

MEDU 625: MAKING HISTORY LIVE: NEW APPROACHES TO HISTORY TEACHING

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"Has anyone seen my linoleum floors, petroleum jelly, and two world wars?" from the song "The Twentieth Century is almost Over" by Steve Goodman and John Prine

"History is instructive. And what it suggests to people is that even if they do little things, if they walk on the picket line, if they join a vigil, if they write a letter to their local newspaper. Anything they do, however small, becomes part of a much, much larger sort of flow of energy. And when enough people do enough things, however small they are, then change takes place." Howard Zinn

COURSE GOALS

Essential Questions

- To what extent can a knowledge of the discipline of history energize the teaching of history?
- What would the curriculum and day to day events in a history classroom look like that were driven by the goal of teaching young people to think historically and built on the premise that learning history involves examining the lived experience of people, all types of people?

Broad Goals

- To examine our practice as history teachers
- To explore what it means to think historically
- To examine the discipline of history as a basis for energizing the teaching of history
- To explore new approaches to history, including those grounded in the C3 Framework
- To explore the role of learning history in promoting citizenship
- To examine current practice and to develop an action plan for enhancing practice
- To develop a grabbag of strategies for enriching the teaching of history

TEXT

Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History: Teaching Argument Writing to Diverse Learners in the Common Core Classroom by Chauncey Monte-Sano, Susan De La Paz, Mark Felton

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Journal (35%)
2. Attendance and Participation (20%)
3. Mini-Action Research Study
 - Paper (25%)
 - Presentation (10%)
4. Final Action Plan Journal for 2016-17
 - Paper (10%)

ATTENDANCE

Due to the nature and structure of the course, attendance at each meeting is crucial. If you have to miss a class for some valid reason, please call me to explain. It will be your responsibility to talk to class members to find out in detail what you missed.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

I abide by the College's academic honesty policy. For written work to be acceptable, its final form must be the product of your own thought and effort. Anything else is of no value as a measure of your effort and understanding and will receive no recognition. If the work of others is quoted or paraphrased in your papers, cite that source with some standard bibliographic notation. If a completed assignment is found to be dishonest, a grade of zero will be entered for the assignment, and the Academic Dean will be notified of the action in accordance with College policy. Disagreement concerning the instructor's judgment can be appealed to the College's Academic Standards Committee.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact the Academic Support Center, located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

CELL PHONES AND OTHER DEVICES

In support of building a classroom community, cell phones and other electronic devices need to be put away during class unless used for class purposes. There are times we will use electronic devices in class including laptops, tablets, and occasionally phones. All should be used only for the defined class purpose **and put away when not in use for class.**

GOOGLEDOCS

Readings and other materials will be distributed through GoogleDocs folders. This will also be your main mechanism for turning in assignments.



TENTATIVE SCHEDULE



*Asterisk indicates that the article is available through the GoogleDocs folder marked MEDU 625 Readings.

Session 1 (1/19): Our Classrooms/Knowing in History, A Lesson on the Dustbowl

Session 2 (1/26): Literacy and the discipline of history/Who fired the first shot in Lexington?
Reshaping the History Classroom: Using the Discipline as a Guide

Reading Assignment:

Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History, Chapters 1 & 3

Journal 1: What ideas about history as a discipline are presented by the authors in these chapters? Describe them. Pay particular attention to words they use such as sourcing, contextualization, and corroboration and phrases such as evidence-based interpretation. How is the discipline of history connected to learning literacy? What strategies for teaching history do they propose and how are these strategies connected to their view of history and literacy?

Journal 1a: Describe how you teach history. Describe what makes your history teaching unique. If it helps, share materials you have created or materials you use that capture your unique style.

Session 3 (2/2): Historical Analysis-Historical Writing

Reading Assignment:

Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History, Chapters 2 & 4

Journal 2: What ideas about history as a discipline presented by the authors in these chapters stand out for you? Describe them. What strategies for teaching history do they propose and how are these strategies connected to their view of history and literacy?

