

Historian: Transcontinental Railroad

Adventure Description:

In this adventure, you will think like a historian and create a Youtube channel for people to learn about different perspectives related to the building of the Transcontinental Railroad.

Activity

Step 1: Background on Historians and Transcontinental Railroad (5-10 minutes)

- Show [Video: Different Perspectives on Building the Transcontinental Railroad](#).
- As a class, discuss why people had different perspectives on the railroad being built. Show [Handout: Why Perspectives are Different](#).
- Next, have students brainstorm why it is important for historians to research and write about people's different perspectives. Discuss what would happen if historians didn't include all perspectives when they wrote a book or recorded a Youtube episode (e.g., people might not get a complete picture of a historical event, people might not understand that people were treated differently during a historical period).

Step 2: Activity Set Up (5 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will create their own Youtube episode! The Youtube episode should tell people about how people who were affected by the Transcontinental Railroad could have different perspectives on it.
- Provide students with [Handout: Creating a Youtube Episode](#).
- Review Step 1 and discuss why it is important to choose an audience before you design an episode. Discuss how historians think about their audience when they are teaching others! For example, they might use simpler words when talking to young children who are just learning about a topic for the first time. They might use more sophisticated language when talking to a group of historians.
- Explain to students that they will follow the steps to plan what they will discuss in their Youtube episode.
- Teacher note: students will need a copy of [Handout: Why Perspectives are Different](#). You can display this on a smart board, print out copies for students, or email it to students to use on tablets or personal computers.

Please contact Allison Bischoff, Director of Customer Service, at allison@rozzylearningcompany.com or 314-272-2560 with questions.

Step 3: Brainstorming and Planning (20+ minutes)

- Have students complete Steps 1-3 on the handout.
- As students are working, ask the following questions:
 - Why is it important to identify the audience before you write an episode? (some audiences might need accommodations, like text on the screen if viewers have auditory impairments. By identifying your audience ahead of time, you can make sure that your episode is accessible to your audience; you would need to use simpler language if your audience is children)
 - Why is it important to reference primary sources in your episode?
 - What points of view will you discuss in your episode? How would your episode be different if you only showed one point of view?

Step 4: Recording (15 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now record their episodes. Have students use the video feature on a tablet or phone to record each other.
- Provide students with [Handout: How to Record a Youtube Episode Like a Professional](#). As a class, review the steps that students will take to record an episode in a professional way.
- If you are short on time, have students complete this step on another day.

Extra Time? Watching Episodes and Giving Feedback (10 minutes)

- Discuss how historians provide feedback to each other in a constructive, respectful way. Have students watch others' episodes and provide feedback using [Handout: Providing Professional Feedback](#).
- Optional: You can upload episodes onto Youtube and have a private channel so only students and guardians can see the episodes. You can also have another class watch the episodes and provide feedback to encourage collaboration between classes!

Please contact Allison Bischoff, Director of Customer Service, at allison@rozzylearningcompany.com or 314-272-2560 with questions.

Historian: Transcontinental Railroad

Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: Different Perspectives on Building the Transcontinental Railroad
- Handout: Why Perspectives are Different
- Handout: Creating a Youtube Episode
- Handout: How to Record a Youtube Episode Like a Professional
- Handout: Providing Professional Feedback

Please contact Allison Bischoff, Director of Customer Service, at allison@rozzylearningcompany.com or 314-272-2560 with questions.