

Lesson Procedures

Note- This module is organized around four basic steps essential to an inquiry. You are welcome, and encouraged, to tailor these steps to the needs of your students. Younger students might need additional direction and collaboration is provided here.

Step 1: Framing the inquiry

1. Students should restate the inquiry question in their own words, establishing exactly what it is asking. Students might work with a neighbor to predict what possible perspectives might be available on the question.
2. In addition to the framing question, students should generate a list of questions that they need to know in order to proceed. These questions should include background knowledge they anticipate needing or related questions that they find interesting. Students will use these questions to help guide how they examine the sources and what additional resources they might request.

Examples of questions for this lesson might include:
How does a President's leadership shape the government?
What were President Truman's strengths and weaknesses as a leader?
What are the challenges of a President assuming office from someone else?

3. Together as a class, brainstorm the kind of sources that might be important to examine to answer the question. This lesson includes several types of sources but that doesn't need to limit instruction to just those sources.
4. Use the background essay (and other sources if desired) to give students context for the inquiry. Consider the following strategies to make this effective:
 - a. The students or teacher might read the essay aloud, establishing the main point of the reading.
 - b. Revisit the question. How does this information change or expand our understanding of what the question is asking? How does it affect our initial understanding?
 - c. Student should re-read the essay individually, looking for information that might provide answers or clues to their original questions. Students might be asked to record their questions and answers in a class notebook.
 - d. Other activities might involve:
 - i. Opening up the document- research topics that are new or confusing.
 - ii. Using context to infer meaning of new words/phrases
 - iii. Compare the essay to other sources (textbook, articles) on the same topic.
 - e. Create a graphic organizer that might help organize evidence collected from the sources.

Step 2: Go to the sources

Note- each source should be looked at separately for information that will help reveal perspectives on the question. Consider the following steps with each source, understanding that students will need less assistance as they repeat the process.

1. All sources have a story. They were produced by a person at a time and place in history. The instructor should model how to analyze these circumstances in order to predict their influence on the content of the source. These include:
 - a. Examining the creator, predicting what this person might create based on who they are.
 - b. Considering the intended audience of the source, predicting how the content might be influenced its format and purpose.
 - c. Brainstorm the context of the source, paying particular attention to the events, attitudes, and forces at work at that time and place.
2. Use all of this information to predict the reliability and utility of the source. History students should recognize that all sources are worth investigating even if they represent a viewpoint not recognized by themselves or other sources.
3. Students should view sources like a detective looks at a crime scene. Each source should add information towards the questions established in step 1. To support student success consider the following steps:
 - a. Students look over the source to get a general idea of the content.
 - b. Determine whether or not predictions were accurate.
 - c. Ask questions, researching or working with other students to clarify confusion.
 - d. Examine the format of the source. If necessary, model the kinds of questions to ask or details to pay attention to that are specific to that format.
 - e. Categorize the source based on its perspective. Which possible answer does this source support?

Step 3: Reviewing the evidence

Note- By reviewing sources, students should have gathered many ideas that are relevant to the question. This step allows learners to look at this evidence and decide what it actually reveals. What is the best interpretation based on the evidence?

1. Go back to Step 1 and review the possible interpretations of the answer predicted by the class. How many of those panned out? What additional interpretations were exposed through the rest of the learning?
2. In groups, students should use evidence collected to identify multiple or competing interpretations to the question.
3. Direct students to create a graphic organizer the clearly reveals the multiple perspectives, components of main ideas of the evidence. All important evidence collected in the sources should be accounted for.

4. Facilitate a class discussion about the evidence. The purpose of these activities is to guide students to begin forming a claim in their minds; a position on the question that is supported by the preponderance of evidence.
5. There are other options to help students come to an answer on a topic:
 - a. Consider using the [“They say, I say” template](#) which supplies students with language to help narrow down their own thinking.
 - b. Position students on opposite sides or corners of a room based on different interpretations to the question. Each group picks a spokesperson who speaks for the group. In a structured conversation, the spokesperson represents the perspective of the group using evidence from the sources to defend the answer. The group can switch or rotate through spokespersons at any time. Also, students may change groups at any time.
 - c. Facilitate a more open socratic seminar using framing questions to allow students to share their thinking on the topic. Consider using [thinking stems](#) to provide students with language to help focus their comments and questions.
6. At the end of this step students should have the information they need to write a thesis or a claim. There are many resources available to help students construct this statement so use the strategy you like best or consider [this strategy](#). Even if the ultimate product of learning may not be a writing activity, the thesis should still be written to guide what students say or produce related to the question.

Step 4: Communicating an answer

Note- By communicating an answer to the framing question students are accomplishing several thinking tasks at once. The teacher does not have to assess everything a student does but should be aware of the importance to model and/or provide quality examples so that this format doesn't get in the way of students sharing what they have learned from the documents. If you have been working specific types of writing or speaking, consider working this step around those goals.

1. Provided in the materials for this lesson is a resource entitled *Answering the Question*. In determining the product of learning for this lesson consider the following criteria.
 - a. What is the skill level of my students?
 - b. What literacy goals can I support with this product?
 - c. Does the format of the product allow students to communicate a claim and use evidence from the sources to support it?
 - d. Can students have a say in what they produce to show their learning?
 - e. Do all students need to have the same product?
2. Construct a rubric for the product, careful to assess student proficiency towards your class learning goals. A sample rubric is provided following this step.
3. Provide students time to create their initial product in class allowing collaboration as needed. Consider having students get feedback from peers at multiple points in this process. When soliciting feedback from a peer a student should first identify what he/she would like help with, then be prepared to ask for help and input.

4. Before collecting student work, consider having students self-assess their work using the rubric. This is an important step that will help them take more ownership in their ultimate grade.

| | 0 | 1- Below Basic | 2- Basic | 3- Proficient | 4- Advanced |
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| P= Your main idea | Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task. | Can create a claim only with guidance from the instructor. | Creates an appropriate claim on a topic but is not able to introduce or give further explanation to the idea. | Clearly introduces and stakes out a position on the topic. | Clearly introduces the range of possible answers on a topic while staking out a clear position that can be supported with evidence. |
| E= Evidence you have to support your main idea. | Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task. | Includes generalizations or other ideas not aligned to the prompt | Generally alludes to evidence but does not cite it, or draws from only one account; | Refers to relevant and accurate evidence from more than one source and links it directly to specific accounts, mentioning the accounts by name. | Seamlessly integrates evidence from multiple sources by accurately summarizing details and using source information to establish its relevance. |
| E= Evaluation and Explanation of your evidence | Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task. | Distinguishes or sorts between evidence that is/ is not relevant to answering a question or explaining a point of view. | With minor errors explains how evidence is relevant to the question or point of view of the paragraph. | Accurately explains the significance of the evidence used to answer the question. | Accurately explains the significance of evidence used and evaluates the reliability or utility of the available sources. |
| L= Link to context/content | Is not able to demonstrate any part of this task. | Provides a conclusion that is confused or is not relevant to the evidence. | Provides a general conclusion sentence that summarizes the main point of with no specific link to the point. | Links the back to the original point by summarizing how the evidence supports the main idea. | Links back to the original point by both placing the evidence within historical context and by summarizing how the evidence supports the main idea. |