

EDUCATOR GUIDE



put YOUR history on the map



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Educator's Guide

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All In Vermont: an introduction

"If you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are."

Wendell Berry

As educators, we share a common goal: to nurture historically literate students - young people who not only grasp the broad arcs of history but also understand how those events continue to shape the world around them. Often, though, the scope and pacing of curriculum require us to focus on sweeping narratives. Too often, in the push to cover "what matters," local history is quietly left behind. Are we truly equipping our students to see themselves as part of the historical narrative if we overlook the stories rooted in their own neighborhoods and communities? Through this lens, including local history in the curriculum is both a pedagogical opportunity and a civic responsibility.

The past belongs to us all. Most history is a common language that we speak because it is a collection of experiences that bind us all together to time and space. Local history is perhaps the most accessible because it is the closest to home. It is the framework in which to practice cultural history in an attempt to understand an area's distinctive flavor. Whether overt or hidden, choosing to study local history drives at understanding why a particular area has come to be what it is today. What better way for students to gather a sense of place than through the study of local history? Who better to help guide students to these items than local historians at local historical societies?

For the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, the *All In Vermont* project is a place-based learning opportunity for Vermont students from the Vermont Historical Society tied to the C3 Framework of Social Studies Standards. Educators and students will study local history in partnership with local historical societies. Through inquiry-based research, students will uncover the enduring history that makes their home unique and share it on an ArcGIS interactive map housed on both the Vermont Historical Society and the Vermont History Explorer websites. The goal is to have as many towns and cities as possible represented by the end of the commemoration year 2026.

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States National Park Service (NPS) under assistance agreement (P24AC02271) to NEIWPCC in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program.



Relevance to the Semiquincentennial

Studying local or nearby history takes on special significance during the semiquincentennial year - a moment marking 250 years since the founding of the United States of America. While national narratives often dominate commemorations, it is in the histories of towns, neighborhoods, and communities that the broader story becomes personal, tangible, and real. These local histories offer a lens through which we can see how larger events shaped and are shaped by ordinary people in specific places.

Engaging with nearby history allows us to reconnect with the lived experiences of those who came before us, grounding abstract ideas like freedom, struggle, and change in familiar landscapes. During a year that invites collective remembrance, turning our attention to local history ensures a richer, more inclusive understanding of the past - one that acknowledges complexity, honors community memory, and fosters a deeper sense of place and belonging.

In a time when the past can feel distant or even irrelevant, exploring local history offers a way to make meaning of this milestone year. It reminds us that history isn't just something that happened elsewhere; it happened here, in our backyards, and it continues to shape the world we inhabit today.

250th Themes

The American Revolutionary era changed North America and the world in profound ways. This is a time for Americans to learn about our past, celebrate our successes in freedom and bravery, and think about the times we've faced (and continue to face) unfairness, racism, and violence. This once-in-a-lifetime event is a chance to examine our whole history and work towards strengthening our communities, and in turn, working towards improving our world.

It's also an opportunity to improve how we study history to make sure that future generations gain a more complete understanding of history. The Vermont Historical Society has adopted the American Association for State and Local History's (AASLH) themes to help students and teachers think more deeply about the last 250 years of history (<https://aaslh.org/programs/250th/>). These themes act as a jumping off point for students as they begin to contemplate what history means to them in their own lives, but also it can spawn questions about the ways in which their towns evolved over time.

Relevance to the Semiquincentennial

AASLH 250th Themes

Unfinished Revolutions

The struggle for freedom, fairness, and justice has a long and complicated history in the United States. People have worked hard in many ways - through politics, organizing, protests, and even wars - to help America live up to its ideals. U.S. history isn't a smooth path of progress. It's a complicated mix of successes and failures. The fight for freedom started before 1776 and continues today.

Power of Place

Looking at history through the lens of "place" helps us understand the past better. It makes us think about the land and areas we now call the United States in a deeper way. Looking at how Indigenous peoples have connected with their land, how communities use land and water, and how expansion and colonization affected different groups of people. This theme helps us examine our natural world and built environments.

We the People

Who is included in the phrase: "We the people?" Who belongs to the nation, and what citizenship means, has changed since the founding of the United States? Many people have been left out of full participation in the country's political, economic, and cultural life throughout history. Over time, different groups have worked hard to be included and to make the nation fairer for everyone.

American Experiment

The leaders who started our country didn't have all the answers. Even though they created new ideas like representative democracy and rights for everyone, they understood that the birth of a nation was a big experiment. They hoped future generations would make improvements to what they started. The 250th anniversary is a great time to think about how our government and democracy began, and how it has changed over time.

Doing History

How do we get people to become interested in history? We invite them to engage! Let's talk about what history is, how we learn about it, and why it's important. By showing how we study the past, we can help people understand how new questions and ideas change what we know about history. Participating in conversations with others about history has the potential to strengthen our communities and work towards creating a more perfect union.

Relevance to the Semiquincentennial

250th Themes

Vermont has any number of historical moments, stories, people, and topics that fit the 250th themes. Below is just a small sample to get you started.

Unfinished Revolutions
◦ Vermont's 1777 Constitution ◦ Women's Suffrage in Vermont ◦ Civil Rights Activism in the 1960s and 70s ◦ Vietnam War Protest in Vermont
Power of Place
◦ The Abenaki Connection to the land ◦ The Vermont Marble Industry ◦ Champlain Canal and Lake Champlain ◦ Natural Disasters and Response: Flood of 1927, Year without a Summer, etc. ◦ Architectural Design/Feature Unique to Area
We the People
◦ Individuals Who Leave a Mark on a Community: Alexander Twilight, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Governor Deane Davis, etc. ◦ Refugee Resettlement in Vermont ◦ The Granite Industry in Barre and Immigrant Workers
American Experiment
◦ Vermont as an Independent Republic (1777-1791) ◦ Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys ◦ The Council of Censors ◦ Town Meeting Tradition: what has been important to specific towns/areas?

Local History

Local history, much like the broader discipline it belongs to, invites a nuanced exploration of human experience. Its study tends to be more intimate because it focuses on the particular: the streets we walk, the buildings that have stood through generations, the quiet revolutions within families, neighborhoods, and towns. Those who delve into local history are drawn to the texture of everyday life, uncovering how national movements echo in parish records or how global conflicts reshaped a single village. In tracing these smaller arcs, local historians reveal the profound with the familiar, showing how the lives of ordinary people are woven into the larger story of humanity.

Including local history in the classroom allows students to see the past not as a distant abstraction, but as something lived and felt in the very places they know. It roots historical inquiry in the familiar, fostering a deeper sense of connection, relevance, and agency. It invites students to see themselves as part of history's ongoing narrative rather than merely observers of it.

Why Local or Nearby History for Soft Skills?

Stronger Sense of Identity and Belonging

Understanding the history of where one lives helps students feel more connected to their community. It's one thing to learn about ancient Rome or the American Revolution, but when students recognize street names, buildings, or neighborhoods, they light up. When they learn about the people, events, and places that shaped their own town or region suddenly, history isn't abstract, it's about them. When kids realize their town was part of something bigger like the Civil Rights Movement, the Dust Bowl, and immigration waves, they see themselves in history. They connect with place - with "home."



Representation and Inclusion

Mainstream history often leaves out marginalized voices. Local history can highlight stories of Indigenous communities, immigrants, labor movements, or local heroes who don't typically show up in textbooks.

Local History

Why Local or Nearby History for Hard Skills?



Critical Thinking and Research Skills

Teaching local history often means digging into lesser-known stories. Studying local history often involves investigating primary sources (old newspapers, maps, interviews, public records) which builds real-world research skills and teaches students how to interpret different perspectives. Teachers can guide students through real research like interviewing elders, analyzing old photos, interpreting conflicting accounts. That's where deep learning happens.



Connection to Larger Historical Narratives

Local stories often reflect bigger national or global themes - wars, migrations, economic booms and busts. It's a great way to show students that history isn't just something that happens "out there." History happens everywhere. In actuality, history is being made all the time.



Engaged Citizenship

Local history brings politics and civic engagement closer to home. Students who know their community's past are often more likely to care about its future - voting, volunteering, or even running for local office someday.

Historical Research

Why Historical Research Matters in K-12 Classrooms

Those who study and teach history are often drawn to finding connections across time and human experience. Though historians may focus on a single facet of history, they often seek to understand the interrelatedness of people, events, and ideas.

Students, however, don't always share this instinct. In a fast-paced, short-form, consumer-driven culture of immediacy, the past can feel remote or irrelevant. The rupture from historical continuity doesn't register as a loss, mostly because it isn't felt personally. (Kammen 1996, 101).

From asking questions in kindergarten to evaluating historical claims in high school, students move from wonder to wisdom, developing both knowledge and the tools to think critically about the past. Introducing historical research across all grade levels builds critical thinking and civic awareness. It fosters inquiry, encouraging them to move beyond memorization to ask questions, investigate sources, and form evidence-based interpretations. These skills apply across subjects and into life beyond school. Even young learners can begin with age-appropriate projects that spark curiosity and emphasize storytelling while fostering a sense of competency in their abilities as a researcher. Mostly importantly, research shows students that history is dynamic, relevant, and belongs to them too. While researching in their communities, they learn who tells the story, why it matters, and how it connects to their lives.

For teachers, research projects not only support inquiry-based learning which students find intrinsically motivating, but it also opens doors to interdisciplinary connections with literacy, civics, science, and the arts. When students explore meaningful topics to them, they gain academic confidence and a stronger sense of agency. Historical research doesn't just become an "add-on," but a powerful tool for nurturing thoughtful capable learners at every stage of K-12 education.

Historians Erin Aoyama and Allison Mitchell offer useful strategies for finding and working with primary sources, along with activities that support place-based learning. In their video, part of the *Investigating Local History Teacher's Guide* on EDSITEment, they demonstrate how exploring local history can help students better understand their communities and the issue they face today. It may be a great source to orient you to the types of opportunities that the *All In Vermont* project holds.

[Investigating Local History: Place, Memory, and Perspectives](#)



Historical Research

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework

In contrast to the shifting and often divided nature of public opinion, research on history education consistently affirms that for students to truly grasp the richness of the subject, instruction must find a thoughtful balance between engaging in historical thinking and “doing” history. It’s not enough to simply memorize dates or events. Instead, meaningful learning occurs when students are invited to question, analyze, and interpret the past as historians do. (Havekes et al. 2012, 73-74)

Students’ understanding of how knowledge about the past is formed deeply influences the way they engage with historical learning. Their assumptions, or epistemic beliefs, about what it means to know something in history play a crucial role in shaping the connection between acquiring historical knowledge and actively interpreting it. (Maggioni, VanSledright, and Alexander 2009, 188)

The College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards emphasizes inquiry-based learning, disciplinary thinking, and civic engagement. Launched in 2013, several states use it as a guiding document, and/or lean on parts of it to inform state standards. Vermont is the only state, however, that has embraced the C3 Framework as its only social studies standards. That the C3 Framework has not only endured over the past decade but continues to gain momentum speaks to its continued relevance. (Grant, Lee, and Swan 2023, 366)

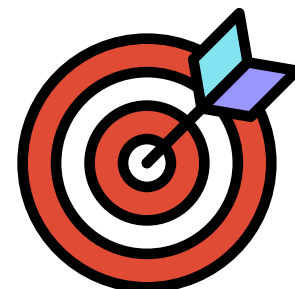
Historical Research Skills Connection to C3 Framework

Clearly, historical research evolves significantly from kindergarten through 12th grade, reflecting students’ growing cognitive abilities, literacy skills, and emotional maturity. Research will look very different in terms of content and complexity, reflecting developmentally appropriate expectations throughout various grade bands.

Shared Learning Outcomes or Targets

All students will:

- Conduct meaningful historical research using authentic, local sources
- Apply critical thinking to understand change, continuity, and perspective
- Develop and communicate historical arguments supported by evidence
- Reflect on how local stories contribute to broader historical narratives and civic identity



Historical Research

Historical Research Skills Connection to C3 Framework

Kindergarten through Grade 2: Building Curiosity Through Story & Observation

In the earliest grades, historical research is less about finding and analyzing sources, and more about experiencing the past in accessible ways. Young learners explore history through storytelling, images, objects, and guided conversations.