Beyond the two-page discussion of the reading, remember to write at least one additional about the chapters in relation to your classroom. What ideas or strategies might you bring or have you brought into your classroom? Why? Or perhaps why not?

Session 4 (2/9): C3 Framework and Evidenced-Based Writing

Reading Assignment:

*1) "From Inquiry Arc to Instructional Practice: The Potential of the C3 Framework" by S. G. Grant, *Social Education*, Nov/Dec 2013, 77(6).

*2) "Is the Common Core Good for Social Studies? Yes, but..." by John Lee and Kathy Swan, Nov/Dec 2013, 77(6).

3) *Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History*, Chapters 5

Journal 3: Same as journal 2.

Session 5 (2/16): History and Creative Writing: Reading and Writing Diaries

Reading Assignment:

*"Diaries: Writing from Opposing Viewpoints" from *Eyewitness to the Past* by Joan Brodsky Schur

Journal 4: Same as journal 2, though now you are reacting to the chapter from Schur.

Session 6 (2/23) The Discipline of History, The Teaching of History

Reading Assignment:

*1) "'Any History is Someone's History': Listening to Multiple Voices from the Past" by Linda Levstik (*Social Education*, January 1997)

2) *Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History*, Chapters 6

Journal 5: Same as journal 2 though you are reacting to Levstik in addition to the text.

Session 7 (3/1) The Wild Vision of James Percoco/The Levstik-Barton Model, Communities of Inquiry

Reading Assignment:

*1) "Of things revolutionary: Lexington, Concord, and Beyond" from *Divided we Stand: Teaching about Conflict in U.S. History* by James A. Percoco

*2) "There aren't a lot of 'for sure' facts: Building communities of inquiry" from *Doing History* by Linda S. Levstik and Keith C. Barton

Journal 6: Same as journal 2, though now you are reacting to the chapter from Percoco and/or Levstik & Barton.

Due (Thursday, March 3): One-two paragraph description of proposed mini-action research study.

Session 8 (3/15): Concluding *Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History*

Reading Assignment:

1) *Reading, Thinking, and Writing about History*, Chapter 7

2) "Assyrian Siege of Jerusalem" Lesson Plan from "World History Lessons, Ancient" on the SHEG (Stanford History Education Group) Website

Journal 7: Same as journal 2

Due: Draft of what is historical thinking paper?

Session 9 (3/22): The "Teaching with Documents" and *Middle Level Learning* from NCSS

Reading Assignments:

*1) "The War of the Words: Letters to the FCC regarding Orson Welle's 1938 Broadcast" by Lee Ann Potter (*Social Education*, May/June 2002)

2) "Teaching with Documents Lesson Plan: 'A Date which will live in Infamy'" ("Teaching with documents website/<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/day-of-infamy/>)

3) Teaching With Documents: Lesson Plan: "Petition of Amelia Bloomer Regarding Suffrage in the West" ("Teaching with documents website/<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/bloomer/>)

4) Choose two other lessons from the Teaching with Documents website to read and share with class.

*5) "Promote Inquiry about Child Labor with Online Historical Primary Sources" by Teresa G. Wojcik and William Knous, *Middle Level Learning*, 50, May/June, 2014 pp 2-10

*6) "Primary Source of the Day A Warm-Up Activity" by Amy Trenkle, *Middle Level Learning*, 38, May/June 2010, pp. 2-5.

Journal 8: Same as journal 2, though now you are reacting to the "Teaching with Documents" and *Middle Level Learning* approaches. .

Session 10 (3/29): New York State Social Studies Toolkit and the C3 Framework

Reading Assignments:

*1) "Bringing the C3 Framework to Life" by S.G. Grant, Kathy Swan, and John Lee, *Social Education*, November/December 2015, 79 (6).

