

*Research*



## 16. HISTORICAL LITERACY

©Literacies for the Digital Age to Teach in the K-12  
Classroom

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Developed for the Pier Institute: Global Youth in the  
Digital Age

Yale University, July 8-12, 2013





“History Literacy Failing Among American Students.....”

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/10/study-rates-colleges-base\\_n\\_1954987.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/10/study-rates-colleges-base_n_1954987.html)

- “A 2010 study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) showed the [U.S. history testing scores are “stagnant,”](#) with only 9 percent of fourth graders correctly identifying a photograph of Abraham Lincoln and stating two reasons for his importance.”
- “Lee White, executive director of the National History Coalition, says the problem stems from history's place in American curriculum.”
- “They've narrowed the curriculum to teach to the test. History has been deemphasized,” he said. “You can't expect kids to have great scores in history when they're not being taught history.”



**CURRICULUM STANDARDS for SOCIAL STUDIES**  
provide guidelines for educators: **CLICK ON URL**  
<http://www.ncss.org/standards/strands>

**HISTORICAL LITERACY IS INFUSED IN EACH OF THE STANDARDS**  
**10 INTERDISCIPLINARY SOCIAL STUDIES THEMATIC STANDARDS**

- 1.Culture and Cultural Diversity
- 2.Time, Continuity, and Change
- 3.People, Places, and Environments
- 4.Individual Development and Identity
- 5.Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- 6.Power, Authority, and Governance
- 7.Production, Distribution, and Consumption
- 8.Science, Technology, and Society
- 9.Global Connections
- 10.Civic Ideals and Practices



# CT Social Studies Curriculum Framework Grades PK-12 provide guidelines for educators

[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Curriculum\\_Framework\\_2011.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT_Social_Studies_Curriculum_Framework_2011.pdf)

- The Connecticut Social Studies Framework Grades PK-12 is a comprehensive document that provides a roadmap for teachers to understand what students should know and be able to do from prekindergarten through high school.
- Teachers are expected to combine Content Knowledge (Standard 1) strands and grade-level expectations (GLEs) to develop comprehensive units and lessons.
- The Connecticut Social Studies Curriculum Framework is organized around the following three interrelated standards:

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# CT Social Studies Curriculum Framework Grades PK-12 provide guidelines for educators

[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Curriculum\\_Framework\\_2011.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT_Social_Studies_Curriculum_Framework_2011.pdf)

- **Standard 1: Content Knowledge**

- Knowledge of concepts, themes, and information from history and social studies is necessary to promote understanding of our nation and our world.

- **Standard 2: History/Social Studies Literacy Skills**

- Competence in literacy, inquiry and research skills is necessary to analyze, evaluate and present history and social studies information.

- **Standard 3: Civic Engagement**

- Civic competence in analyzing historical issues and current problems requires the synthesis of information, skills and perspective.



## CT Social Studies Curriculum Framework Grades PK-12 provide guidelines for educators

[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Curriculum\\_Framework\\_2011.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT_Social_Studies_Curriculum_Framework_2011.pdf)

- This framework identifies grade-level expectations; however, it allows districts flexibility to select specific content that must be taught at each grade level. Districts can take different approaches to help students meet the GLEs. The purpose of this framework is to identify specific standards, strands and GLEs that each student should be expected to know and be able to do, while allowing the flexibility for individual districts to determine the organization of the content at each grade level.
- **CLICK ON THE URL BELOW. SEE PAGES 3-58**  
[http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT\\_Social\\_Studies\\_Curriculum\\_Framework\\_2011.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/curriculum/socialstudies/CT_Social_Studies_Curriculum_Framework_2011.pdf)



# HISTORICAL LITERACY DEFINED

<http://www.schools.utah.gov/CURR/socialstudies/Teachers/Newsletter/Social-Studies-newsletter-May-2011k.aspx>

- Students' historical literacy allows them to construct interpretations of the past with increasing sophistication. (Draper, Broomhead, Jensen, Nokes, & Siebert 2010)
- Historical "texts" include all resources and evidence historians and archeologists use to research the past, such as primary sources, government documents, oral histories, artifacts, photographs, movies, numerical data, artwork, music, fashions, secondary sources produced by other historians...
- Historical literacy does not require an encyclopedic knowledge of historical facts from every era or global location (Wineburg, 2004)
- Historical literacy requires the use of historians' strategies for working with historical evidence.