Grade 3 through Grade 5: Asking Questions & Exploring Evidence

At this level, students begin to ask more structured historical questions and investigate answers using accessible primary and secondary sources, such as photographs, newspaper clippings, oral histories, and local landmarks. They practice sorting information, identifying point-of-view, and recognizing cause-and-effect relationships. Research becomes an inquiry process where students start to organize evidence and share findings through writing, speaking, or presentations.

Grade 6 through Grade 8: Deepening Analysis & Building Context

Middle school students learn to frame research around compelling questions, gather and evaluate a range of sources, and consider historical context, bias, and reliability. They engage in comparative analysis, track change and continuity over time, and develop arguments supported by multiple types of evidence. Students also begin to explore how local histories intersect with national or global events, using digital tools and more sophisticated archival materials to present findings.

Grade 9 through Grade 12: Conducting Independent Research & Civic Reflection

High school students take greater ownership of the research process - posing original questions, identifying and accessing diverse sources, and applying disciplinary thinking to develop complex historical interpretations. They critically analyze competing narratives, use archival research tools and databases, and produce evidence-based arguments in a variety of formats. Through the study of local history, students explore how personal, and community stories connect to broader civic and historical themes, preparing them for engaged citizenship and lifelong inquiry.

Primary Grades (K-2)

Research Skills

How It Presents in the Classroom

- Ask simple questions about the past
- Identify basic differences between past and present
- Observe and describe objects or images
- Begin to distinguish between real and fictional historical stories

- Listening to read-aloud of historical fiction, historical documents, or biographies
- Observing photographs, maps, or simple objects and describe what they see
- Asking questions like “What was it like?” or “How was life different back then?”
- Engaging in hands-on learning through craft
- Building “past and present” comparisons

C3 Framework Dimensions

- **D1.1.K-2:** Ask and answer questions
- **D2.His.1.K-2:** Sequence Events
- **D2.His.2.K-2:** Compare past and present
- **D4.2.K-2:** Present Findings through speaking, drawing, or storytelling

Local History Activity Examples

- Create a *Community Helpers Timeline* showing how different community helpers (like firefighters, teachers, doctors, or mail carriers) have supported the community over time.
- Make a class mural called *Our Town: Then and Now* showing changes
- Exhibit photographs of older buildings in town. Then, draw and label pictures of their favorite local places (library, park, store).
- Match “Then and Now” photographs by sharing old photographs of their town and comparing them to how things look today. Students can create a Venn Diagram to compare similarities and differences.
- Design a *Local Landmarks Picture Book*. Students illustrate a book featuring important places around town and write one sentence per page explaining the importance of each place or describe an architectural feature.

All In Vermont Project Ideas

The Stories Objects Tell: Using simple artifacts from a museum or home, students learn that every object holds clues about who used it and how it was made.

- What can this object tell us about the person who used it?

People Who Helped Our Community: Students learn about past and present community helpers such as teachers, farmers, or firefighters.

- How have the ways people help our community change over time?

Vermont Seasons and Traditions: Students learn how seasonal activities like sugaring, farming, or festivals have deep roots in local history.

- What traditions do we still celebrate that people long ago enjoyed too?

Upper Elementary (3-5)

Research Skills

- Use simplified primary and secondary sources
- Begin comparing perspectives
- Ask “why” and “how” questions

How It Presents in the Classroom

- Reading excerpts from letters, diaries, or other historical documents (script may need transcription)
- Comparing different accounts of the same event (with teacher support)
- Using simple research tools like library books, websites, or museum resources
- Asking questions like “Why did this happen?” or “What did people believe?”

C3 Framework Dimensions

- **D1.2.3-5:** Generate supporting questions
- **D2.His.9.3-5:** Summarize how sources can be used
- **D3.1.3-5:** Gather relevant information
- **D4.1.3-5:** Construct basic arguments

Local History Activity Examples

- Read excerpts from historical letters or diaries. Then, create a timeline of important events from life during a specific moment in history. Alternatively, if there is a collection of diaries or ledgers, is it possible to create a timeline of significant changes seen in the community?
- Students create maps of their neighborhood showing historical or meaningful places.
- Examine postcards from the past. Write and illustrate a postcard “sent” from a historical moment in their area - like the day the first train arrived, or during a big festival or fair from 50 years ago, etc.
- Analyze historical photographs or simple newspaper clippings

All In Vermont Project Ideas

- Jobs and Work in Our Town:** Students investigate local industries like logging, quarrying, dairy farming, or mills.
- What kinds of work built our community?
- Town Names and Landmarks:** Students research the origins of place names, covered bridges, or town greens.
- What stories do these landmarks tell about who lived here and what they valued?
- A Town Celebration:** By studying old fair posters, parade photos, or oral histories, students learn about local traditions.
- What do these events tell us about community values?
- Music and Storytelling in Vermont:** Students examine song lyrics, instruments, or folktales collected locally.
- How do stories and songs preserve history?

Middle School (6-8)

Research Skills

How It Presents in the Classroom

- Distinguishing between primary and secondary sources
- Considering bias and purpose in historical documents
- Synthesizing information from multiple sources into coherent arguments

- Developing focused historical questions
- Analyzing primary and secondary sources with attention given to perspective
- Using digital archives and curated databases
- Creating claims supported by evidence

C3 Framework Dimensions

- **D1.1.6-8:** Develop compelling questions
- **D2.His.13.6-8:** Evaluate reliability
- **D3.2.6-8:** Evaluate reliability
- **D4.1.6-8:** Use evidence to support claims

Local History Activity Examples

- Select someone from the area who made an impact (i.e. historical figure, civil rights activist, artist, etc.) After doing research about them, create a mini-documentary about the impact they had on the community.
- Recreate a newspaper front page from a local event (i.e. the founding of a factory, a major storm, a protest, etc.). Include “articles,” photos, headlines, and editorials.
- Select a historical building, or a neighborhood, in your area and explore its past. What was it originally? How has it changed? Write a fictional short story from the building’s point-of-view or create a zine that focuses on a specific time period.

All In Vermont Project Ideas

The Rise and Fall of Vermont’s Railroads: Students explore how rail lines connected small towns to national markets (maps, schedules, photographs) to analyze economic shifts and changing patterns of settlement.

- How did railroads change where people lived and worked?

The Civilian Conservation Corps and the Great Depression: Students uncover how New Deal programs reshaped Vermont’s landscapes and provided jobs during economic hardship (photographs, camp reports, oral histories).

- How did New Deal programs reshape Vermont’s landscape and economy during the Great Depression?

Immigration and Identity in Vermont’s Towns: Students investigate how immigrant groups influenced Vermont’s culture and economy and how communities adapted to new populations (church records, census data, maps, oral histories).

- How did new immigrant groups shape Vermont culture and industry? How were they received by established residents?

High School (9-12)

Research Skills

How It Presents in the Classroom

- Distinguishing between primary and secondary sources
- Considering bias and purpose in historical documents
- Synthesizing information from multiple sources into coherent arguments

- Developing these statements and sustained historical arguments
- Understanding historiography and sustained historical arguments
- Communicating findings clearly through essays, presentations, or multimedia

C3 Framework Dimensions

- **D1.1.9-12:** Develop questions about enduring issues
- **D2.His.16.9-12:** Use multiple sources in arguments
- **D3.3.9-12:** Integrate evidence
- **D4.2.9-12:** Present findings through writing, speaking, or digital media

Local History Activity Examples

- Choose a current issue (housing, transportation, immigration, environmental concerns) and research its historical roots in the community. Then, write a paper or create a presentation that traces the history and show how the past affects the present.
- Create a Walking Tour Guide. Design a walking tour of a neighborhood, complete with historical stops, background information, and QR codes or audio narration. Partner with your area's tourism board, or welcome center.
- Observe local monuments, museums, historic sites, and town signs. Investigate whose stories are missing and write proposals for new exhibits, plaques, or public art to include more voices (Indigenous Communities, immigrants, BIPOC, LGBTQ+).

All In Vermont Project Ideas

Vermont in Wartime: Students explore home-front life, antiwar movements, and soldiers; experiences through letters, newspapers, and archives

- How did Vermonters experience and interpret global conflicts from their local communities?

The Economics of Change - Tourism, Agriculture, & the Modern Vermont Brand: Examining business records, advertisements, and public policy, students trace how Vermont's image as being "green" has evolved.

- How has Vermont's self-image been constructed and what realities lie beneath that brand in your local community?

Public Memory and Monuments: Students investigate local memorials, statues, or historical markers to understand how public memory is shaped and contested.

- How do public monuments reflect changing ideas about who and what deserves remembrance?

Student Research

Developing Student Research Topics

At the heart of the *All in Vermont* project is the exploration of Vermont's rich history. Think of this as a broad theme or a lens that helps students dive into historical research in a way that is meaningful and personally engaging. The goal is for students to choose a topic that truly interests them. When you care about what you're studying, you're more likely to stay curious, ask great questions, and stay motivated over time. In research on Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan report that "the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy...appear to be essential for facilitating optimal functioning..." (Ryan, Kuhl & Deci, 1997 in Ryan & Deci, 2000) According to self-determination theory, autonomy is one of the basic psychological needs for humans to feel motivated. (Ryan & Deci, 2000)

It's also important to find a topic that's "just right" - not too broad and not too narrow. Historians sometimes call this the "Goldilocks Principle." For example, trying to cover the entire American Revolution is likely too big; historians spend their whole careers studying just parts of it. On the other hand, focusing on a single decision made by Ethan Allen might be too specific and not offer enough material for deep research. Help students aim for a topic that gives them room to explore, question, and discover connections, but is still manageable. Of course, set expectations for your students that are grade appropriate and align with their educational goals.

Wide Research

In historical research, depth comes from breadth. Exploring a wide range of sources allows us to see the past from multiple angles and to better understand the complexity of human experience. Thoughtful historians seek materials that reflect different perspectives, and they engage with a variety of formats (books, letters, photographs, oral histories, newspapers, maps, and more) each offering its own window into the past. It's important not to limit a student's search to a single database, website, or archive. What matters more is the quality and diversity of a student's research.

The availability of sources often depends on the chosen topic, and the time period being studied. No document is entirely neutral or complete. That's why researchers don't rely solely on just one voice or one type of evidence. They compare, contrast, and question. They examine both primary and secondary sources which together help to shape meaningful research questions and support well-reasoned arguments.

That said, presenting a very focused theme or topic may help certain demographics of students. It may be the very structure that is needed for participation and success. Adapt as necessary.

Student Research

Close Reading as a Reflective Research Practice

Engaging with historical sources calls for more than just reading words. It requires presence and attention. Close reading is the practice of slowing down to examine a source thoughtfully, with the goal of uncovering meaning and drawing deeper connections to the past. It's not a passive activity; it's an active conversation between the reader and the material.

Although we often associate close reading with written text, in historical research it extends to photographs, maps, and artifacts. A political cartoon, a faded letter, or a worn object can all be “read” for clues. These clues offer insight into the lives of the people who came before us.



Developing a close reading practice helps to ground inquiry. It also helps to make thinking visible, and it helps students to see how understanding evolved. As a source is examined, students may begin to notice things that they didn't see at first glance. Returning to sources - sometimes multiple times over - allows for new interpretations to surface.

