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NEH Summer Scholar 7/10/11-7/15/11  
Grades 6 - 8

Lesson Setting:

This lesson will be used in a Michigan middle school classroom as part of a unit on the importance of using artifacts to understand history. It could also be used in a unit on Colonial America.

Objectives:

- Students will comprehend the importance of examining primary sources to obtain authentic viewpoints and data.
- Students will analyze and interpret newspapers from today and the eighteenth century to identify differences in societies, lifestyles and perspectives between the two eras.

Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations:

6-H1.2.1/7-H1.2.1 Explain how historians use variety of sources to explore the past (artifacts, primary & secondary sources including narratives, technology, historical maps, DNA etc).

6-H1.2.2/7-H1.2.2 Read historical passage to identify basic factual knowledge (who, what why, where & outcome).

6-H1.2.3/7-H1.2.3 Identify point of view (perspective of the author) & context when reading and discussing primary & secondary sources.

Materials Needed:

- Copies of the front page and advertisements from The Monroe Evening News (daily published in Monroe, Michigan).
- Copies of The Pennsylvania Gazette (Colonial Era Newspaper).
Anticipatory Set:

Teacher will display a “Letter to the Editor” from the Monroe Evening News on the overhead projector and ask the following questions of the class: “Did anyone see this Letter to the Editor in last night’s paper? It was a rebuttal to a letter someone else wrote.” The teacher reads the letter aloud and then says: “They really didn’t like what the earlier person had to say. What do you think about this issue?” After some discussion about the topic, the teacher asks, “If someone from another time or even from outer space read this letter, what do you think it would tell them about our society?” After more discussion, the teacher says, “We can learn a lot about a society and an era by looking at its newspapers. Today, we will compare newspapers from the Colonial era to one from now to see what differences we can find.”

Instructional Input:

Students will be given copies of the Monroe Evening News and the Pennsylvania Gazette. The teacher will give an overview of each paper's history.

Group Practice:

Student will be put in groups and have 15 minutes to compare and contrast these newspapers and complete the Venn diagram worksheet.

Checking for Understanding:

After the 15 minutes, groups will share their results, creating a comprehensive classroom list on the board. Teacher will ask questions of groups as differences are noted:

- Why did your group think that they made the type so small and grouped the stories so close together?
- Were you able to understand the five W’s (who, what, why, when and where) in a Gazette Story?
• In what ways do the ads look different today? Why would it be important for ads to grab your attention more today?

• Do you think the newspaper was published everyday? Would that work today?

• What do you notice about the Letters to the Editor? Can you understand the writer’s viewpoint?

• What do you see in the Gazette that you would be surprised to see in a paper today?

• What do you think the people of the 1760’s would think of the Monroe Evening News?

• Do you think people today would buy a paper like the Gazette if it were published today? Why or why not?

Each group will also be asked:

• What does this difference tell you about the Colonial era?

Assessment:

Students will complete a reflection expressing their viewpoints as the reasons behind the differences, what it means about the society and the effectiveness about using authentic sources.
Use the Venn diagram below to list at least 8 differences and 8 similarities between the two newspapers. Be as specific as possible so you are able to give details when sharing your findings with the class.

The Pennsylvania Gazette  

The Monroe Evening News

After compiling these differences, select three and discuss amongst your group. What do these differences tell you about the Colonial era?

1.______________________________________________________

2.______________________________________________________

3.______________________________________________________
Reflection:

Today we compared the Pennsylvania Gazette with the Monroe Evening News and discussed reasons for their differences. Please think carefully and respond to the questions below:

Why do you believe that the newspapers were different?

What do you believe was the most surprising difference to you about the two newspapers and why was it surprising?

After reading the Gazette, discuss at least three ways in which you that the Colonial society was different than how we live today:

1.

2.

3.

In what ways was it helpful or not helpful to use the primary source, the Gazette, today?
In what ways was it difficult or not helpful to use a primary source, the Gazette, today?
June 20, 1755.

The Pennsylvania Gazette.

Containing the Freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

From the Gentleman's Magazine for March, 1755.

New Account of Martirolo, near Aegina, Salamina and Bao, the Principal of Mitylene against Kelly and Ellis, near Martiopolis.

These Worstus were ascertained in the formation of the General Declaration of the American Colonies, it is declared.

One of these was to extend its dominion to the Southern Part of the Province, he was in 1244 declaring number of them to be a confederacy, a Third was to unite six other Colonies of the South; a Fourth was to long establish Canada; and the Fifth was to extend the Province. The last idea he has adopted is to extend the Province. It is proposed by one of his Instructions that there is no doubt but what it might be a confederacy, a Third was to unite six other Colonies of the South; a Fourth was to long establish Canada; and the Fifth was to extend the Province. The last idea he has adopted is to extend the Province.

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July 10, 1776.

The Pennsylvania Gazette.

Containing the Freshest Advices, Foreign and Domestic.

A DECLARATION by the REPRESENTATIVES OF the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress assembled,

WEN, in the County of New York, the 4th of July, 1776, the Representative Congress assembled, for the common good of the United States, and in the name of the same, constituted and declared, that these United States are independent States, and ...