# ELEMENTS OF HISTORICAL LITERACY

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

- Events of the past – Knowing and understanding historical events, using prior knowledge, and realizing the significance of different events.
- Narratives of the past – Understanding the shape of change and continuity over time, understanding multiple narratives and dealing with open-endedness.
- Research skills – Gathering, analyzing and using the evidence (artifacts, documents and graphics) and issues of provenance.
- The language of history – Understanding and dealing with the language of the past.

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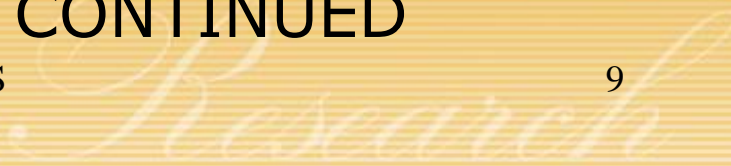


# ELEMENTS OF HISTORICAL LITERACY

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

- Historical concepts – Understanding historical concepts such as causation and motivation.
- ICT understandings – Using, understanding and evaluating ICT-based historical resources (the virtual archive).
- Making connections – Connecting the past with the self and the world today.
- Contention and contestability – Understanding the 'rules' and the place of public and professional historical debate

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# ELEMENTS OF HISTORICAL LITERACY

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

- Representational expression – Understanding and using creativity in representing the past through film, drama, visual arts, music, fiction, poetry and ICT.
- Moral judgements in history – Understanding the moral and ethical issues involved in historical explanation.
- Applied science in history – Understanding the use and value of scientific and technological expertise and methods in investigating the past, such as DNA analysis or gas chromatography tests.
- Historical explanation – Using historical reasoning, synthesis and interpretation (the index of historical literacy) to explain the past. Historical understanding is incomplete without explanation.





# OVERVIEW OF HISTORICAL LITERACY

- THE URL BELOW PROVIDES DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT HISTORICAL LITERACY. IT IS VALUABLE FOR EDUCATORS PLANNING THEIR UNITS AND LESSON PLANS, WHO INTEND TO INFUSE THEIR DISCIPLINE CONTENT WITH HISTORICAL LITERACY ELEMENTS.
- CLICK ON THE URL TO SEE 58pp.
- <http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>



# Working with historical sources

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

## Primary sources

- “It is important that all history teachers should be in a position to recognise categories of historical sources. Broadly, a primary source is a piece of **historical evidence which is contemporaneously and directly linked with an event** or series of events in the past.
- The importance of using primary sources carefully in the classroom cannot be emphasized too highly since it puts students directly in touch with the past and all primary sources do have a special fascination for child and adult alike”

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# Working with primary historical sources

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

## Samples of Primary sources

- photographs and film clips
- cartoons from newspapers and journals
- drawings, sketches and paintings
- newspaper editorials, letters and articles
- extracts from speeches
- extracts from writings of commentators
- extracts from original official records and other documents
- maps
- statistics in both tabular and graphic format
- music and poetry
- print artefact material, such as posters and advertising.

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# Working with primary historical sources

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>



President Abraham Lincoln delivered the *Gettysburg Address* on Nov. 19, 1863.  
*Photo: Bettmann/Corbis*



SIGNING  
THE TREATY  
OF  
VERSAILLES





# Key issues about using primary historical sources in the classroom

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

- Using primary source material offers students an exciting opportunity to study and work with the very building blocks of evidence that professional historians use to construct their views of events from the past.
- As the range and availability of primary source materials is almost overwhelming, one task for teachers is to select and offer appropriate and relevant source material suited to student abilities and to the learning activities specifically relating to the unit of history under study.