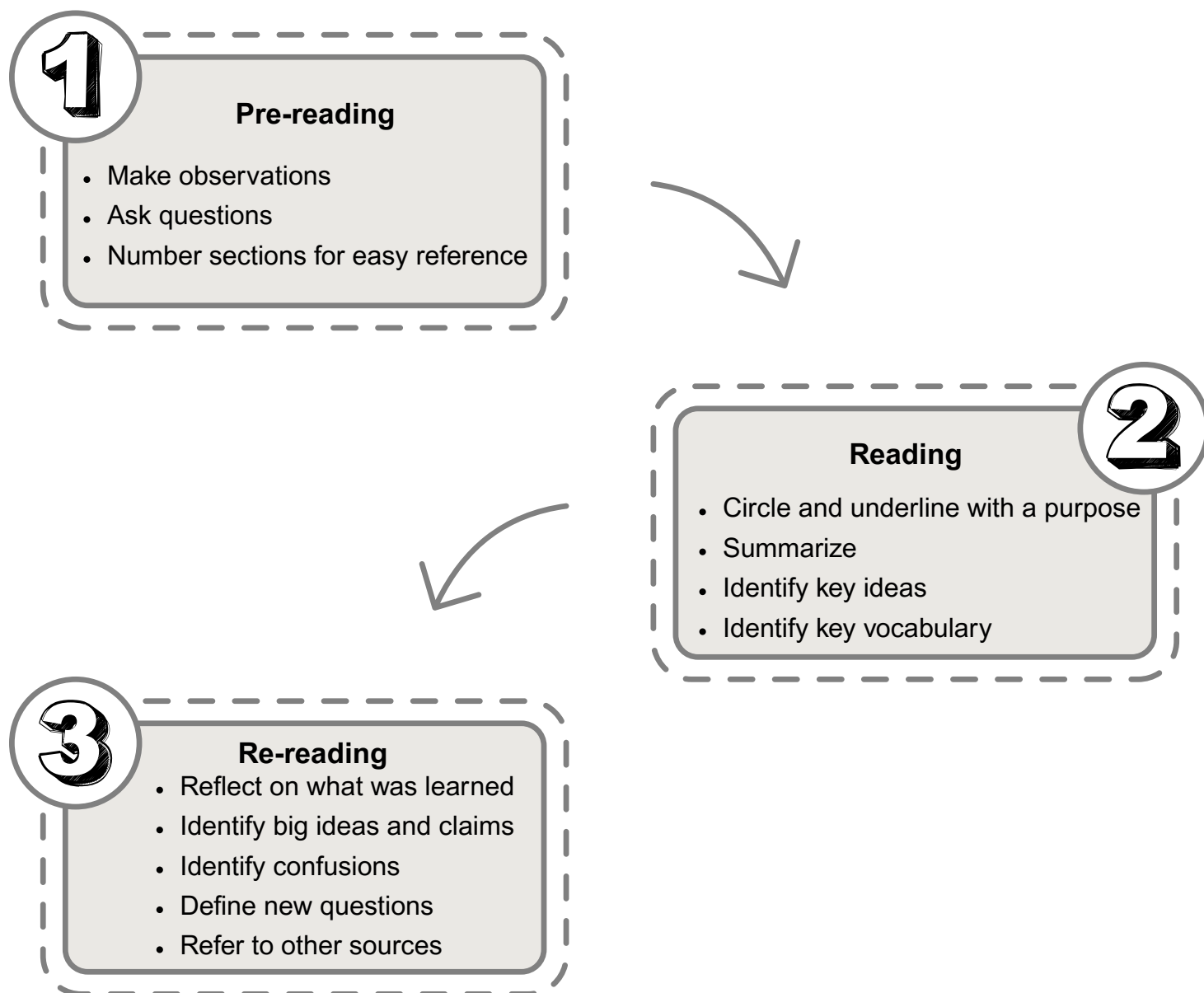
When students develop close reading skills, encourage them to ask and record questions that arise. This may require explicit instruction if students have yet to be exposed to notetaking while reading. Students need guidance about how to annotate effectively, drawing out the most important information for their research.

Making note of surprising information or information that is unclear or important may help to develop supporting questions. If possible, students may mark up a copy of a source by highlighting, underlining or circling words or images that have relevance to their study. Close reading is an important tool of observation, interpretation, and reflection as a historian.

Student Research

Close Reading as a Reflective Research Practice

Modeling and practicing close reading as a skill is essential to student success. Here is one approach that may help students understand the process.



**adapted from the Library of Congress' Close Reading Routines*

Student Research

Close Reading as a Reflective Research Practice

1

Read Aloud Together

Either the teacher or a strong student reader reads the text aloud while the class follows along. As they listen, students circle any unfamiliar words (on photocopies of archival material). Afterward, list these words as a group and decide:

- Which words should we define right away so the text makes sense?
- Which ones can we figure out later using context clues and rereading.

2

Silent Reading and Word Hunt

Students now read the text quietly to themselves. This time, they mark words or phrases that stand out. Perhaps they stand out because they are unusual, confusing, powerful, funny, or interesting. Share some of these as a class. Use questions like:

- What do we already know or guess about the author?
- How is the text organized?
- Does this structure make it easier or harder to understand?
- What does the structure suggest about the author's style or purpose?
- Which ones can we figure out later using context clues and rereading.

3

Digging Deeper with Questions

In small groups, reread the text in short sections. After each section, create questions that can only be answered by carefully looking at the words, details, and evidence in the text. Then, create a drawing chart, or other visual that shows the main idea of the text (or of an assigned section). Add either a one-sentence summary, or a question to go with it.

4

Gallery Walk

Groups display their visuals around the room. Everyone walks around, looks at each group's work, and notices similarities and differences in how the text's main ideas were represented.

4

Whole-Class Discussion

Finally, bring the class back together to discuss connections and big ideas beyond the text. This can be a simple, open conversation, or a formal structured activity using a framework like "Socratic Seminar" or "Save the Last Word for Me."

Student Research

Types of Historical Sources

Primary Sources

A primary source is a firsthand piece of evidence created during the time under study - something that offers a direct window into a historical moment. It may be a letter, photograph, diary, newspaper article, speech, map, artifact, or even an oral history. In sum, it is anything created by someone who experienced or witnessed the event.

Primary sources are invaluable to a researcher because they are unaltered by time. Primary sources allow a researcher to discover history first hand, through the words, artifacts, and images of the people who lived it. They can provide facts and details about a particular topic, and some may even offer a “flavor” for a particular person or event through anecdotal story.

For teachers, introducing students to primary sources can transform the study of history from passive learning into active discovery. Students engage with history as detectives by analyzing, questioning, and interpreting evidence for themselves. Using primary sources in the classroom involves guiding students to observe closely, ask critical questions, consider the creator’s perspective, and place the source within its broader context.

It’s also important to help students recognize the limitations and biases that every source may carry. When used thoughtfully, primary sources don’t just teach content. They build inquiry skills, deepen empathy, and help students develop a more personal and nuanced understanding of the past.

Primary Source Examples

- Artifacts
- Autobiographies
- Government records
- Interviews with participants
- Letters
- Manuscript collections
- Music from the period
- Newspapers from the era
- Original film footage
- Photographs



Student Research

Types of Historical Sources

Secondary Sources

A secondary source is a work that interprets, analyzes, or synthesizes information from primary sources and other evidence to tell a story or make an argument about the past. These sources are typically created after the events they describe and include things like textbooks, scholarly articles, biographies, documentaries, or museum exhibits.

Primary sources are generally from only one perspective. Therefore, they can be conflicting and contradictory. Secondary sources can be helpful in clarifying the discrepancies because it has the benefit of distance, and therefore may be more objective.

Secondary sources serve as essential tools for helping students understand how historians construct meaning from evidence. They provide context, key themes, and introduce multiple perspectives which are especially valuable when students are still learning how to navigate the complexity of historical narratives. Using secondary sources in the classroom helps students practice skills like comparing interpretations, identifying author's bias or purpose, and evaluating the reliability of information.

Just as with primary sources, it's important to approach secondary materials critically by asking who created them, when, and for what audience. Incorporating secondary sources allows for rich discussions about interpretation and perspective, and offers a scaffold for students as they develop their own research-based arguments.



Secondary Source Examples

- Biographies
- Books about the topic
- Encyclopedias
- History textbooks
- Interviews with scholars or experts
- Media documentaries
- Websites

Student Research

Types of Historical Sources

Digital Collections

The internet offers unprecedented access to historical sources like primary documents, scholarly articles, digital archives, and multimedia materials that can deeply enrich our understanding of the past. Yet engaging in historical research online requires a thoughtful balance of curiosity and critical discernment. While many reputable and well-vetted resources exist, such as government and educational websites, the internet is also saturated with misinformation and content that lacks proper fact-checking. Even credible sources can reflect particular biases or institutional perspectives, making it essential for researchers to approach all information with a careful and questioning eye.



One key consideration is the credibility of sources. It's important to model and teach the practice of evaluating websites based on their authorship, institutional backing, and purpose. Yet, even within reputable sources, it's important to ask: whose voices are included and whose are missing? These questions help surface gaps in the historical narrative.

Another essential element is understanding the context in which sources were created. Digital access can make it easy to read documents without considering their original social, political, or cultural environments. Students who gain an understanding that historical materials are not just data points, but instead are objects shaped by specific moments in time.

Student Research

It is best practice to encourage students to reflect on the ethical use of digital materials. Citing digital sources accurately, respecting copyright restrictions, and being sensitive to culturally and historically significant materials is paramount.

Digital research offers a chance to diversify the historical lens. Online access can bring in global perspectives, voices of marginalized communities, and alternative narratives that might not appear in traditional textbooks. Used thoughtfully, online research can help teachers present a richer, more inclusive view of the past.

Another thing to consider is that some historical sources live only in the physical spaces where they were created and preserved, tucked into the archives of local historical societies, handwritten in ledgers or recorded in fragile newspapers and photographs that never made their way online. These materials offer insights that cannot be found elsewhere. Examining a mix of both digitally and locally available resources can give students a broader understanding of their topic.



Stowe Historical Society

Student Research

Types of Historical Sources

Oral History

Oral history is a method of collecting, preserving, and interpreting historical information through recorded interviews with people who have personal knowledge of past events. Oral histories are less about “verifiable facts” and more about how people experienced and interpreted events, leaning into the personal and emotional depth to historical study. They are especially valuable for capturing voices, experiences, and perspectives that may be missing or underrepresented in written records. Interviews are usually audio or video recorded, transcribed, and often archived which can connect students with living history.

In his book entitled *Doing Oral History*, Donald Ritchie explains:

An oral history interview generally consists of a well-prepared interviewer questioning an interviewee and recording their exchange in audio or video format...These interviews may be used for research or excerpted in a publication, radio or video documentary, museum exhibition, dramatization or other form of public presentation. Recordings, transcripts, catalogs, photographs and related documentary materials can also be posted on the internet. (Ritchie, 2015, p. 22)

Oral history is a great source for students researching history because it provides personal, firsthand accounts that bring the past to life in ways traditional sources often can't. Further, oral history lets students explore local or family history, making research more personally meaningful and culturally relevant. Lastly, interviewing someone or listening to oral histories is often more engaging than reading a textbook. It helps students develop research, communication, and analytical skills.

Skills students may develop by conducting oral history interviews:

- Critical thinking and questioning
- Empathy and perspective-taking
- Research design and project planning
- Communication and storytelling
- Historical interpretation and civic engagement



Courtesy of: Bells Elementary School, D.C.

Visit the Oral History Association Educator's Resource for more information:

<https://oralhistory.org/educators-resource/>

Another resource, Vermont Folklife Digital Collections: <https://vtfolklifearchive.org/collections/>

Tracking Sources & Making Citations

Tracking Sources

As students begin to do historical research, it is a perfect moment to introduce them to keeping track of sources they use. It will make it easier for them to locate the source again. A tracking chart (see appendix) may be a useful tool to model using before you visit your local historical society or conduct online research. Information to track should include: the source type and title (which can be useful in demonstrating the variety and depth of research), the author or original creator, source location, and how the source contributes to a student's overall understanding of a topic.

What's in a Citation?

A citation is like a road map that guides the reader to the original source. It includes key details like who created it, what it is, where it was published, and when it was made. The exact information needed for a citation depends on the type of source.

Formatting a Citation

There are several different citation styles, each with its own rules for formatting sources. The style you use typically depends on the subject or discipline. The following are a few common citation styles.

- **Modern Language Association (MLA)** is often used in English, literature, and other humanities, and is commonly used in K-12 classrooms. It features in-text citations with the author's last name, page number, and a "Works Cited" page.
- **American Psychological Association (APA)** is often used in Psychology, education, and social sciences. It features in-text citations with author and year, and a "References" page.
- **Chicago Manual of Style (Chicago or CMS)** is often used in history and in some humanities. It features footnotes or endnotes with a bibliography.

Once a student has gathered the right information, the next step is to format their citations and bibliography correctly. This may take practice. The format for your bibliography (aka- works cited, references) will also depend on the citation style chosen. For a student friendly guide, that can be assigned or distributed, please see the appendices.

If your school uses Google Classroom, students may find the citation tool useful within Google Docs. It can be found in the "Tools" drop down menu. They may choose the preferred citation style, and they add citation sources which then can be referenced and inserted easily during their writing process.