* 2) Middle School: "The New York State Toolkit and the Inquiry Design Model: Anatomy of an Inquiry," by S.G. Grant, Kathy Swan, and John Lee, *Social Education*, November/December 2015, 79 (6).

*3) Middle School: "Creating an Engaged Classroom: An Interview with April Francis," *Social Education*, November/December 2015, 79 (6).

*4) High School: "How Did the Industrial Revolution Move People" New York State Social Studies Toolkit Inquiry" *Social Education*, November/December 2015, 79 (6).

*5) Middle School "What makes a complex society complex?" and "Why do countries declare independence?" from the New York State Social Studies Toolkit: <http://www.c3teachers.org/>

*6) "The Inquiry Design Model" <http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiry-design-model/> Look under Inquiries

Journal 9: Same as journal 2, though now you are reacting to the New York state toolkit approach.

Due (Thursday, March 31) : Progress Report on Study



Session 11 (4/5): Using Historical Fiction and Film

Reading Assignments:

*1) "Historical Narrative and the Young Reader" by Linda S. Levstik *Theory into Practice*, Spring89, Vol. 28 Issue 2, p114, 6p (Ebscohost)

*2) "Connecting narrative and historical thinking: A research-based approach to teaching history" By Robert H. Mayer, *Social Education*; Feb98, Vol. 62 Issue 2, p97, 4p. (Handout)

*3) Chapter 1, My Brother Sam is Dead (Handout)

*4) What Can *Forrest Gump* Tell Us about Students' Historical Understanding? By Sam Wineburg, Susan Mosborg, and Dan Porat, *Social Education*, January/February, 2001, 65 (1).

Journal 10: What is Levstik's position on the use of narrative and historical fiction in the teaching of history? Describe your personal view and also any practice related to the use of historical thinking in class. Using *My Brother Sam* as one example, discuss how you might use historical fiction to teach historical thinking.

Session 12 (4/12) Writing History for Young People

Reading Assignments

*1) Chapter 2: "The Reverend Shuttlesworth Fights On" from *When the Children Marched: The Birmingham Civil Rights Movement* (Handout)

*2) Ricky Shuttlesworth, Pat Shuttlesworth, and Fred Shuttlesworth, Jr. *Oral Histories from Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories*

*3) "Nosotros La Gente, Diverse perspectives in American history" from *Doing History* by Linda S. Levstik and Keith C. Barton

Journal 11: TBA

Session 13 (4/19) Historical Thinking as an Unnatural Act

Reading Assignment:

*"Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts," by Samuel Wineburg

Journal 12: Write a summary and a reaction to Wineburg's article. Connect the article to your teaching.

DUE Friday, April 22: Mini-action Research Study Paper

Session 14 (4/26): Presentation of Studies/Where goes history and history teaching?

DUE: Presentation of your study



ASSIGNMENTS



Send me a GoogleDoc course folder with your name with last first and MEDU625 (Mayer, Bob MEDU625). There should be at least two folders in the course folder:

- Journal: Have a folder marked "Journal" with your last name on it (Journal, Mayer).
- Paper: Have a folder marked "Paper" with your last name on it (Paper, Mayer).

ASSIGNMENTS

1) Journal

Generally, your journal will be an opportunity to first describe key ideas and strategies in the reading and then to discuss your class in relation to those ideas. The discussion about your class should serve as critique of the reading as in, what ideas about history and literacy and suggested strategies make sense for your students? The discussion of the reading should be **at least two pages** and the discussion of your classroom should be **at least one page**. The discussion of the reading and your class might intermingle.

Note: Journals should be dated, numbered, and placed in your "Journals" GoogleDocs folder and be available for class.

2) Mini-Action Research Study and Presentation: Teaching Historical Thinking

Here are the big questions you will be answering for this project:

- What is historical thinking?
- What are some good ways to teach historical thinking?
- How do I know these are good ways to teach historical thinking?

