

3 Day Lesson Plan utilizing *Letters from an American Farmer*

American History Book Club
Teaching American History Grant
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Overview: The following is a three day lesson that will be taught as part of the new 10th grade integrated US and World History course at RMHS. This lesson would be imbedded within a unit on 19th Century Immigration and Urbanization in the US. The goal of this lesson would be to get students to think critically and analytically on how the “we” of who is included as an American has changed over the years as different immigrant groups have come to America. Using Crèvecoeur’s 18th Century *Letter* that poses “What then is the American, this new man?” in addition to ideas on how we define being American today, students will be asked to put into context the eugenics movement of the late 19th Century, when the pseudo-science of ‘racial purity’ influenced immigration laws and defined being an American. Students will try to draw a conclusion or generalization of who is included and who is excluded from a place at the table over the history of America from its earliest days to the present. Students will be asked to think and discuss concepts of what forms our national identity, what groups are accepted into that identity and how that changes over the course of history. One note, as a prerequisite, this unit would come after the eugenics movement and Social Darwinism has been introduced and studied.

Essential Questions for 3 Day Lesson:

- I. Who/what is an American?
- II. What creates our national identity and does that change over time?
- III. What happens when science is used to shape who is included and who is excluded from the American identity?

Learning Objectives for 3 Day Lesson:

At the end of the 3 day lesson, students will be able to:

1. create a generalization or draw a conclusion for what shapes the question what is an American or our national identity over the course of history
2. web or outline the main ideas from the primary source *Crevecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer* – excerpted pp. 23 to 26
3. compare and contrast how the idea of what is an American or our national identity changes over the course of the country's history
4. analyze primary sources in order to connect the idea of being and American during 19th Century Eugenics movement to 18th Century America and to our views today
5. evaluate who is not included as being “American” over time and what may shape that exclusion

Materials:

- Smartboard and media projector in classroom
- Inspiration software
- Handouts of photocopy of back cover of *Crevecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer*
- PDF file posted on Edline of excerpt from *Crevecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer*
 - (or Classroom set of *Crevecoeur's Letters from an American Farmer*)
- Computer Lab in Media Center or Social Studies Laptop Cart with internet access
- Web Site for Facing History and Ourselves at facing.org
- Edline class web page

Utilizing Historical Thinking Benchmarks of the American Historical Association:

- Analysis of primary sources
- Determination of the significance of different kinds of historical change
- Sophistication of how causation refers to continuity and change
- Understanding of the interrelationship among themes, regions and periodization

FIRST DAY

Procedures:

1. On the Smartboard have the question “What/who is an American?”
2. As soon as the students settle, have them take 5 minutes to jot down in notebook their ideas, direct by asking “How would you explain to someone what an American is?”, or “Who gets to be an American today?”.
3. Pair students up and have them pair share their ideas for 5 minutes
4. Bring the class back together for a class discussion,
 - a. now using Inspiration on the Smartboard, create a web of ideas from the students reporting their pair discussions
 - b. in center of inspiration document would be the original question, “What/who is an American?”
5. start class discussion of completed web, direct with the following
 - a. Who is an American?
 - b. What is valued as American or being American?
 - c. Who is excluded?
 - d. What about immigrants of today – illegals, legals, English speaking, from Latin America, from Africa, from the Middle East, Islam, India, or SE Asia?
6. Wrap up discussion with asking students to write down one generalization about being an American from our discussion in their notebooks on a page titled Generalizations of What is an American?
7. Inform that a word doc version of the class web just completed that class will be posted on class Edline page for students to download as part of their homework tonight.
8. Handout photocopy of back cover of Crevecoeur’s Letters from an American Farmer (or have students turn to back cover if have classroom set)
9. Go over who this man is, and what this primary source is about
10. Have students download excerpt of pages 23 to 26 at home tonight as part of their homework or have them read those pages from the book if have class set.
11. Read the assigned pages and sketch/web/outline how the author answers the question he poses on the top of page 26 “What then is the American, this new man?”