Student Research

Starting the Research Process

Starting the Research Process

Approaching a research project from a primary source, like an object, is a powerful way to build critical thinking, curiosity, and research skills. Here is an example as to how to help students begin:



Civilian Conservation Corps Patch
Courtesy of: Vermont Historical Society

Step 1: Observe the Object Carefully

Encourage the student to study the object closely using their senses (sight, touch - if allowed, and sometimes even sound or smell). Ask questions:

- What do you notice first?
- What materials is it made of?
- Are there markings, labels, or signs or wear? If there are, what do you want to know about them?
- Does it look handmade or mass-produced?

*Tip: drawing or photographing the object may help to deepen observation.

Step 2: Ask Open-Ended Questions

Now, begin the inquiry by generating questions about the object. Focus on asking why, how, and what questions:

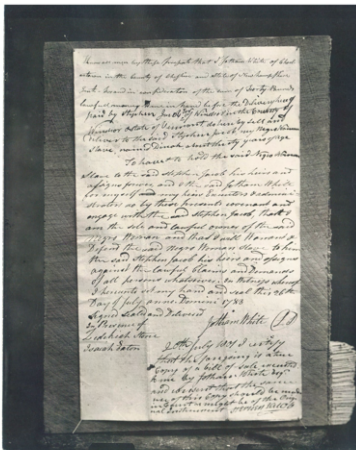
- What was this object used for?
- Who might have used it?
- Why was it made this way?
- How did it end up here?
- What does it tell us about the time-period or culture it comes from?

*Tip: encourage curiosity - even speculative or unusual questions are valuable at this stage.

Primary Sources

Historical Documents

Created by people who lived through the moments we study, through letters, laws, speeches, or records, historical documents let students encounter history in the words of those who shaped it. Whether reading the Vermont Constitution, a farmer's daily journal, or a wartime letter, students gain a deeper understanding of the forces at play and trace how ideas developed and how individuals within communities experienced their world. Engaging with these documents helps history feel immediate, real, and deeply human. These sources also help students practice critical reading skills, develop arguments, and support their research with concrete evidence straight from the past. Students learn to ask deeper questions and think like historians. They develop the tools to understand how history has been written, preserved, and debated over time.



Bill of Sale of a "Negro Woman Slave"
<https://digitalvermont.org/items/show/1848>

Use Historical Documents Thoughtfully

As with all primary sources, it's important for students to engage with historical documents critically. While these texts offer valuable firsthand perspectives, they are also shaped by their context, purpose, and audience. A speech might aim to persuade or inspire. A legal document might reflect the political power dynamics of its time. A personal letter may only capture one side of a much larger story. That's why it's essential to ask not just what the document says, but why it was created, who created it, and for whom.

Limitations

Historical documents may not present the full story. For a well-rounded understanding, students could combine primary and secondary sources to provide interpretation and context. When working with historical documents as primary sources, it is essential to read them with a careful and questioning mindset. Keep the following points in mind when analyzing historical documents:

- **Consider the Source:** Knowing who wrote the document helps students understand the perspective being presented and any potential bias. Was the author a politician, soldier, activist, or private citizen?
- **Why Was it Written?** Understanding the document's purpose helps interpret its tone and content. Was it intended to record facts, persuade an audience, or express emotion?
- **Context is Key:** Consider the historical moment - social tensions, wars, movements, or cultural shifts - to fully understand the significance of the document. What was happening in the world when the document was created?

Primary Sources

Newspapers

Newspapers are valuable primary sources that offer firsthand accounts of historical events, public opinions, and everyday life from the past. When used in historical research, newspapers allow students and researchers to explore how events were reported at the time they occurred, revealing contemporary language, societal values, and perspectives. By analyzing articles, headlines, advertisements, and even letters to the editor, students can uncover insights into the everyday language, events, opinions, and social norms of a specific time and place. Newspapers also help researchers examine bias, understand differing viewpoints, and trace how public sentiment evolved over time. Whether investigating a major historical event or exploring local history, newspapers provide a rich, layered view of the past that textbooks alone can't fully capture.

When using newspapers as a primary source during historical research, it's important to approach them with a critical and thoughtful mindset. Treat newspapers not just as a source of information, but as an object that reveals how people understood the world around them. Encourage students to cite newspapers as they would any other source, noting the publication name, date, and article title. Here are several other key things to keep in mind:



Consider the Source

Understanding the paper's readership can reveal why certain stories were emphasized or framed in certain ways.

- Who Wrote it?
- Was the newspaper local, national, partisan, or independent?
- Who was the intended audience?

Be Aware of Bias

Newspapers reflect the viewpoints and assumptions of their time.

- Editorial choice (headlines, placement, tone) can reveal political, cultural, or economic biases
- Compare multiple sources, if possible
- Get a more balanced picture of events

Primary Sources

Newspapers



Context Matters

A story's meaning can change depending on what else was happening at the time - social movements, wars, elections, etc. Questions to ask to drive at context:

- What was the broader historical context?
- How might it have influenced how the story was reported?

Look Beyond the Headlines

Articles, editorials, ads, photographs, and even obituaries can offer rich historical insights. Examine how everyday life, public opinion, and cultural norms are reflected in seemingly "ordinary" content.

Pay Attention to Language and Tone

The words used in headlines or articles may reflect outdated or offensive views, but they also reveal how people thought and spoke at the time. To analyze the tone, ask:

- Is the piece celebratory, fearful, dismissive?
- What is the primary emotion the author is hoping to evoke?

Verify with Other Sources

Newspaper accounts are snapshots in time, but they are not always complete or accurate. Cross-reference with other documents like diaries, government records, and oral histories, to build a fuller understanding.

Primary Sources

Newspapers

There are numerous ways to access newspapers for student research. Many local libraries and historical societies keep local newspaper archives, either in print or on microfilm. Ways to access newspapers digitally include:

Chronicling America

Created by the Library of Congress in partnership with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), it offers access to millions of digitized pages of local and national newspapers dating back to the 17th century. It is intended as a free educational resource for researchers, teachers, students, and the general public. The “search by state” feature allows you to locate local publications. The database also included curated collections of articles on major events, figures, and periods in U.S. history, as well as newspapers created by and for a range of ethnic communities across the United States.

- <https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/search/titles/>

Newspapers.com

Offers a much larger collection, with millions of pages from the 1700s to the 2000s with many continuing into the present. Owned by [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com), this is a commercial subscription service. This site tends to have more extensive coverage of local, regional, and small-town newspapers.

- <https://www.newspapers.com/>

Thanks to a partnership between the Vermont State Archives and Records Administration (VSARA) and Newspapers.com, you do not need a paid subscription to access Vermont Newspapers if you are a resident. However, you are required to create a MyVermont.gov account to access the records. MyVermont.gov accounts are free and can be created by visiting: <https://secure.vermont.gov/myvermont>. If you would like to access newspapers outside of Vermont, you will need a paid subscription.

Google News Archive

A collection of digitized newspaper pages that Google began scanning in the mid-2000s as part of an effort to preserve historical news content. Although the project was scaled back around 2011, much of the content is still accessible online, but it is not actively updated. It is a free site, and works well as a supplementary source. The directory lists hundreds of newspapers that Google digitized and all content is organized alphabetically by title.

- <https://news.google.com/newspapers>

Primary Sources

Photographs

Today, making and accessing photographs is faster and more effortless than ever before. In contrast, photography in the past was a slower and more deliberate process. The earliest daguerreotypes and wet-plate glass photographs were cumbersome to make with large wooden cameras that weren't easy to maneuver, and dangerous processing chemicals. Access to owning a camera or hiring a skilled photographer was limited to those who could afford them. While older photographs may be limited, there is still an abundance of photographs available for perusal at any given moment. There is also much variation in the organization and quality of photographs. At times, that can be a cause of frustration if they are not labeled with useful information to the viewer. Even so, photographs have so much to teach.

Looking Versus Reading Photographs

There is a subtle but powerful difference between looking at a photograph and reading a photograph. When someone looks at a photograph, they are taking it at a surface level. The individual might notice the subject, colors, composition, or general mood. Looking at a photograph is more about observation and first impressions.



Courtesy of: Vermont Historical Society,
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2017784414/>

This close looking example is from a Vermont Historical Hands-on History program:

“This a black-and-white photo of what appears to be two adults, three younger kids, and someone who could be an older child or a young adult. It appears they are in their kitchen. Their clothes look well-used. They wear a range of expressions on their faces.”

Primary Sources

Photographs

Reading a photograph invites someone to go deeper by analyzing and interpreting what the image is saying - understanding its context, symbolism, and message. Reading a photograph leans on inquiry to ask critical questions, like one would while reading a text.



Some examples may include:

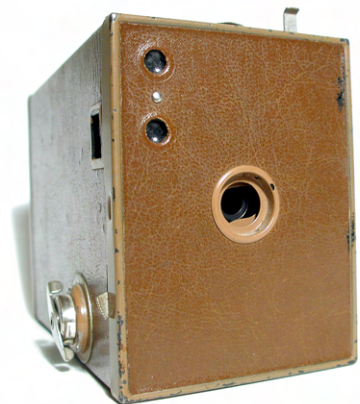
- Who took this photo and why?
- What is happening in the background?
- What emotions or power dynamics are at play?
- What's missing or excluded from the frame?
- How does this image relate to its historical or cultural context?

Expanding on the example from the previous page:

“It looks like this could be a photograph of a family. Perhaps, another family member took the photograph. Although, photography could be expensive so they may not own their own camera. The interior of the house and clothing are well worn, suggesting that they may be of modest means. It looks like they have some essentials, but not a lot extra. The scene might reflect certain financial struggles, but some of their facial expressions suggest a lightness. Other expressions are more subdued.”

Adding another detail could enhance or change what can be read from the photograph. For this photo, that could include:

- Asking the students what they know about the Great Depression.
- Informing students that it was a worldwide economic crash, which caused businesses to close and many people to lose their jobs. The price of milk dropped, which meant some rural Vermont dairy farmers lived in poverty, especially those who farmed on marginal land.
- Sharing that this particular photograph shows a family of farmers in Bradford, Vermont, in 1939. In order to receive help from the federal government, they had to let a photographer take their pictures. (Russell Lee photographed the family but did not record their names.)
- Engaging in a class discussion about the topic.



Primary Sources

Photographs

Historic Research

Photographs are incredibly valuable in historical research. Not just pictures, photographs are primary sources that offer visual evidence of the past. Historians use them in a variety of ways.



Visual Evidence of People, Places, Events

Photos can capture real moments in time - how people dressed, what their homes or workplaces looked like, and what was happening during specific events.

Clues About Daily Life

Photos often show details that written records leave out like tools people used, the layout of a room, or the way people interacted. Even an old family photo can reveal information about socio-economic class, gender roles, or cultural traditions.

Supporting or Challenging Written Sources

Photographs can confirm or contradict content in written documents. Historians use photos to cross-check stories, especially when there are biases or gaps in written records. Example: If a newspaper said a protest was "small and peaceful," but a photo shows a large crowd and tension with police, that changes how we interpret the event.

Understanding Historical Context

Photographs can help people visualize the broader context like urban development, segregation, war zones, disaster impact, and more. Even things like advertising signs or storefronts in the background can give hints about the era in which the photograph was taken.

Triggering Memory & Oral History

Photos are great tools for interviews. They can spark memories and help people tell stories about the past that might otherwise be forgotten.

Primary Sources

Photographs

Limitations

There is no doubt that photographs can enhance historic research, but they are not without real limitations that must be considered. Photos tell of one small part in a larger whole. In other words, they don't tell the entire story. Since photographs isolate a single instant, they fall short in conveying the repetitive rhythms that shape our daily lives. (Kyvig and Marty 140). Furthermore, they reflect the photographer's choices and perspective which means that they could be influenced by artistic license or bias. Lastly, photographs, especially due to early camera technology, can be staged or selective. Therefore, it is important to use careful discernment when examining and using these primary sources.

When a Photograph Holds Within it a Much Larger Story



Photograph Courtesy of: Brattleboro Historical Society.

Marion McCune Rice grew up in Brattleboro, Vermont and attended the town's public schools. She graduated from Brattleboro High School in 1900, later graduating from Smith College. Afterwards, she attended nursing school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

At the time, professional options for single women were generally limited to school teacher, social worker, or nurse.