After you examine your own teaching, you will discover you have a lot to tell your colleagues. Think in terms of how you will convey this knowledge to them and how you will support the validity of that knowledge. Your project will include the following specific elements:

A) Your Research Question: Start with a question about teaching history that will guide your study.

A) Answer these questions: What is historical thinking? What does historical thinking look like in my classroom? (2-3 pages)

The essential task here is to define historical thinking. As the two questions imply, talk about it from a more abstract level and then talk about historical thinking in the context of your classroom. Such discussions of the classroom can serve as examples for the more abstract telling. Explore the relationship between the abstract and the concrete. In discussing especially the abstract definition of historical thinking, make sure that you are referring to at least three of the readings from class. I do want to see your ability to explain and synthesize readings. (Draft due: Monday, March 15)

B) Three Lesson Plans for Mini-Study

Plan at least three lessons where you consciously teach historical thinking. This could be either a segment of the lesson or the entire lesson. (An alternative to this is to plan a mini-project where students are encouraged to think historically.) The lesson plans should include the following elements:

- A statement of goals and objectives
- At least a paragraph where you lay out the historical thinking within the lesson. Specifically, what is the nature of the historical thinking students will be doing? How will your proposed activities lead them there?
- Evaluation: How will you evaluate the extent to which students have thought historically.
- Activities: Describe enough so that I know what the planned activities are. If you are using a worksheet or any auxiliary material please include them. Also, xerox any readings you are using.

C) Conclusions: Lesson or Project Critique, The answer to your research question/What are some good approaches to teaching historical thinking? (4 Pages)

- Critique your definition of historical thinking. To what extent do the planned activities and student reactions reflect your definition? Given the activities and reactions, to what extent will you revise your definition of historical thinking if at all? Explain.
- Critique your teaching of historical thinking. Examine what you did in relation to student reactions. Given that relationship, what in your teaching of historical thinking will remain the same and what will change? Why? (The answer to why needs to be grounded in discussions of what actually happened in the class or what students did.)
- Conclude with a more general statement about how to teach historical thinking. In other words, what knowledge about teaching historical thinking have you gained that you can share with your colleagues?

D) Appendix

Your appendix will be a repository for all data. Have a labeled section for each type of data indicated by a letter (i.e. Appendix A: Field Notes). Then you should refer to specific appendices as support for claims in the paper as in ("See Appendix A"). Potential data sources include:

- Field notes: This would include rough notes where you jot down descriptions of events taking place in your class. For the most part, you will focus on student learning. The best thing to do is to write your field notes during class, immediately after class, or later in the day. The first two would be the best options.
- Annotations on the lesson plan. Either during or after the lesson, you would write critical comments based on the experience on your plan.
- Student Work: Here you run the gamut from worksheets to quizzes to projects to writing. Include any work that captures student thinking. This is a very valuable data source. Looking at student work as data means that you approach it differently than if you are grading it. You read the work

over and over again, searching for the patterns. Like grading the student, this method is a form of evaluation but here the focus is the teaching.

•Other Data

An exemplary study will include the following:

- Three lesson plans which include all required elements
- Clearly stated knowledge claims about how to teach historical thinking and literacy
- Support for knowledge claims growing directly from practice and is supported by reference to data
- A thoughtful discussion about how analysis of the lesson will affect future teaching
- A Well thought out and articulated definition of historical thinking
- A strong image of how to teach history and historical thinking
- Strong Organization (Moving between broad ideas, sub-ideas, and concrete support)
- Clarity (Well chosen words/carefully crafted sentences)
- All paper parts meet minimum page length requirements

Due: Paper: Friday, April 22 Presentation: Tuesday, April 26

Benchmark Due date:

Proposal (Thursday, March 3): Provide a one-two paragraph description of the study you propose to carry out. Include your research question. Let me know a little bit about the nature of the lessons you plan to teach and how they will attempt to teach students to think historically. Share some ways you plan to gather data. Also let me know approximately when you plan to carry this study out.

