

What Is History?

Intro to History

Kristen Sublett, Susan McHale, Kristen Sublett
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Grade Level	8th – 12th Grade	**Time Frame**	1 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	**Duration**	50 minutes
Course	Oklahoma History, U.S. History, World History		

Essential Question

What is history? Why is history important?

Summary

This short, introductory lesson is a great way to begin the year in any history class from 8th-12th grade. Each student will create their own definition of history then compare it to quotes about history and the term's dictionary definition. Students then will reexamine their own definitions, modify them as needed, and discuss what they believe is missing from the dictionary definition. Students will also justify why their addition to the definition is important to include in an understanding of history. This lesson includes optional modifications for distance learning. Resources for use in Google Classroom are included.

Snapshot

Engage

Students create their own definitions of history using the I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer.

Explore

Students read several quotes about history and discuss which quotes they agree or disagree with.

Explain

Students compare their definitions of history to the dictionary definition.

Extend

Students discuss the importance of learning and understanding history.

Evaluate

Students write a Two-Minute Paper about the definition and importance of history.

Standards

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Reading (6-12)

WME201: Understand the implication of a familiar word or phrase and of simple descriptive language
ARG201: Analyze how one or more sentences in passages offer reasons for or support a claim when the relationship is clearly indicated

ACT College and Career Readiness Standards - Writing (6-12)

I&A 201: Understanding the task and writing with purpose. A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Generate a thesis that is unclear or not entirely related to the given issue -Respond weakly to other perspectives on the issue
ORG 301: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Group most ideas logically -Use transitions between and within paragraphs to clarify some relationships among ideas
ORG 302: A score in this range indicates that the writer is able to: -Provide a basic organizational structure are grouped locally

Attachments

- History Quotes Magnetic Statements—What is History.docx
- History Quotes Magnetic Statements—What is History.pdf
- History Quotes Sheet—What is History - Spanish.docx
- History Quotes Sheet—What is History - Spanish.pdf
- History Quotes Sheet—What is History.docx
- History Quotes Sheet—What is History.pdf
- I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer—What is History - Spanish.docx
- I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer—What is History - Spanish.pdf
- I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer—What is History.docx
- I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer—What is History.pdf
- Lesson Slides—What is History.pptx

Materials

- Lesson Slides (attached)
- History Quotes Magnetic Statements (print one-sided, one set)
- I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer handout (attached, one per student)
- History Quotes Sheet handout (attached, one per student)

10 minutes

Engage

Teacher's Note: Preparation

Prior to the lesson, print a copy of the **History Quotes Magnetic Statements**. Place each printed quote at a different location around the classroom. Ensure that each quote is visible to students.

Use the attached **Lesson Slides** to guide the lesson. Begin the lesson by displaying **slide 3**. Read aloud the two essential questions and instruct students to keep these questions in mind as they participate in the lesson. Ask students to first consider the question, "What is history?"

As students are considering the question, pass out copies of the **I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer** and display **slide 5.** Introduce students to the I Think / We Think instructional strategy and ask them to think about how they would define the term "history." Allow students to think quietly for a moment, then instruct them to record their definitions of history in the "I Think" column of the graphic organizer.

Display **slide 6.** Have students find an Elbow Partner and ask each student to share their definition with their partner. Once students have shared their definitions, instruct each pair to come to a consensus and create or modify a definition of history together. Ask students to write their shared definitions in the "We Think" column of their graphic organizers.

Optional Modification for Distance Learning

Engage: Upload the attached I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer to a collaboration space such as Google Docs. Create a separate copy for each to group to work in together.

Explore: Digitally distribute the attached History Quotes Magnetic Statements handout or create a digital bulletin board such as Padlet and post the quotes for students to view in separate columns.

Download all attachments to use this lesson in Google Classroom or your LMS.

15 minutes

Explore

Display **slide 7.** Draw students' attention to the different history quotes posted around the room, then ask them to walk around and read each quote. Once they have read all of the quotes, students will participate in Magnetic Statements activity where they select a quote that most attracts them. They will stand next to that quote, forming small groups around each one.

Teacher's Note: Grouping

Each quote should have at least two or three students standing by it, thus creating a small group. If there are any quotes that have just one student, you can participate in a discussion with that student, ask them to join another group, or let them share out as an individual during the whole class discussion.

Ask students within each quote group to share with each other what attracted them to this quote and why they chose it. Give groups 5–10 minutes to discuss, depending on how large the groups are. Tell them to be prepared to share out their group answers.

After students have had time to discuss, ask members of each group to share with the whole class why they chose their particular quote.

10 minutes

Explain

Display **slide 8.** Pass out copies of the **History Quotes Sheet** handout and ask students to return to their original Elbow Partner. Tell students to read through each quote on the sheet and put an A next to each quote that they agree with and a D next to each quote that they disagree with in the “Agree/Disagree” column. Ask students to consider if any of the quotes inspire them to change or add to their own definitions of history. Circulate around the room and help partners decipher any quotes that they might not understand.

Show the students the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of “history” displayed on **slide 9.** Ask each pair to compare their definitions to the dictionary definition. Ask students to consider what is missing from the dictionary definition or their personal definitions. Discuss as a whole class and invite partners to share out.

Display **slide 10.** Ask partners to think about everything that has been discussed in class including their original definitions, the various quotes, the dictionary definition, and all student discussion. Ask each pair to decide upon a final definition of “history” and record their answers in the “We Re-Think” column of their I Think, We Think, We Re-Think Graphic Organizer.

Students can turn in their graphic organizers and their final definitions can be used as a formative assessment for this lesson.

10 minutes

Extend

Display **slide 11.** Read the Santayana quote to the students: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Ask students to think about a historical event that stands out in their minds as something important or significant. Ask them to share with their partner the event and why they think it's important for every citizen to know about this event. After students have had time to discuss, ask partners to share out their thoughts and initiate a whole class discussion.

5 minutes

Evaluate

Display **slide 12.** Instruct students to recall the Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of history. Ask them what they think is missing from the dictionary definition. Instruct them to spend the next two minutes creating a Two-Minute Paper in which they explain what should be included in the definition of history.

Resources

- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google classroom. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/628
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Google docs. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/2327
- K20 Center. (n.d.). I think / we think. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/141
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Magnetic statements. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/166
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Padlet. Tech Tools. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/tech-tool/1077
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Think-Pair-Share. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/139
- K20 Center. (n.d.). Two-minute paper. Strategies. https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/152
- K20 Center. (2021, September 21). *K20 Center 2 minute timer* [Video]. YouTube.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HcEEAnwOt2c
- Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). History. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved August 19, 2024, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/history