In May of 1914, she and five friends set off for Europe on a three-month tour. The trip was hampered by the assassination of Austrian prince Franz Ferdinand. European countries were soon descending into war, and traveling became more difficult and tenuous. Regions became increasingly unsafe for English speaking individuals. In September of 1914, Marion returned home for a short visit with family where she informed them that she intended on returning to Europe. Rice joined the Red Cross and became a nurse who would be stationed in Europe to care for soldiers who were fighting against German and Austrian aggression. Marion was one of ten Red Cross nurses who traveled to France in February of 1915 to serve in what would later become known as WWI. It is interesting to note that it took more than two years later that the United States joined the war. The Brattleboro area saw over 450 people to serve in WWI, but Marion was the first. Also of interest, Rice was a talented photographer and documented her war experience with a high quality Kodak camera.

Primary Sources

Prints & Drawings

When students in K-12 explore prints and drawings from the past, they go beyond reading words in a textbook and begin to read history itself. These visual sources offer direct windows into a time and place, capturing moments, people, and landscapes that written documents might overlook. By studying the details, like clothing, setting, and expressions, students begin to develop questions: Who made this and why? What does it show us about the community? When that history is local, it connects them more deeply to the places and people around them, helping to build a sense of identity, curiosity, and civic awareness.

Historic Research

Students can use prints and drawings for historic research by treating them as visual text or objects to be read, questioned, and interpreted. Just like reading a diary or newspaper from the past, reading an image means observing it closely. A drawing of a town square, for example, can reveal what building stood there, what transportation may have been used, and how people gathered. By asking careful questions, students begin to uncover the layers of meaning behind the artwork. They can compare images over time to track changes in a neighborhood or see how different artists or communities represented the same event. They can pair or layer visuals with maps, letters, or oral histories to build a fuller picture of the past. In this way, prints and drawings become more than just depictions or renderings, they become active sources of evidence, guiding students as they piece together the story of local history.



Landscape print showing a valley from above in Woodstock, VT by George Taylor Plowman.
Courtesy of: Vermont Historical Society

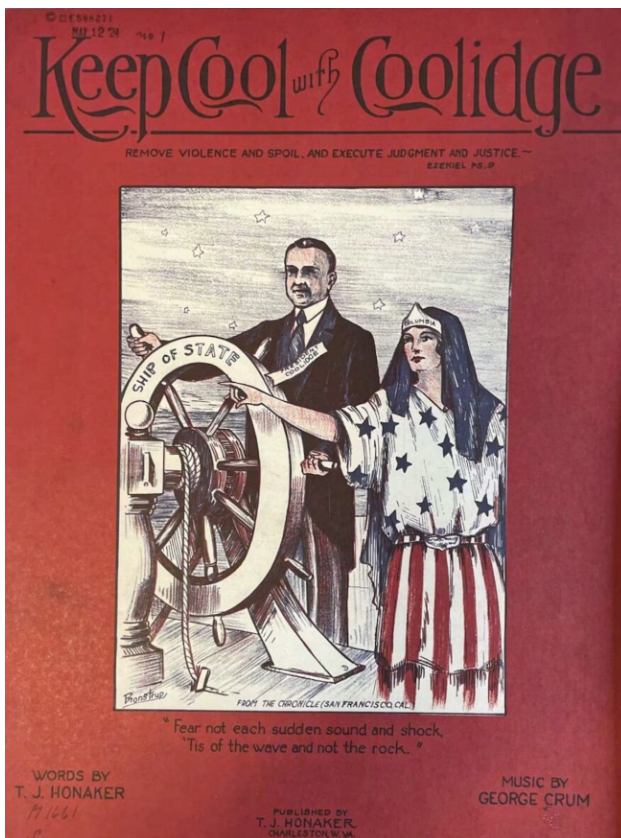
Primary Sources

Prints & Drawings

Limitations

There is a quiet complexity in using print and drawings for historical research simply because there are a set of limitations that students must learn to navigate. Unlike photographs, which often capture a moment as it appeared, prints and drawings are shaped more directly by the artist's perspective, intention, and imagination. What is shown in the image may reflect not just reality, but opinion, symbolism, or even propaganda. The artist chooses what to include and what to leave out, and those choices can distort or idealize the scene. A drawing of a bustling main street may omit signs of poverty or conflict, presenting a version of the past that is polished or incomplete. Another limitation is context. Without understanding when, why, or for whom the image was made, students might misinterpret its meaning.

It's also important to remember that not every part of the community was equally represented. Some voices, faces, and places may be missing altogether. Recognizing these gaps is part of learning. Even the silences in prints and drawings can help students think more critically about the past and about how history is told and shared.



This sheet music cover depicts Calvin Coolidge steering the “Ship of the State” alongside Columbia, who is the female personification of the United States. It has his famous slogan “Keep Cool with Coolidge” at the top, and portrays him as collected and in charge of where the country is going.

Keep Cool With Coolidge, cover of sheet music, published by T. J. Honaker, 1924
Courtesy of: Library of Congress

Primary Sources

Material Culture



Hand Blender
Courtesy of: Vermont Historical Society

Material culture offers a tangible link to the past, inviting people to imagine how things looked, felt, and functioned in their original context. A worn shoe, a handcrafted bowl, or a faded Air Force uniform can tell us about the values, technologies, and daily experiences of those who used them. Studying these items allows historians to piece together stories that may be overlooked, revealing the textures of daily life in an environment, and the silent details that shaped them.

Turning our attention from words and photographs to material objects invites a move from abstract concepts to direct, sensory engagement with the past. While language and images often represent ideas or emotions, objects exist in the physical world. People can use their senses to interact with objects - touching, measuring, examining, and comparing. Objects from the past may include tools, clothing, furniture, art, and everyday items.

Object Categories

Robert G. Chenhall developed a common nomenclature for classifying man-made objects, which remains the standard cataloging tool for thousands of museums and historical organizations. Chenhall's system breaks objects into meaningful categories that help researchers, curators, and students better understand the role these items played in everyday life. When exploring local history, students may encounter a wide range of historical objects that fit into these categories, helping to tell the story of a town's past. These might include structures like buildings or bridges that shaped the physical landscape, or furnishings and fixtures that once filled those spaces. Personal items such as clothing or grooming tools provide insight into individual lives, while tools and equipment reveal the work and skills practiced in a community. Communication objects like signs, books, or newspapers show how people shared information, while items related to transportation reflect how goods and people moved. Art and decorative pieces, recreational objects, and societal artifacts help illustrate cultural expression and shared identity. Even simple packages and containers, like bottles or crates, can offer clues about daily routines and trade. Approaching an object as part of historical research involves more than just observing what it is. It requires asking thoughtful questions about what it means, how it was used, and what it reveals about the time and people it came from.

Primary Sources

Material Culture



Sheep sheers possibly used at the Kent Tavern in Calais, VT.
Courtesy of: Vermont Historical Society

E. McClung Fleming, of the Winterthur Museum in Delaware, created a model for examining objects in a thoughtful and structured approach that encourages researchers to look beyond the surface of an artifact and ask deeper, more interconnected questions. His model outlines five basic properties that guide inquiry, offering a kind of roadmap for understanding how an object fits into its historical, cultural, and functional context. These five properties are:

History	This involves tracing the object's life story like when and where it was made, who made or used it, and how it moved through time. Studying its history helps situate the object within specific events, social contexts, or personal narratives.
Material	By identifying what the object is made of (wood, glass, metal, fabric, or another substance) we begin to understand both the resources available to its makers and the cultural or technological significance of those choices.
Construction	Looking at how the object was made (methods, techniques, and tools used) reveals not only craftsmanship but also broader patterns in labor, industry, and technological advancement. Construction also helps identify whether the object was mass-produced or handcrafted.
Design	This refers to the object's form and appearance, including its shape, color, decoration, and overall aesthetic. Design choices often reflect cultural values, artistic trends, or practical needs, offering insight into both function and meaning.
Function	Examining how the object was used (what it was meant to do, how it was handled, and by whom) grounds it in everyday life. Function connects the object to human experience, revealing how people interacted with their environment and with each other.

Primary Sources

Material Culture

Together, these five properties create a kind of interpretive formula. They don't exist in isolation; rather, they are deeply interrelated. Fleming suggests performing four operations of analysis on the object's five properties. The four operations include:

Identification	This first step involves recognizing what the object is - its type, form, and purpose. Identifying the object is crucial, as it sets the foundation for understanding its context and function within its specific time and culture.
Evaluation	Once identified, the object is classified into appropriate categories based on its characteristics. This involves grouping the object by type, material, function, or any other relevant criteria. Classification helps organize objects in a way that connects them to similar items, revealing broader cultural and historical patterns.
Interpretation	Interpretation goes beyond simply identifying and classifying the object. It requires analyzing the object's meaning - how it reflects the social, cultural, and technological contexts of its time. This operation asks why the object was made, what it tells us about its creators and users, and how it connects to larger historical narratives.
Cultural Analysis	The final operation involves comparing the object to other similar objects or to other historical sources. This helps place the object in a broader context, revealing common trends or unique variations. Comparison allows for a deeper understanding of the object's significance and its role in history.

For example, the material of an object might influence its construction, which in turn shapes its function. Its design might reflect cultural values at a particular moment in history. By weaving these elements together, Fleming's model helps people move beyond simply identifying an object. It encourages individuals to understand how it lived in the world, and what it can still teach everyone about the people who made and used it. (Fleming 1981, 157)

Primary Sources

Material Culture

Considerations

Studying objects can be a challenging exercise, but it is not an impossible task. Objects offer historians a tangible link to earlier cultures, revealing not only how people lived but also the events, values, and circumstances that shaped their creation. Though they are important touchstones, there are some considerations to take into account. To begin with, we should be careful not to expect a single object to reveal too much about the people who made or used it. It's important not to let one artifact stand in for a broader culture than it truly represents. Likewise, it shouldn't be studied in isolation, detached from the cultural context that gives it meaning. Sometimes, objects are viewed only through the lens of their function, overlooking their aesthetic qualities. Other times, they are automatically placed on a scale of progress - from primitive to modern - a perspective that can be not only limiting, but also misleading or historically inaccurate. It is important that professional and amateur historians approach objects carefully and with the ability to observe their bias to avoid its influence. (Kyvig and Marty 155-156)

An Object is Just an Object Without Context



If you are familiar with Vermont's dairy industry, then you may be familiar with this object - a butter mold made of wood and steel. In the 18th and 19th centuries, butter served almost like currency for farmers, who often traded it for groceries, clothing, and other necessities. Those who took pride in their craftsmanship wanted a way to distinguish their butter and ensure they were fairly rewarded for their skill. Carved wooden butter molds provided that opportunity. Imprinting each batch with a distinctive mark signaled to buyers they were getting butter from a specific farmer.



Courtesy of: Vermont Historical Society

What is not obvious is that this butter mold came from Riverside Women's Reformatory which operated between 1921-1936 in Rutland. Lena Ross became the first superintendent of the women's reformatory. The majority of women at the Reformatory were serving time for "crimes against morality." Of those, nearly all had been

imprisoned for adultery or cohabitation. To much public acclaim, Ross instituted progressive programs for the rehabilitation of women offenders. Women ran a laundry, tended a large garden, and hosted meals for the public. The same women who were "skill-building" also were subjected to Eugenics Survey field investigator's IQ tests for the Vermont Commission on Country Life Committee on the Handicapped. In this example, a simple butter mold connects to a larger story.

Analyzing & Interpreting Sources

Source Reliability

There are challenges when studying the past. Historians rely on sources to help understand what happened, how people felt, and why events unfolded the way they did. But not all sources are created equal. That's why reliability is key. Researchers must consider whether sources are credible, trustworthy, and accurate.

Historians often will use a simple but powerful test to evaluate a source's reliability:



• **Is the source credible?**

- Was it created by someone with knowledge, expertise, or lived experience?

• **Is the source trustworthy?**

- Is it connected to a reputable organization, archive, or research body?

• **Is the information in the source accurate?**

- Does it align with what we know from other reliable sources?
- Does it offer clear, consistent facts?

The only way to answer the questions above is to really examine the sources closely. When analyzing a source here are some things to consider:

- Is this a primary or secondary source?
- What is the source format - text, image, or audio?
- Who created the source and what is their background?
- When was the source created and what was happening at the time?
- What was the source's purpose - was it meant to inform, persuade, record, or entertain?
- Asking these questions doesn't just help in gathering facts, it also helps to develop a more thoughtful, nuanced understanding of history.

Analyzing & Interpreting Sources

Multiple Perspectives in Historical Research

As teachers, you know that history is more than a timeline of events. It's a tapestry woven from the voices, choices, and experiences of people across time. When students are taught to study multiple perspectives, they are invited to move beyond surface-level understanding and into the deeper, more honest work of historical inquiry.