What is historical thinking draft? (Tuesday, March 15)

Progress Report (Thursday, March 31): Share a one-page progress report and any lesson plans or projects you have created. The progress report should describe any parts of the study you have carried out, some preliminary thoughts on what you are finding out, and the source of evidence (student remarks in class, exit slips, papers). If you have yet to actually carry out your study, share plans with anticipated dates.



3) Extended Mini-Action Research Study Presentation: Teaching Historical Thinking

Think of yourself presenting to colleagues at the Pennsylvania Council for the Social Studies gathering. You are translating your findings into knowledge for other social studies practitioners. Think in terms of a 15 minute presentation though if you need more time you could certainly have it. Just let me know.

Having presented at PCSS, I can tell you what the teachers are interested in:

- They want concrete ideas for what to do in the classroom. (SURPRISE!!!) So tell us about effective strategies you discovered for teaching young people how to think historically. Be sure to describe how you carried out your strategies and how you will adapt what you did for the future.
- Tell us how you know these are effective strategies. That is, present some data as support. This could be some description from your field log, or more likely, your student's work. Teachers who attend your session at PCSS will tend to believe you because you are a classroom teacher. More so, they will believe you when they see the results.

- Please provide a handout which includes an overview of your study. Define the type of historical thinking you were attempting to promote and a brief description of the strategies you employed. The handout does not need to be more than 1-2 paragraphs in length. It should leave the audience with one more concrete piece to help them remember and perhaps use what you proposed.
- Give us materials you created so we can borrow/steal/use your ideas. Beyond that, give us any other materials (lesson plan) which might help us see what you did. You can attach the materials to your handout.
- Engage us in some manner. Let us know why your presentation is important.

An exemplary presentation will include the following:

- Clarity
- Enthusiasm
- All of the above bulleted elements
- Well-explained ideas which can be used in the classroom
- Rich descriptions of classroom events

Presentation Due Tuesday, April 26

4) Final Journal/Final “exam”: Action Plan for 2016-17

By the end of the course, you will have encountered a lot of ideas about history and history teaching. The ideas will come from reading, class presentation, and your fellow teachers. Ideas in teaching are not enough. The real question is: what will you do with these ideas? What is your plan? More specifically, **how will your experiences in this course affect what you will do the rest of this year and next year?** Your plan should include the following:

- Your philosophy of teaching history. This does not need to be long, but it should be the explicit and implicit glue that ties your plan together. One strategy is to start your paper with a one paragraph overview of your philosophy.
- Your plan: You will show explicit ways your teaching will be different next year. This could be a general discussion about new approaches you will employ. You could also create some actual lessons, materials, units, and activities which reflect your new approach. In other words, this is an opportunity to take this assignment and create artifacts you will actually use in your classroom.
- Allow me to see the source for your plan. One source I would like to see you include is readings you have done for the course. Other sources could include your action research projects and discussions in class.

The journal should be 4 pages in length but, again, it could be longer if you need it to be.

Due: Tuesday, May 3 at 4:00

An exemplary paper will include the following:

- A discussion of both philosophy and concrete plans
- An explanation (explicit or strongly implicit) for how the philosophy and plan are interrelated
- A discussion of some readings from class
- Strong Organization (Moving between broad ideas, sub-ideas, and concrete support)
- Clarity (Well chosen words/carefully crafted sentences)
- Paper meets minimum page length requirements

RESOURCES

1. "Shays' Rebellion & the Making of a Nation" <http://shaysrebellion.stcc.edu/index.html>
2. "Historical Thinking Matters" <http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/>
3. "Stanford History Education Group" <https://sheg.stanford.edu/>
4. "Inquiry Design Model" (New York State Toolkit) <http://www.c3teachers.org/inquiry-design-model/>
5. "Teaching with Documents" <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/>