## • **ISSUES**

**What constitutes a fact?**

**Whose point of view?**

**What's missing?**

**What is the context?**

**What is the source?**





# Working with secondary historical sources

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

- Secondary sources are usually defined as sources that post-date the events under study and form a commentary on these events – such as a textbook or monograph or biography.
- Students must gain an awareness that secondary sources must be subjected to the same kind of scrutiny as primary sources.

- **CONTINUED**





# Working with secondary historical sources

<http://www.napavalley.edu/Library/Pages/SecondarySources.aspx>

- **“Secondary sources** are material that has taken a primary source and summarized it, analyzed it, combined it, rephrased it and interpreted it. It is at least one step removed from the event or phenomenon under review. A secondary source may try to persuade or argue a position. Much of what you find as sources will be secondary.”
- Examples: Reports, summaries, textbooks, speeches, articles, encyclopedias and dictionaries



# Primary Source vs. Secondary Source Examples

<http://www.napavalley.edu/Library/Pages/SecondarySources.aspx>

## e.g. PRIMARY SOURCE.....

- Person
- Interview
- Email contact
- Event
- Discussion
- Debate
- Community meeting
- Survey
- Artifact

## e.g. SECONDARY SOURCE

- Reference material
- Book
- Dvd
- Encyclopedia
- Magazine article
- Television broadcast

Discipline	Primary Source	Secondary Source
Art	Original artwork	Article critiquing the piece of art
Architecture	Architectural drawing	Book on architectural style and design
Geology	Map	Interpretation of geologic features and history for a given location
Graphics	Poster, computer-generated graphics, photographs	Book critiquing the photographs and graphics
Music	Song	Review of the song
History	Explorer's diary	Book about exploration
Journalism	Newspaper from 1920	Article describing how reporting of the news has changed over time
Literature	Poem	Criticism on a particular genre of poetry
Political Science	Government documents (i.e. text of laws)	Article reviewing a law and its effects on the citizenry.
Religion	Tablets, ancient manuscripts	Interpretation of the meaning of document created in the ancient world
Science	Original journal article	Biological Abstracts
Theatre Arts	Videotape of a performance	Biography of a playwright



# Questions when using secondary historical sources

<http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>

- Who wrote this book? Why?
- What is his or her background? Does this influence the writing? What is the evidence for that?
- What references were used? Are there enough? Are some key references missing?
- How was the book structured? Does this affect the explanations offered?
- Has its position or theme been replaced by more recent books, ideas or articles?
- What are the other approaches advocated by other writers in this area?
- Where does this book sit in the debate about the topic under study?

# SAMPLE LESSON PLANS THAT TEACH HISTORICAL LITERACY

[http://www.echoesandreflections.org/learn\\_about\\_curriculum/lessons.asp](http://www.echoesandreflections.org/learn_about_curriculum/lessons.asp)

- *Echoes and Reflections* supports study in United States and World History, English, Holocaust Studies, Fine Arts, Character Education, and the Social Sciences, and meets or reinforces U.S. [national standards](#) in Social Studies, English/Language Arts, and Viewing and Media Literacy.
- NOTE THE PRESENCE OF MULTIPLE LITERACIES FOR THE DIGITAL AGE IN THE LESSONS: **Visual, Media, Historical, and ELA Literacy.**
- CLICK ON THE URL BELOW FOR COMPARISONS OF NATIONAL STANDARDS  
[http://www.echoesandreflections.org/pdfs/nat\\_stds.pdf](http://www.echoesandreflections.org/pdfs/nat_stds.pdf)





# SAMPLE LESSON PLANS THAT TEACH HISTORICAL LITERACY

[http://www.echoesandreflections.org/learn\\_about\\_curriculum/lessons.  
asp](http://www.echoesandreflections.org/learn_about_curriculum/lessons.asp)