No single account can capture the full complexity of the past. Every source reflects a particular point of view shaped by identity, context, and purpose. When we introduce students to a range of perspectives, especially those that have been traditionally underrepresented or silenced, we help them see that history is not fixed. Instead, it is constructed, contested, and continually interpreted.

Encouraging students to compare different viewpoints fosters critical thinking and, perhaps, empathy. It allows them to ask: Whose story is being told? Whose story is missing? Why might these perspectives differ? In doing so, students begin to understand that historical truth is often found in the spaces between accounts - not just in what is said, but also in what is left unsaid.

Studying multiple perspectives also prepares students for civic life. It teaches them to navigate complexity, to hold multiple truths at once, and to engage respectfully with differing interpretations of events. These skills are essential in history, but also in the world today.

Ultimately, when students are guided toward inclusive and layered understandings of the past, they are not being taught just the process of research. Students are provided with the opportunity to see history as a living dialogue. A dialogue that they have the power and responsibility to enter. They discover that their voices matter.

Multiple Perspectives/Viewpoints Resources

Please find additional resources at the end of the Educator Guide, on pages 60 and 61, to help your students examine multiple viewpoints.

Analyzing & Interpreting Sources

Corroboration in Historical Thinking

In the work of historical research, corroboration is more than a strategy. It's a mindset. When students are taught to corroborate sources, they are guided to think like historians: to pause, question, compare, and seek out patterns and contradictions in the evidence that they encounter.

Corroboration asks students not to take any one account at face value, but to consider how different sources speak to, or challenge, each other. It helps them recognize that history is built not from isolated facts, but from a network of voices and records that must be interpreted in relationship to one another. This is where the work of critical thinking begins. Students learn to weigh and connect what they are observing with care.

By teaching corroboration, students are invited to develop intellectual humility. They begin to understand that even trusted sources can be incomplete or biased, and that truth in history is often something that must be assembled, not simply found. They learn to ask questions like: Do other sources confirm this account? How does this version compare with others? What do these differences tell me?

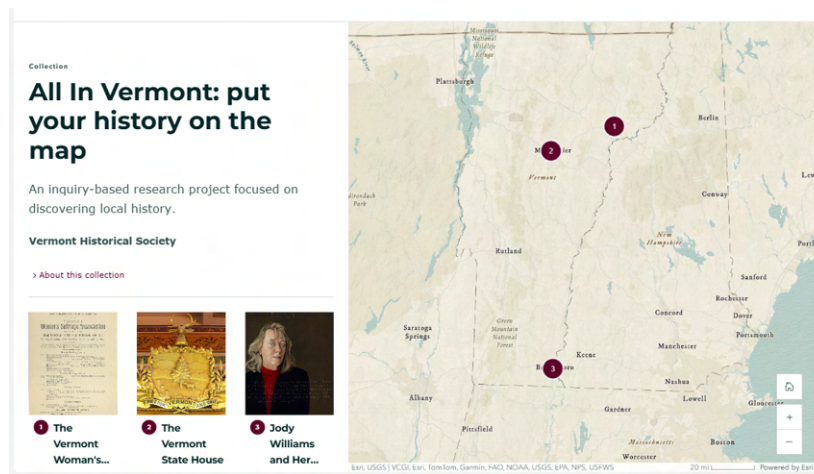
Not only is historical understanding deepened, but media literacy, discernment, and informed citizenship is nurtured. In a world overflowing with information and competing narratives, corroboration equips students to think with discipline and integrity. At its heart, teaching corroboration helps students realize that reliable conclusions come from thoughtful examination. It also helps students realize that the past, like the present, deserves to be understood with both rigor and reflection.



Project Components

What is ArcGIS Storymaps?

ArcGIS StoryMaps is an online storytelling platform that allows users to combine narrative elements like text, images, video, and audio to create engaging, place-based stories. For the *All In Vermont* project, this platform offers a dynamic way to showcase student research and connect their work directly to the Vermont towns they study by pinning it to a map of Vermont. StoryMaps allows us to build immersive, scrollable stories that feature interactive static maps alongside student writing, photo galleries, video or audio clips, quotes, and even timeline or sliding panel layouts.



As the project grows, each town will appear as a point on the map, linking site visitors to a student-created window into that community's local history. The result is a visually rich interactive archive of Vermont stories as shared by students.

In this guide, we have provided templates for the available features that the All In Vermont project will be using. Students may use one or more templates to showcase their local story. By offering this “plug and play” approach, educators can not only create a project structure developmentally appropriate for their grade, but they can also differentiate project expectations based on specific learner needs.

ArcGIS Templates

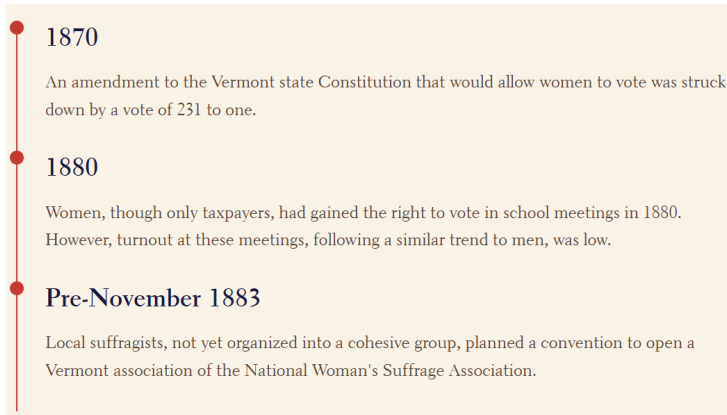
There are eight, ready-to-use StoryMaps templates designed for students on the following pages. Each template includes prompts and structure ideas to jump-start content creation. Use one template, or many, considering the abilities of your class and the way that you structure the *All In Vermont* project as an assignment. See basic descriptions below, and look in the Teacher Resource Section for full templates.

Project Components

Timeline Template

"This timeline will show you the important events in [topic]."

Example:



Best for:

- Sharing historical events in order
- Demonstrating change over time

Each timeline entry needs:

- Date/year
- Event title
- Short text description

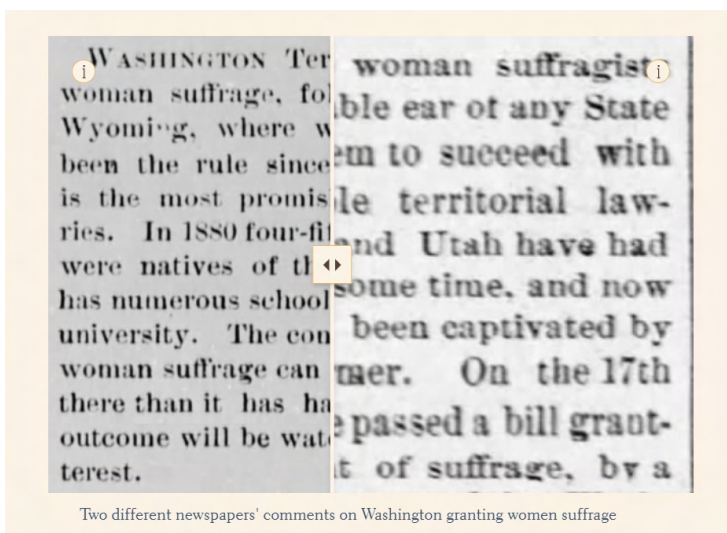
Prompts to consider:

- What happened?
- Who was involved?
- Why does it matter?

Compare Template (swipe or side-by-side)

"Let's see how things have changed or how two things differ."

Example:



Best for:

- Before and after
- Past and present comparisons (then and now)
- Rural and urban

Each compare entry needs:

- Two images or maps
 - label image A and image B

Prompts to consider:

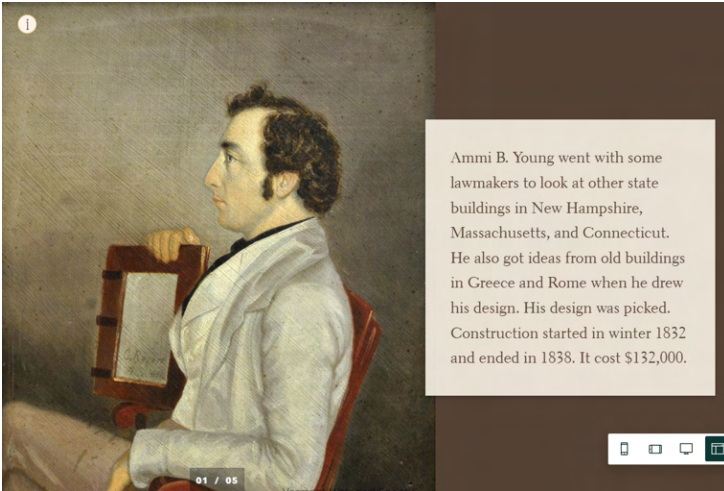
- What is different between these images or maps?
- What stayed the same?
- Why do these changes matter when talking about [topic]?

Project Components

Sidecar Template (for multimedia & text stories)

"Let's take a journey through the story of [event/person/place]."

Example:



Best for:

- Telling a story step-by-step with visuals and explanations

Each sidecar entry needs:

- An image related to corresponding text
- Source information for image
- Text block

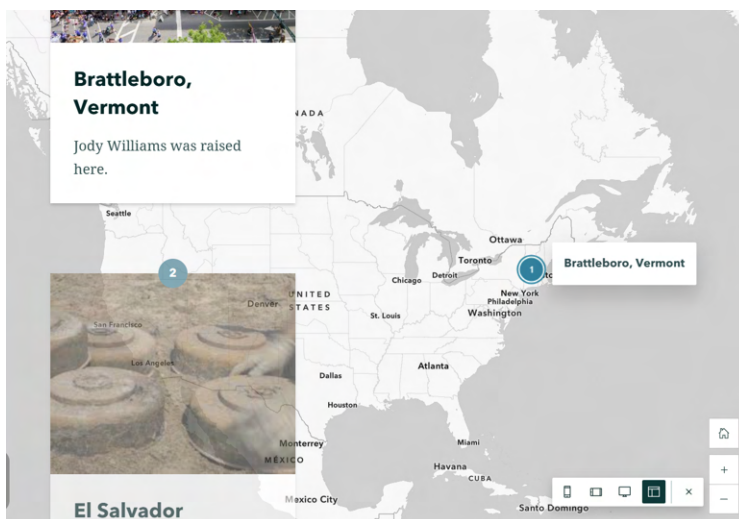
Prompts to consider:

- What happened?
- Why is this important?

Guided Map Template Map (Embed & Explanation)

"This map will help the audience understand [topic] better."

Example:



Best for exploring:

- Geography
- Migration
- Environmental changes

Each guided map section needs:

- An embedded map
- Source information

Prompts to consider:

- What does this map show?
- What do you notice and why is important to the overall story?

Project Components

Image Gallery Template

"Here are some photos and what we learned from them."

Example:



At The Rutland Fair In The 1940s; Courtesy of Rutland Historical Society

Best for:

- Providing context
- If it does not help to tell the story, consider if its relevant to include

Each image block needs:

- An image
- Source information for image

Prompts to consider:

- What is represented in the image?
- What did we learn from it?
- How does it enhance the story I'm telling?

Audio/Video Template

"Let's hear and see what [topic] is all about, first-hand."

Examples:



Tucker Hill looking at Bragg Hill; Courtesy of the Wainsfield Historical Society



Interview with Willis and Erlene Bragg - Vermont Folklife Center Digital Collections (FC1992-0008)



Vermont Historical Society Collections Video: Jack Jumper

Best for:

- Oral histories
- Music/performances
- Action

Each section should include:

- Audio/visual clip
- Transcript or text description

Prompts to consider:

- Who is speaking?
- What are they saying/showing?
- How important is the overall story?
- Are their parts that can be edited for greater focus on [topic]?

Project Components

Submission Guidelines

The All In Vermont project is an ambitious, statewide effort. As a small team, we're relying on thoughtful collaboration with educators across Vermont to help bring it to life. To support this goal and manage the scope of the work, we ask that each participating school **prioritize one student or group project per grade for initial submission**. As you know your students and school community best, how you select this submission is your choice. Schools that serve students from multiple towns are encouraged to select projects from communities that are underrepresented on the map, if possible. This helps us maintain more equitable representation across the state while honoring the voices of students from every community.

