



Archivist: Politics in Philadelphia during the American Revolution

Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like an archivist and collaborate with a history museum to create a new archive that students can use to learn about why Philadelphia was an important city during the American Revolution.

Activity

Teacher notes:

- This activity is long and can be completed across multiple days.
- Each student (or pairs of students) will need a computer for this activity.
- You will need to set up 2 free accounts on two different websites before class. You will also need to set up a shared folder in Google Drive for all students to access. See [Handout: Teacher Prep](#).

Step 1: Background on Archivists (5-10 minutes)

- Show [Video: Politics in Philadelphia](#).
- As a class, discuss how archivists typically work at museums and libraries where thousands of historical documents, like historical paintings or maps, are stored. They have a lot of different responsibilities, including organizing documents in archives. An archive is a location where documents and artifacts are stored. Before the internet, documents were organized in physical archives (e.g., boxes of documents in a large room). However, digital archives now exist. A digital archive is a database that houses scanned images of artifacts and other important information.
- Ask students what would happen if archivists didn't organize documents and artifacts in digital or physical archives (e.g., documents would be disorganized and professionals wouldn't be able to use them to back up claims or make new claims about history, professionals might have an inaccurate understanding of a historical event because they didn't have access to important artifacts).
- Next, explain to students that physical and digital archives are typically created for professionals to use. For example, historians and economists can use the archives to find primary and secondary sources to use as part of research or to write a book. The problem is that students who are learning about artifacts have a hard time using the archives! Show [Handout: Examples of Archives](#).
- Extra Time? Go to other digital archives and have a class discussion about what features are complicated and what features are easy for students to use.
- Ask students what they would change or add to the archive to make it more student friendly. Discuss the following: how can the design or wording be changed to make it easier for students to search for information?

Step 2: Activity Set Up (5+ minutes)

- Explain to students that they will create their own digital archive for students to use. Their digital archive will make a claim about the importance of Philadelphia in the Revolutionary War.
- Provide students with [Handout: Steps to Create a Student-Friendly Archive](#). As a class, read through the steps.
- Next, have students go to this website: <http://bit.ly/impofphili>. Explain to students that they should reference this handout while creating their archive. Feel free to print the handout as well.
- Divide students into pairs or small groups.

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Step 3: Brainstorming Ideas and Creating Entries (30+ minutes)

- Have students complete Steps 1-3 on their handout.
- As students are working, ask the following questions:
 - How will you create your archive in a way that is student friendly?
 - What sources will you use to show that Philadelphia was an important location for politics in colonial America?
 - Why is it important for students to use archives in social studies class?
 - What features can you add to your archive to make it fun for students to use? (e.g., bitmojis, hashtags, videos)

Step 4: Creating QR Codes (10+ minutes)

- Have students complete Step 4 on the handout.
- Teacher note: you will need to email students the class Google Drive folder link so they can upload their QR code to the class folder. You can have students label the file with their names so you know which QR code belongs to which student.

Step 5: Presenting Archives (10+ minutes)

- Have students go into the class Google Drive folder and volunteer to share their QR code.
- Have a concluding discussion about the importance of Philadelphia during the American Revolution.

Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: Politics in Philadelphia
- Handout: Teacher Set Up
- Handout: Examples of Archives
- Handout: Steps to Create a Student-Friendly Archive
- Google Drive Link: <http://bit.ly/impofphili> (this link has the sources students will use to create their entries)

Not Provided Online:

- Each student or pair of students needs a computer

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