**CLICK ON THE URL ABOVE TO ACCESS  
DETAILS OF EACH LESSON**

- **Lesson One: Studying the Holocaust**
- **Lesson Two: Antisemitism**
- **Lesson Three: Nazi Germany**
- **Lesson Four: The Ghettos**
- **Lesson Five: The "Final Solution"**
- **Lesson Six: Jewish Resistance**
- **Lesson Seven: Rescuers and Non-Jewish Resistance**
- **Lesson Eight: Survivors and Liberators**
- **Lesson Nine: Perpetrators, Collaborators, and Bystanders**
- **Lesson Ten: The Children**



# DOWNLOADABLE CURRICULUM MATERIALS FOR ECHOES & REFLECTIONS

**CLICK ON THE URL BELOW TO DOWNLOAD MATERIALS FOR EACH OF THE 10 LESSONS IN THE CURRICULUM**

[http://www.echoesandreflections.org/curriculum\\_components/materials.asp](http://www.echoesandreflections.org/curriculum_components/materials.asp)

- “Many of the pages labeled “Transparency Masters” and “Student Handouts” in *Echoes and Reflections* are available here to [download](#) and use in the classroom. In addition, an interactive [map](#) on the extermination camps and killing sites developed by Yad Vashem has been included for classroom use.”
- **Lesson One: Studying the Holocaust**
- **Lesson Two: Antisemitism**
- **Lesson Three: Nazi Germany**
- **Lesson Four: The Ghettos**
- **Lesson Five: The “Final Solution”**
- **Lesson Six: Jewish Resistance**
- **Lesson Seven: Rescuers and Non-Jewish Resistance**
- **Lesson Eight: Survivors and Liberators**
- **Lesson Nine: Perpetrators, Collaborators, and Bystanders**
- **Lesson Ten: The Children**



# SAMPLE TEACHING MATERIALS THAT DEMONSTRATE HISTORICAL LITERACY

- [\*\*Internationalizing History\*\*](#)
- Discover the resources you need to "globalize" your U.S. history lesson plans! [\[...\]](#) »
- [\*\*Crop It\*\*](#)
- Use this four-step learning routine to deeply explore visual primary sources. [\[...\]](#) »
- [\*\*Four Reads: Learning to Read Primary Documents\*\*](#)
- Teach your students to read like a historian with this guided four-step reading process for primary documents. [\[...\]](#) »
- [\*\*Document-Based Whole-Class Discussion\*\*](#)
- Classroom discussions need not be argumentative and unproductive. Discover a way to facilitate healthy discussion in your classroom. [\[...\]](#) »

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# SAMPLE TEACHING MATERIALS THAT DEMONSTRATE HISTORICAL LITERACY

- [\*\*The Research Paper: Developing Historical Questions\*\*](#)
- Research papers are not an archaic form of assessment. Learn how to help your students with the research paper composition process. [\[...\]](#) »
- [\*\*Visiting History: A Professional Development Guide\*\*](#)
- Learn strategies for creating quality professional development experiences using the museums, historic sites, archives, and cultural institutions. [\[...\]](#) »
- [\*\*Webquest, Inquiry, and Lincoln's Views on Technology\*\*](#)
- Searching for new, exciting ways to engage your students in the classroom? Why not make them internet detectives? [\[...\]](#) »

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# SAMPLE TEACHING MATERIALS THAT DEMONSTRATE HISTORICAL LITERACY

- **[Concept Formation](#)**
- In order to understand topics, you must first understand concepts. Learn all about conceptualization here! [\[...\]](#) »
- **[Using Historical Ephemera in the Classroom](#)**
- Ticket stubs. Report cards. Photographs. All of these things have historical meaning. [\[...\]](#) »
- **[Stop Action and Assess Alternatives](#)**
- Teach students to explore contingency with this great lesson plan idea. [\[...\]](#) »
- **<http://www.echoesandreflections.org/>** Echoes and Reflections, A Multimedia Curriculum on the Holocaust for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms



