

LESSON PLAN 4
Civil War
Shadows of War: Prelude to the First Memorial Day

Grade Level: 5-8

Essential Question: How do I locate information using appropriate sources and strategies that provide accurate historical information?

Activating Strategies: Students will write one sentence to explain what they believe is the difference between a primary source and a secondary source.

Key vocabulary: primary, secondary

Teaching Strategies:

Guided practice:

- 1.) Students will review examples of primary and secondary sources that were identified during historical research for Shadows of War (see resources).
- 2.) Students will use the provided definitions of primary and secondary sources to identify which examples fit each category.
- 3.) Students will work in collaborative pairs to complete the graphic organizers (worksheets), thereby comparing and contrasting information found in the examples of primary and secondary sources.

Summarizing and Application:

- 1.) Student will identify the type of source, primary or secondary, that is most likely to provide accurate historical information and tell why.
- 2.) They will discuss how this should apply to writing.
- 3.) Shadows of War: Prelude to The First Memorial Day will be reviewed to determine whether the author, Janice McElhoe, used primary or secondary sources in writing the book. They will record their conclusions in a paragraph that will be collected by the teacher. The teacher will employ the technique “Luck of the Draw” as a method of choosing two or three students who will verbally share their conclusions.

Standards Alignment: 8.1.9.D. Analyze and interpret historical research using primary sources.

Answering the Essential Question:

Students will identify, and explain why, primary sources provide the most accurate historical information, as their “ticket out the door”.

DEFINITIONS

Primary Sources

Primary sources are original materials. They are from the time period involved and have not been filtered through interpretation or evaluation. Primary sources are original materials on which other research is based. They are usually the first formal appearance of results in physical, print or electronic format. They present original thinking, report a discovery or share an experience.

Secondary Sources

Secondary Sources are less easily defined than primary sources. Generally, they are accounts written after the fact with the benefit of hindsight. They are interpretations and evaluations of primary sources. Secondary sources are not evidence, but rather commentary on and discussion of evidence.

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