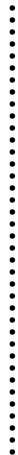


Mapping Unknowns—Bard College

Maps & Mind-Maps: Writing to Learn Primary Documents

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Grade: Middle School through College (with adaptations)

Subject: Education, English, History, Social Studies

Time Required: two-to-four class periods.

Overview

These two workshops are part of a five-day sequence at Bard College. They are an interaction of an introductory workshop called “Writing to Learn.” These workshops introduce teachers at all levels of instruction to the Institute’s writing-based practices. The idea of the five-day series is to explore a complex idea from different angles, using a variety of texts and text-types. These particular workshops were centered around the idea of “mapping” exploring both literal maps, and individual and cultural mind-maps. Library of Congress resources work beautifully in this context, providing varied and provocative types of text to use inside and outside of the workshops.

LOC Sites Consulted



The Edward S. Curtis Collection:

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/about-this-collection/>

Including:

Ceremonies: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/?q=ceremonies>

Hopi: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/?q=hopi>

Fishing: <https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/?q=fishing>

Staged Ritual attended by Teddy Roosevelt:

<https://www.loc.gov/item/mp76000109/>

17th c. maps, including:

Map of the North River:

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3804n.ct000050/?r=-0.008,0.033,1.572,0.665,0>

The Catawba Deerskin map:

[https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3860.ct000734/?r=-0.207,0.011,1.431,0.637,0\(5\)](https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3860.ct000734/?r=-0.207,0.011,1.431,0.637,0(5))

Joy Harjo interview and musical group:

<https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-8767/>

<https://www.loc.gov/item/webcast-8913/>

Objectives:

Students will:

- Learn a simple means of searching for photos and videos in the LOC digital archives
- Examine and analyze photographs and videos of Native Americans using a variety of institute practices
- Examine and analyze 17th century maps, looking for clues as to their uses and their worldview
- Put these images in conversation with each other and with written texts which help interrogate assumptions and biases
- Experience how working with individual texts (as opposed to beginning with a general survey) can introduce a topic and encourage engagement and autonomy in student research.
- Experience the value of examining primary sources
- Notice how close-reading primary sources is a pedagogical practice that aligns individual disciplines and can lead to cross-disciplinary work, objectives and understandings

Threaded through all of these objectives is a specific pedagogical objective:

- Encounter and reflect non a set of interdisciplinary writing-to-learn practices.
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Procedure:

Curtis Workshop:

Say that we will be looking at 2 images from a vast collection of the photographs of Edward S. Curtis in the LOC and working to observe them closely, and to interrogate their purpose: Chief Horsecapture and Geronimo

Part 1

Introduce and model a set of prompts that begins with the protocol of “noticing and wondering: and help them continue to think about how these photographs were made, their purpose, the point of view of the photographer:

1. Look at the/Notice the...
2. Where is the...
3. Imagine that you are Curtis, taking this photograph. What kind of preparatory work did you do to set up the shot? What are you thinking about as you go about shooting the photograph itself? If you like, you can write this in the first person, as an interior monologue.
4. What is at the heart of this photo? What does the photographer believe here?
5. Look at this photograph of Geronimo. What do you notice? Does Curtis seem to have a similar or different relationship to his subject here?

Part 2

Students read aloud a part of Curtis’s introduction to *The North American Indian* where these photographs originally appeared.

Then, students pick significant sentences from the introduction and read them aloud to each other.

We pause for written reflection on the concerns of the group, and read these aloud.

Part 3

Each student gets a piece of paper with a passage from late 20th century texts printed on each side: a critical analysis of Curtis’s work and a tribute to Curtis written by Chief Horsecapture’s grandson. Ample margins have been left on the paper.

Students annotate first one passage and then the other, concentrating on a word, phrase or concept that seems interesting or puzzling to them. Then they pass the paper to the right.

Their colleague reads these annotations and annotates in turn, commenting on what the writer noticed and said. They pass the paper to the right once again.

Once this process has happened a few times, the papers are returned to their original annotators and everyone reads their colleagues' commentary.

The group pauses again to do some meta-cognitive reflection on how the thoughts and concerns of the group are deepening.

Map Workshop:

Part 1

The group reads an excerpt of William Cronon's *Changes in the Land: Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983.)

Students write to the following prompts:

FFW1: What is Thoreau's "entire poem"? Do you ever search for it? / What's Cronon's problem with this type of thinking? (6)

FFW2: Towards the end of the excerpt, Cronon gives us many examples of Native American place names. Choose one that intrigues you. What does it make you see? Wonder? What new questions does it raise? (5)

FFW3: Take a look at this map, sometimes known as the 'Catawba Deerskin Map', describing the situation of the several nations of the Indians to the north-west of South Carolina. What ideas about Native American social organization and/or land use does it suggest to you? / The city of Charlestown (sic) is all squares and a ship, whereas the Indian towns are round and connected by paths. What questions does this provoke?

[https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3860.ct000734/?r=-0.207,0.011,1.431,0.637,0\(5\)](https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3860.ct000734/?r=-0.207,0.011,1.431,0.637,0(5))

Students divide into groups of 3 and read to each other what they have written to each prompt

We pause for meta-cognitive thinking about where in this sequence learning happened.

Part 2

Students examine a 17th c. Map of the NYC area using a practice called Overview and Inventory: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3804n.ct000050/?r=-0.008,0.033,1.572,0.665,0>

They begin by writing a one-sentence overview of the map. What does it seem to be a map of?

Then working together, aloud, students brainstorm the map, making an inventory of first impressions. They note what they see, what they don't see, what the map makes them think of, any curious visual cues, like vignettes or depth markings, as well as questions, hypotheses and implicit comparisons that might come to mind.

Then each participant chooses one of the items on this inventory and extends the thinking. If they have chosen to write about a detail, they make an inference. If they have chosen an idea or question, they return to the map and locate details that have raised the question, or helped them to this conclusion.

Students read these more in-depth statements aloud to the group.

To pull their thinking together, they return to the excerpt of Cronin's *Changes in the Land*, writing to this prompt: What might Cronon have to say about this map?