

## ENGAGING HISTORY STUDENTS THROUGH THE USE OF THE SOURCES FRAMEWORK

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As history students are afforded various ways to learn about and engage with the past, it is essential that educators critically think about how they frame, scaffold, and facilitate their students' educational opportunities. When learning about historical content, students learning experiences can be greatly enriched through the use of primary sources. Thus, it is important to properly guide students and structure the historical inquiry process and carefully determine how primary sources will be utilized, especially since many may not have learned how

to effectively or correctly engage with and analyze primary sources. Through the use of the SOURCES Framework for teaching with primary sources, students are provided a structure and framework to direct their historical investigations and allow them to get more out of their learning process. In the following article, the SOURCES Framework is outlined for use in the history classroom.

*“These questions should not be dichotomous in nature, should not allow for an easy answer, should encourage students to think critically...”*

### SOURCES FRAMEWORK STAGES

- ◆ Scrutinize the fundamental source(s)
- ◆ Organize thoughts
- ◆ Understand the context
- ◆ Read between the lines
- ◆ Corroborate and refute
- ◆ Establish a plausible narrative
- ◆ Summarize final thoughts

In the first stage of the SOURCES Framework, Scrutinize the fundamental source, students are asked to analyze a primary source related to the selected topic of study. Two sources may be used if they are both deemed crucial, but for this initial stage, the use of one source is optimal. The fundamental source is the one that would be considered to be vital to any proper study of the topic being considered. To help scaffold the process of examining this fundamental source, the teacher should supply a fundamental question that will guide the entire historical inquiry process associated with the topic of study. These questions should be not be dichotomous in nature, should not allow for an easy answer, should encourage students to think critically, and should necessitate careful examination of the sources provided throughout the entire process to be able to properly attend to the question posed. Examples of fundamental questions for this sort of inquiry could be “What historical and social impacts can be associated with the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich?”, “To what extent did the end of slavery improve the lives of African Americans in the South?”, or “What are some of the events that led to the writing of the United States Constitution, and how did those events impact the content of this document?”



## ENGAGING HISTORY STUDENTS THROUGH THE USE OF THE SOURCES FRAMEWORK CONT.

### References

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In the last stage, **Summarize** final thoughts, students are asked to think about the process that was undertaken, what ways they engaged in thinking and procedures that mimics what an historian does, what they have learned about the topic of study and the fundamental question, how they came to know what they know, and what questions still exist.

Engaging with the past, especially when utilizing primary sources, can be valuable and educational for students of various abilities and ages. It is essential that the process is properly scaffolded in order to help ensure success and, hopefully, engender interest and passion for learning history. The SOURCES Framework is one tool that can help history teachers in this endeavor.

# SAVE THE DATE!

## 2018 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

JULY 26 & 27  
TAMPA, FLORIDA

Keynote Speakers



Breakout Sessions



Poster Sessions

Florida Council for History Education (FLCHE) is pleased to present our 2nd annual conference in Tampa, Florida. Please join us as we share our organization's mission to promote history in education as a way to appreciate the progress and awareness of past and present events. Conference presentations will reflect the theme, *Triumph and Tragedy*, and will relate to Florida's role in history. All sessions will focus on building content knowledge, promoting history education and disciplinary literacy, and the use of primary sources.

FLCHE aligned our conference theme with the 2019 National History Day contest theme to support teaching and learning needs for next year's contest!

Florida Council for History Education

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