First Day Homework:

1. Download class discussion web from Edline
2. Download primary source reading excerpt (or use book if class set) and Sketch/web/outline the interesting or main ideas in notebook the primary source reading

SECOND DAY

Procedures:

1. To start class, pair students up again with different partners
2. Compare sketch/web/outlines of homework for 10 minutes
3. Bring the class back together for a class discussion,
 - a. Using Inspiration on the Smartboard, create a web of ideas from the pair discussions
 - b. in center of the inspiration document would be the Crèvecoeur's question, "What then is the American, this new man?"
4. start class discussion of completed web, direct with the following
 - a. Who is an American to Crèvecoeur?
 - b. What is valued as American in 18th Century?
 - c. Who is excluded from what you know of that period – Africans, Native Americans, non-Christians, are women mentioned?
 - d. Encourage questions and discussion on Crèvecoeur as a Frenchman, and of the period
5. Bring class discussion to essential question how do Crèvecoeur's 18th Century definition compare to the classes web from Day 1
6. Assign HW

Second Day Homework:

1. Download class discussion of Crèvecoeur's *Letters* in form of word document on Edline
2. Write down one generalization about being an American based on both discussions – write it on the same notebook page as generalization from the first day

THIRD DAY

In the real world, this day's lesson may take two days – making this a 4 Day Lesson

Procedures:

1. In the computer lab in Media Center or in class with Laptop Cart
2. Review the aspects/concepts of American Eugenics that we covered before this 3 day lesson
3. Divide class into 5 groups and assign each group one of the following topics concerning eugenics in America
 - a. Propaganda
 - b. Anti-miscegenation Laws
 - c. Forced Sterilization
 - d. Public Education
 - e. Immigration Laws
4. Inform students that our goal today is to see how Eugenics influenced America of late 19th Century into 1st half of 20th Century and to see how the pseudo-science of eugenics answered the question we have looked at – what is an American?
5. Using Microsoft Explorer, students go to facing.org – project the following directions on the smartboard
 - a. Click the link – “Online Campus”
 - b. Click the link – “Online Modules”
 - c. Click the link – “Race and Membership: The Eugenics Movement”
 - d. Click the link – for their group topic
6. Each group of students reads their assigned page, and explore the links to primary sources on each page for example – on the Immigration Page see the list of immigration laws passed in this era, and also the primary source on US House debate on Immigration laws based on Eugenics concepts. – have students note the racial arguments for what is an American
7. Last half of class, as a class, discuss and web with inspiration “What is an American during the age of Eugenics?” by having each group report
8. Wrap up by asking for connections between the three separate views of our essential question and what does this say.
9. Assign homework

Homework/Final Assessment:

1. Download web of class discussion on Eugenics and Immigration in form of word document on Edline
2. **Write an essay that draws a connection between or creates a logical generalization about the three discussions we webbed, in addition be sure to focus the essay on immigration policy influenced by Eugenics by using primary sources from the website used in class and use at least one quote from Crèvecoeur's *Letters*.**

**WORLD HISTORY 2
ESSAYS**

Name _____

Question #: _____

New and Improved Rubric for the 30 Point Essay

Excellent 6	Very Good 5	Good 4	Poor / Not Done 3 2 1 0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly and overtly stated thesis • well organized opening paragraph • all parts of question clearly addressed in intro • All statements made are historically correct 			
Excellent 10	Very Good 9 8	Good 7 6	Not Done 5 4 3 2 1 0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific detail / factual support is given to thesis • Uses and evaluates at least 1 primary source • All evidence supports thesis or refutes others • Well organized and logical progression of information • 1 clear statement of student evaluation of a specific piece of evidence • All statements of fact are historically accurate 			
Excellent 6	Very Good 5	Good 4	Poor / Not Done 3 2 1 0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contains student's analysis • satisfies thesis expressed in introduction • evaluates information provided in body • All statements made are historically correct • Does NOT introduce new evidence 			
Excellent 8	Very Good 7	Good 6 5	Poor / Not Done 4 3 2 1 0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct verb tense and verb tense agreement • Correct spelling including use of capitalization of formal nouns • Correct punctuation • No Contractions • No 1st or 2nd person pronouns – I, me, my, you, yours, we, us, our • No addressing the reader 			