# Teaching Literacy Through History Units and Lesson Plans

- The following units target the skills and strategies students must learn before they can gain academic independence.
- Each unit develops key skills as outlined in the Common Core State Standards, such as examining vocabulary text, discerning argument construction, analyzing non-fiction texts, and writing critical analysis.  
<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/literature-and-language-arts/resources/teaching-common-core>
- Please explore and use our *Teaching Literacy Through History* units and lesson plans below. [Explore additional Teaching Literacy Through History courses and resources.](#)

# TEACHING HISTORY WITH TECHNOLOGY



- CLICK ON THE URL BELOW TO OPEN LESSON PLANS THAT ENHANCE HISTORICAL LITERACY & TECHNOLOGY.
- <http://thwt.org/index.php/lessons-activities>
- [Library of Congress Lesson Plans](#)
- [National Archives Lesson Plans](#)
- [New York Times Learning Network Lesson Plans](#)



# SAMPLE HISTORICAL LITERACY OBJECTIVE

1. Learning objective: Conduct library research on Haitian history, identifying key people and events, and critically analyzing the sources and nature of available information.

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<http://www.cmu.edu/global/education/global-literacy/#Global%20Literacy>





# SAMPLE HISTORICAL LITERACY ASSESSMENT

- **Assessment:** Students engage in a group brainstorming session addressing the question: How can we find information about Haitian history? The brainstorm prompts discussion about a range of issues, such as different cultural perceptions of historical events, gaps in reliable data, the credibility of a range of potential sources, strategies for accessing these sources, etc. Individual students then investigate different sources (including French language sources) as homework. The next class they get into small groups, pool the information they have found, present it to the class, and collectively construct a time-line of Haitian history, which they then make use of throughout the semester as they address different aspects of Haitian life. This assignment helps students develop a more critical view of history and assesses their ability to conduct research effectively before they encounter higher-stakes assignments.



# CIVIC LITERACY SOURCES

- <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/> *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)* <http://nationsreportcard.gov/about.aspx>
- <http://www.mhschool.com/socialstudies/2009/teacher/pdf/ncss.pdf> NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS), Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, I-X
- [http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/images/RevisedNCSSStandards\\_Golston.pdf](http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/images/RevisedNCSSStandards_Golston.pdf) The Revised NCSS Standards: Ideas for the Classroom Teacher, by Syd Golston
- [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/10/study-rates-colleges-base\\_n\\_1954987.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/10/10/study-rates-colleges-base_n_1954987.html) History Literacy Failing Among American Students, Study Faults Colleges Lack Of Core Subject Requirements (SLIDESHOW),
- <http://www.schools.utah.gov/CURR/socialstudies/Teachers/Newsletter/Social-Studies-newsletter-May-2011k.aspx> Historical Literacy by Jeffery D. Nokes, April 18, 2011, in Utah State Office of Education, Social Studies, newsletter May,



# CIVIC LITERACY SOURCES

- <http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf>  
*index of historical literacy 41pp* [Historical literacy - National Centre for History Education](http://www.hyperhistory.org/images/assets/pdf/literacy.pdf)
- [http://teachinghistory.org/system/files/NHEC\\_Report.pdf](http://teachinghistory.org/system/files/NHEC_Report.pdf) A Report on the State of U.S. History Education, State Policies and National Programs as of September 2008. 44pp.
- <http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/have-dream-exploring-nonviolence-30509.html> Lesson Plan I Have a Dream: Exploring Nonviolence in Young Adult Texts
- <http://www.napavalley.edu/Library/Pages/HistoricalThinkingSkills.aspx> Historical Thinking Skills, Napa Valley College Library, Read and Compare Secondary History Sources, updated June 14, 2011, by Nancy McEnery, Reference Librarian-Instructor

