

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT SPRING 2011

Lesson Title: Analyzing Postcards from Historic Willimantic From Chelsea Ferland

Grades: 9-12

Length of class period: 45-50 minutes

Inquiry: (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

1. How are primary sources (postcards) analyzed?
2. What do primary sources tell us about the past, and how our surroundings have changed over time?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

1. Given a primary source (postcard) students will be able to find similarities and differences between their home-town (Willimantic, CT) over the years and complete a graphic organizer detailing their findings.
2. Students will be able to analyze a primary source (postcard) and determine the symbolism in the images through group discussion.
3. Students will be able to generate persuasive arguments on whether or not their hometown (Willimantic, CT) was a more ideal place to live either currently or during the time period of the primary sources based on their analysis of the postcards.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?):

1. Examples of post cards from hometown or place of your choice with descriptions and room for note taking on the side (in this case Willimantic, CT)—**please see attached**
2. Analysis Worksheet and Thesis Statement Template—**please see attached**

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?):

1. Open up class time posing the following question to students: "What makes Willimantic (or your hometown) a "good" place to live? What are some qualities about our hometown that attract people to move here or visit?" (Students can write down their responses and/or share them through a brief class discussion.) *5-10 mins.*
2. After this discussion have a brief review of the difference between a primary source and secondary source allow students to offer examples (I find this especially useful and necessary for my lower level students). *2-3 mins.*
3. Distribute the packets of primary sources (postcards) and the "analysis" packet. After giving students your direction you can decide whether to have them work independently, in pairs or in a small group based on your class size. *1 min.*
4. Allow students to analyze the primary sources and complete the steps in their "analysis" packets. For an additional activity students can turn their thesis statements into persuasive essays or present them to the class. This also could be used as a starting point for a class debate. *20-30 mins* (and possibly a homework assignment if using the additional activities).

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:

1.13 Understand the characteristics of and interactions among culture, social systems and institutions.

56. Recognize the importance of viewing a culture through a variety of perspectives.

59. Analyze the impact of family, religion, gender, ethnicity and socioeconomic status on the development of culture.

2.2 Interpret information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including electronic media (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, images, artifacts, recordings and text).

4. Analyze and explain multipurpose visual materials (e.g., graphic maps, pictographs).

5. Interpret social/political messages of cartoon.

2.3 Create various forms of written work to demonstrate an understanding of history and social studies issues.

8. Compose a thesis statement using primary and secondary sources.

5. Based on your decision above please complete the thesis statement template below.

_____ Willimantic would be a “better” place to call home because _____

(reason 1)

(reason 2)

_____, and _____

(reason 3)