Additional work is still welcome and will be archived for potential inclusion once every town has been represented, or as time allows. If multiple projects are being submitted, please clearly identify which one is the primary submission for that town by checking the box on the cover sheet.

There are now *two* ways that you can submit student entries - shared Google Classroom folder or PDFs built from printed templates

Google Classroom

Procedure

Review the various templates using the *Overview Slide Deck*. Each slide describes the Storymaps feature block and how it can be used to share what they've learned. Like in this guide, there are also examples that can be seen.

Afterwards, assign a copy of the *Student Template Slide Deck* to each student. The first two slides of this deck include specific directions as to how to use the templates. Students use fillable templates, adding more or deleting those that they do not plan on including. In the end, they have been empowered to design a submission based on personal choice. Once they are done, they turn in their assignment for you to review.



Submission

After all student work has been collected in a Google Drive folder, share that folder to vermonthistoryexplorer@gmail.com. The Vermont Historical Society will then get to work uploading student research to the map!

Project Components

Submission Guidelines

PDF Submission

Alternatively, you can choose to have students fill out paper templates. Afterwards, they can be scanned in the desired order and submitted as a single PDF.

To help with organization, and to ensure your students' work is ready for inclusion on the statewide map, please include the following with each PDF submission:

Cover Sheet	• Student name(s) & Grade level • School name • Submitting teacher's name and contact information • Town researched • Local Historical Society or history partners used during project
Completed Project Template(s)	• Official templates must be used and submitted electronically ◦ If more than one template is used, please create one PDF with the pages in the preferred order
Media Files (if included)	• Photos: JPEG - no more than 10 MB or 5,000 pixels (both height and width) • Audio: MP3, WAV - no more than 50MB, smaller will run smoother • Video: MP4, MOV - no more than 50MB, smaller will run smoother ◦ All media's format should be labeled clearly .xxx • All media should be relevant to the project • All media should be credited with where it was found/sourced • Basic captions are optional
Photo Release Form	• Submit if student(s) appear in images or videos • Must be signed by a parent or guardian • One form per student whose image or voice is included in the project

Building Local History Partnerships

Historical societies vary widely. Most of these groups are volunteer organizations without a full-time staff. Some focus more on genealogy, others on material culture, local industries, or underrepresented histories. Often these local historical societies house resources that are not available anywhere else – online or otherwise.

The organization's mission and scope may be available online if they maintain a website or social media presence. You may be able to discover the types of collections they maintain before reaching out. In addition, you may discover any existing education programs or school collaborations that may be useful.



Students visit Woodstock History Center

Educators can enrich their teaching by visiting local historical societies or inviting society members or local historians into their classrooms. Both have value and have the potential to make history feel immediate, personal, and alive. Site visits offer students a tangible connection to place-based learning, while in-school visits bring community expertise directly into learning spaces.

The Value of Local History Engagement Extends Through Adulthood

The value of engaging with local history extends beyond the classroom. According to a 2019 survey of Vermonters

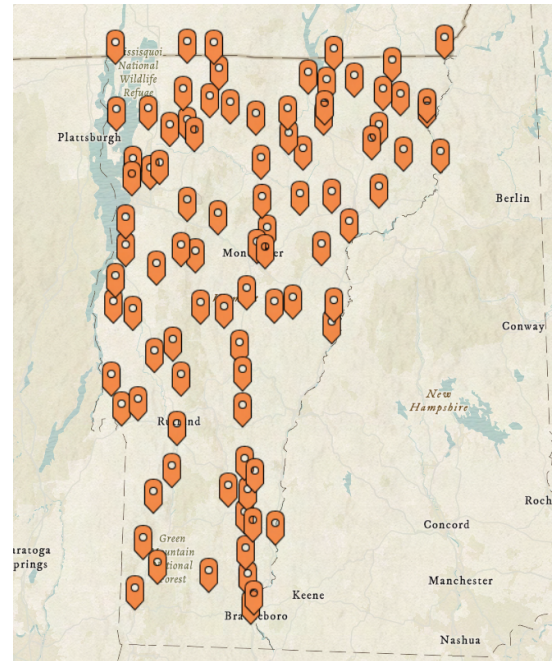
- A majority of adults enjoyed learning state/local history in school
- There is a measurable relationship between interest in history and community engagement, including increased beliefs that citizens can make a difference in their communities.
- Those who engage in local history are more active and engaged in their communities, are more likely to volunteer, attend civic events, and donate money to charity.

Conducted by the Social Opinion Research Lab (SORL) at Castleton University on behalf of the Vermont Historical Society

Building Local History Partnerships

Finding Your Local Historical Society

Are you wondering if your community has a Local Historical Society? There are nearly 200 local historical societies, each playing a vital role in preserving and sharing Vermont's story. The Vermont Historical Society is committed to recognizing local societies as essential stewards of our state's collective past. In fact, the Vermont Historical Society has supported these institutions through the informal League of Local Historical Societies and Museums (LLHSM) since 1953. One helpful resource that the Vermont Historical Society has created is an interactive directory hosted on its website. Click on the map pins to discover addresses and contact numbers.



<https://vermonthistory.org/local-vermont-historical-societies-and-museum-directory>

Other History Keepers

With so many local historical societies, chances are good that you have one in your community. But if not, there are often other organizations or groups that help preserve your local history. This can include:

- Local Libraries
- Town Clerk/Town Office
- State Historic Sites
- Colleges/Universities
- Other Museums
- Local Newspapers

Contact us if you have any problems locating or engaging with your local history community.

- outreach.educator@vermont.history.org

Building Local History Partnerships

Local Historical Society Visits

Visiting a local historical society with students can be an incredibly meaningful and enriching experience - but it takes thoughtful planning to ensure the visit is educational, engaging, and respectful of both the students and the institution. Mutual respect and clear communication are important to ensure the best educational exchange for both parties. It's important to approach the historical society not just as a destination, but as a partner. Local Historical Societies are often staffed by volunteers or small teams that are deeply committed to preserving their community's past. They may be small and resource-limited, but they appreciate it when educators come prepared, open-minded, and collaborative. Here are the key considerations:



Danville Historical Society

Plan Well in Advance

Historical societies may require time to prepare for school visits. Reach out early to discuss possible dates, ideally several weeks in advance. Be flexible with scheduling and be open to adapting your plan to fit their capacity. Sharing the size of your group, and any specific interests or curricular goals will help staff tailor the experience to your needs. Refer to the list below to see what information would be helpful for local historical societies to know in advance.

Potential Questions to Ask the Historical Society

About the Collection

- What kinds of materials or records do you have that might relate to [topic or time-period]?
- Do you have primary sources suitable for [insert grade level]?
- Are there any local events, people, or themes you recommend exploring?

About Access

- Can students view the collection in person, either at the local historical society or in the school? If so, what is the best way to structure the visit?
- Do you offer digital archives or virtual tours?
- Can we photograph or reproduce items?

About Support

- Are there staff or volunteers available to speak with students or provide a short tour?
- Can we work with you to create a digital project for the Vermont Historical Society's "All in Vermont" project?

Building Local History Partnerships

Are you wondering what information to ask of your local historical society? Here are some general suggestions to get you started.

Grade Level and Group Size

- “I’m a middle school teacher. I teach two sections of 7th grade with 25 students in each section.”
- “I’m a home school parent. Would you mind scheduling a meeting with me and my child?”
- “I teach first grade. I would love to bring my class of 18 to the historical society. Is that possible?”

Timeline

- “We hope to visit or begin research between [insert dates here].”
- “Students' final projects are due by [date], and we’d love to share our work with you if you are interested.”
- “Students' final projects are due by [date], and we’d love to share our work with you if you are interested.”

Purpose of the Visit or Project

- “Students will be researching local history. We hope to look at primary sources so that students can learn more about citizens of impact in the area.”
- “My class is examining changes over time. Do you have any photographs that may show the growth of the area?”
- “We’re researching how local industries shaped the community in the 20th century. Do you have anything in your collections that speaks to this topic?”
- “My class is learning about community members. Can you introduce us to historic figures from the area?”

Student Experience

- “Most of my students haven’t worked with original historical documents or material objects before. What should I share with my class about handling before our visit? Will students be able to handle these items themselves? Will you demonstrate handling these items?”
- “My class is learning how to ask quality questions and evaluate sources. They may need support and guidance in selecting sources that can answer their questions. Is this something that you feel comfortable doing? Would you like to see a list of their questions ahead of our visit?”

Building Local History Partnerships

Traveling to a Local Historical Society

Prepare Students Ahead of Time

Introduce students to the historical society's purpose and discuss what they might see or do. Teach them how to handle artifacts respectfully, how to ask thoughtful questions, and why behaviors are expected in a museum or archive setting. This builds a sense of responsibility and curiosity.

Establish Expectations for Behavior and Engagement

Remind and practice positive group behaviors like moving through small spaces quietly, staying with assigned groups, raising a hand to ask a question, and showing gratitude to historical society hosts.

Using guidance from the historical society, discuss norms around asking questions, object handling, and visit structure so that students can feel prepared. It may also be helpful to designate an area for students to retreat if they need a quiet moment to themselves to regroup.

Bringing Local History to Your Classroom

It may not be possible for you to visit your local historical society. Some societies don't have a building to visit. Others may not be able to be open during the time that works best for you (like in the winter). If that's the case, there are other options that might be available to engage with you local history in your classroom.

Many historical societies have members who would be willing to come to your classroom to provide a presentation or show off historical artifacts. Or they may be available to provide a historic walking tour of your town. Local historical society members also make great oral history interviewees.

You can also ask your LHS if they have any of their collections online for students to peruse. With enough advance notice, your LHS may also be able to send you digital materials on a select topic.

All In Vermont Planning Template

We suggest that you think about the following questions about how you plan to implement the *All In Vermont* project within your classroom or school.

IMPLEMENTATION MODEL

My current plan for implementing the *All in Vermont* project is:

- ☐ Voluntary club/after school
- ☐ Entire grade/class
- ☐ Select student enrichment (GT, etc.)

TEACHER UPDATES

Am I receiving the Vermont Historical Society's educator newsletter called - *The Learning Loop*? ☐ Yes ☐ No

PROGRAM BENEFITS

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES

ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT

My administration knows about my plans to participate in the *All In Vermont* project this year.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

I plan to build their support by:

SCHOOL SUPPORT

Other staff at my school with whom I'd like to collaborate:

- ☐ English Language Arts
- ☐ Media Specialist/Library
- ☐ Performance/Theater
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Other: _____

I plan to ask them:

PARENT/GUARDIAN

My plan for letting parents/guardians know about the *All In Vermont* project is:
(blog, email, letter, conferences, etc.)

SCHOOL SHOWCASE

School showcases are great ways to show off your students' hard work. I plan on sharing student work:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

A possible timeframe for a school contest/showcase:

All In Vermont Planning Template

We suggest that you think about the following questions about how you plan to implement All In Vermont before starting!

TOPIC CHOICE

When picking topics, students will have:

- ☐ Will have NO LIMIT on topic choice
- ☐ Will be limited to:

DUPLICATE TOPICS

What are my thoughts on duplicate topics for students in the same class?

- ☐ Yes - duplicate topics is fine
- ☐ No - I'd prefer there are no duplicates

LOCAL HISTORY PARTNER #1

School contests/showcases are great ways to show off your students' hard work. It's can also provide students with feedback before submitting student work to the Vermont Historical Society. A possible timeframe for a school contest/showcase:

LOCAL HISTORY PARTNER #2

School contests/showcases are great ways to show off your students' hard work. It's can also provide students with feedback before submitting student work to the Vermont Historical Society. A possible timeframe for a school contest/showcase:

PROJECT DATES

Contact Local Historical Partner by:

Schedule history partner visit for:

Students choose topics by:

Student research window:

Student project deadline:

SUBMISSION

I plan on submitting *All In Vermont* entries by:

Evaluate Source Reliability

The CRAAP Test

The CRAAP Test is a litmus test to determine whether a source is credible. The CRAAP Test is an evaluation method that was designed by librarian Sarah Blakeslee at the Meriam Library California State University. The acronym stands for Currency, Relevance, Authority, Accuracy, and Purpose. Learn how to evaluate a source by considering the questions associated with each word in the acronym below.



Currency

- Is the information timely?
- Is it out-of-date?
 - Does it matter for what you're researching?
- Has the information been updated since it was published?



