity for students to use the Library of Congress web site. <https://www.loc.gov/>