Relevancy

- Is the source directly related to your topic?
- Who is the intended audience?
- Does it meet the needs of your work?



Authority

- Is the author qualified to write on this topic?
- What are their credentials that make them an expert?



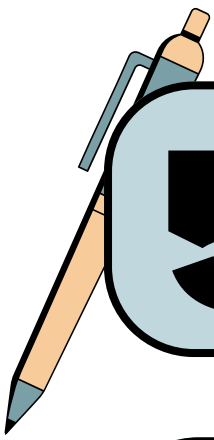
Accuracy

- Is the information supported by evidence?
- Can you find the information from more than one source?
- Is the writing professional?



Purpose

- What is the purpose of the information?
 - Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain, or persuade?
- Is the information presented as fact or opinion?
- Is it balanced?



5 QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN EVALUATING SOURCES

01

Who is the author?

02

What is the purpose?

03

When was it published?

04

Where did it come from?

05

Why is it trustworthy?



Name: _____

Date: _____

Using Evidence • Checklist

01

Source Title: _____

☐

Source Type: _____

☐

Types of Sources

Print Book, Online Book, ebook, Print Journal Article, Online Journal Article, Print Magazine Article, Online Magazine Article, Article from Database, Print Newspaper Article, Online Newspaper Article, Web Page, Television, Film or Music, Photograph, Thesis or Dissertation, Abstract, Book Review, Software, Blog Entry/Comment, Online Course/Discussion Board, Personal Letter or Email, Government Publication, Interview

02

Credibility

Yes

No

☐☐

Is information about the author's qualifications, such as education or profession, available on the source or through additional searching?

☐☐

Does the source provide a reference list or bibliography showing where the information contained within the source came from?

☐☐

Can you find information about whether or not the publisher is reputable?

03

Relevance and Content

Yes

No

☐☐

Is the subject matter of the source related to your topic?

☐☐

Are you able to distinguish between fact and opinion in the source?

04

Date

Yes

No

☐☐

Can you tell when this source was published or revised?

☐☐

Based on the date, will the facts and opinions in this source provide you with current information?

05**Intended Audience**

Yes

No

☐☐

Does this source work well for your audience? For example, if you are writing for a formal, academic audience, is the source a scholarly publication from a journal or a reputable book? If you are writing for the general public, is the source more popular in nature?

06**Purpose**

Yes

No

☐☐

Is the information in this source biased or limited to one point of view?

☐☐

Overall, is this source suitable as a resource for your research purposes?

**Consider**

If you said “no” to any of these questions, it’s a good idea to take another look at your source.

One “no” doesn’t automatically make it unusable, but it should prompt you to think more critically about how reliable it is.

**Record Source Notes or Questions Here**

Making & Analyzing Inferences with Multiple Sources, Excerpts, and Perspectives

Name: _____

Date: _____

View 1

View 2

What was said?

Quote from the text.

What does it mean?

Say it in your own words.

What does it hint at without saying?
(imply or infer)

How do you know?

Supporting evidence and details.

Consider: Do the two views seem to agree, disagree, or show the deepening of an idea?

How are they similar and/or different?

What is the point of view/ perspective of the author?

Name: _____

Date: _____

DIFFERENT • VIEWPOINTS

Use these questions to consider the viewpoints or perspectives of various stakeholders

WHO: Who is invested in this?

WHAT: What questions might they have?

WHY: Why might they be affected?

HOW: How might they react to this?

WHEN: When is it appropriate or timely?

Student Template

Name:	Date:
School Name:	Teacher:

Paragraph Template #1

“These paragraphs will break up other ‘All in Vermont’ feature blocks to help tell my story.”

Student Template

Date:

Teacher:

Paragraph Template #2

"These paragraphs will break up other 'All in Vermont' feature blocks to help tell my story."

[illegible]

Student Template

Name:	Date:
School Name:	Teacher:

Paragraph Template #3

“These paragraphs will break up other ‘All in Vermont’ feature blocks to help tell my story.”

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

Student Template

Name: _____

Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Timeline Template

"This timeline will show you the important events in [topic]."

Add the dates to the left hand column and a corresponding event in the right hand column.

Date	Event

Student Template

Name: _____

Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Compare Side-by-Side Template

“Let’s see how things have changed or how two things differ.”

Insert an image or drawing into each box that you would like your audience to compare side-by-side using a slider.

Image A

Image B

Image Source:

Image Source:

Things to consider: What is different between these two images or maps? What stayed the same, if anything? Why do these changes matter when talking about [topic]?

Write a brief caption that describes what you are comparing.

Student Template

Name: _____

Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Sidecar Template (for multimedia & text stories)

"Let's take a journey through the story of [event/person/place]."

Insert or draw an image related to the larger story that you are telling.
Use a new template for each image.

Image

Image Source

Write a short block of text that describes a part of your story. The text should relate to the image above. Things to consider. What happened? Why is it important?

Text Block

Important!

This image and text block should be featured _____ in my Sidecar.
1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.

Student Template

Name: _____

Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Guided Map Template

"This map will help the audience understand [topic] better."

Insert an image related to the larger story that you are telling.

Put the images in the order that you would like them in the Guided Map Template.

Use one Template per image.

Image

Image Source

Image Title

Image
Description

Image
Location on
Map

Student Template

Name:

Date:

School Name:

Teacher:

Image Gallery Template

"Here are some photos and what we learned from them."

Insert an image into each box.	
Image A	Image B
Image Source:	Image Source:
Image C	Image D
Image Source:	Image Source:
Image E	Image F
Image Source:	Image Source:

Student Template

Name: _____

Date: _____

School Name: _____

Teacher: _____

Audio/Visual Template

“Let’s hear and see what [topic] is all about, first-hand.”

Insert one audio or video clip into the box. If you are using someone else’s material, make sure that you have permission. A link can be submitted for videos from an external source.

Clip

Source

Write a caption that describes the clip. The text should relate to the image above. Things to consider: Who is speaking? What are they saying/showing? How important is the overall story? Are there parts that can be edited for greater focus on [topic]?

Caption



CITE YOUR SOURCES



WHAT IS A CITATION?

A citation is when you reference a source, such as a website, book, or article. A works cited or reference page gives the complete information about that source so your reader can verify your claims.

HOW TO CITE SOURCES

Your citations may include:

- Author's name
- Title
- Title of container
- Other contributors
- Version
- Publisher
- Publication date
- Location
- Date accessed and URL

WHY SHOULD YOU SITE YOUR SOURCES?

- The reader can confirm your statements
- It gives your writing credibility
- You avoid plagiarism
- Sources support your arguments



WHEN TO SITE

You must cite when using:

- Quotes
- Statistics
- Uncommon knowledge
- Paraphrased information

Citation Methods

Style	In-Text Citation	Reference List Example	Common Subjects
APA	(Author, Year)	Author. (Year). Title. Publisher.	Science, Psychology, Education
MLA	(Author Page)	Author. Title. Publisher, Year.	Literature, Arts, Humanities
Chicago	Footnotes + Bibliography	Author. Title. City: Publisher, Year.	History, Fine Arts, Law
Harvard	(Author, Year)	Author. (Year). Title. Edition. Publisher.	Business, Social Sciences, Global

Historical Thinking Skills Rubric - Elementary

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

	Strategies	Procedural Concepts	
Criteria	Corroboration	Claim	Evidence
4	Understands what happened by comparing different texts that say different things about the same topic.	Makes a reasonable idea or claim after looking at evidence from many different kinds of sources.	Explains their ideas with clear evidence from trustworthy sources.
3	Shows how things are alike and different by comparing ideas and information from different texts.	Makes a clear idea or claim after studying evidence from several kinds of sources.	Supports their ideas with good, clear evidence from trusted sources.
2	Finds what is the same and what is different in information from different texts.	Shares an idea or opinion that might not be fully supported by evidence from the sources.	Explains their ideas using broad statements or only a small amount of clear evidence.
1	Shows little or no effort to look at texts for proof that agrees or disagrees.	Does not share their own idea or explanation.	Does not back up their ideas with clear or correct evidence.

Notes or Questions _____

Historical Thinking Skills Rubric - Secondary (1/2)

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Close Reading Strategies		
Criteria	Sourcing	Critical Reading
4	- Fully understands what the sources mean and say. - Names all authors and gives the original dates of both primary and secondary sources. - Evaluates how reliable each source is based on who wrote it, when, and why.	- Questions what the author is saying and figures out their viewpoint. - Uses evidence to check the author's claims and notes what's left out. - Gives examples of persuasive language and explains how it influences the reader. - Looks for unanswered questions to build new interpretations.
3	- Mostly understands what the sources mean and say. - Names most authors and includes most original dates of sources. - Looks at how reliable the sources are based on the author's purpose and time	- Examines the author's main point and viewpoint. - Uses evidence to test the author's claims and notices missing details. - Points out words or phrases used to persuade. - Notes that some questions are left unanswered.
2	- Understands the main ideas of sources with some help or guidance. - Names some authors and includes some original dates. - Tries to judge how reliable the sources are.	- Identifies the author's main ideas and supporting evidence. - States the author's viewpoint. - Notices how language is used to persuade.
1	- Tries to understand what the sources mean with help. - Names few authors and gives few dates. - Does not clearly judge how reliable the sources are.	Tries to find the author's claims or viewpoint, but with limited understanding.

Strategies		Procedural Concepts	
	Corroboration	Contextualization	Claim Evidence
4	- Combines information from different sources to explain an event. - Points out similarities and differences between accounts. - Finds where sources agree or disagree.	- Uses background knowledge to understand the time and place of the sources. - Interprets sources within their historical context instead of judging them by today's standards.	- Makes a clear and thoughtful claim or argument based on strong evidence from many sources. - Supports claims with clear, direct evidence from several reliable sources.
3	- Explains similarities and differences between sources. - Compares information and viewpoints.	- Uses prior knowledge to understand when and where sources were made. - Sometimes interprets sources using a modern viewpoint or limited context.	- Makes a reasonable claim or argument using evidence from selected sources. - Supports claims with some strong, direct evidence from reliable sources.
2	Identifies similarities and differences in information from multiple texts.	Tries to understand when and where sources were made but lacks full understanding of the time period.	- States an idea or claim that may or may not be supported by evidence. - Supports claims using general statements or limited evidence.
1	Shows little or no effort to compare sources for matching or conflicting information.	Shows little or no understanding of the historical setting of the sources.	- Does not make an original claim, argument, or interpretation. - Does not support ideas with clear or correct evidence.

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Vermont Historical Society

Educational Offerings

The logo for Vermont History Day features the words "VERMONT HISTORY DAY" in a white serif font on a dark blue background. "VERMONT" is at the top, "HISTORY" is in the middle, and "DAY" is at the bottom, all separated by thin horizontal lines. Decorative flourishes are on either side of "VERMONT".

VERMONT HISTORY DAY

National History Day is an inquiry-based education program that encourages students to research a topic of their choice as it relates to an annual theme. Students showcase their critical thinking by presenting a project at their school or at the statewide contest - Vermont History Day. History Day can be taught in a variety of classes because students' topics may focus on Vermont, American, or World history.

The program is **open to students in grades 5 through 12**, and home study students ages 10-18. Students may work individually or in groups (up to 5).

The logo for Vermont History Explorer features the words "VERMONT HISTORY EXPLORER" in a white serif font on a dark blue background. "VERMONT" is at the top, "HISTORY" is in the middle, and "EXPLORER" is at the bottom, all separated by thin horizontal lines. Decorative flourishes are on either side of "VERMONT". A small compass rose icon is integrated into the letter "O" in "EXPLORER".

VERMONT HISTORY EXPLORER

Adults can:

- Find **standards-based** lesson plans
- Explore links to primary sources



Kids can:

- Discover the **people** and **events** that helped shape Vermont over time
- Explore fascinating facts about Vermont History on an **illustrated timeline**
- **Uncover artifacts** from the Vermont Historical Society's collection
- Learn about Vermont's **statehood**



School groups can visit the **Vermont History Museum** in Montpelier and explore the exhibit *Freedom and Unity: One Ideal, Many Stories*. This exhibit covers over 400 years of Vermont history in interactive galleries. School groups who book in advance receive free admission to the museum.

Hands-on programs are also available for educational groups for a small fee. Groups interested in hands-on programs **must schedule in advance**. Visit our website for more information on available programs.



vermonthistory.org

vermonthistoryexplorer.org