



The Jewish Education Center Of Cleveland's Óã-- a newsletter for educators

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Teaching History Through Text

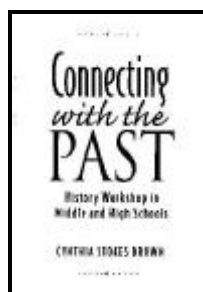
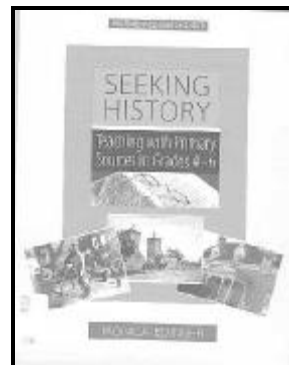
Seeking History: Teaching with Primary Sources in Grades 4-6, by Monica Edinger (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000).

Beyond the Textbook: Teaching History Using Documents and Primary Sources, by David Kobrin (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1996).

These two complementary books take the reader on incredible journeys of classroom change from the first person perspectives of educators who have learned to integrate primary sources into social studies classes. Each book offers a rationale for moving beyond the textbook, and each offers many curricular samples out of real teaching experiences.

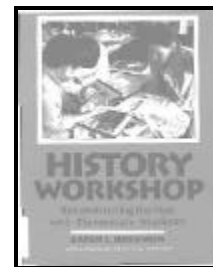
- Edinger, a fourth grade classroom teacher, offers a broad definition of primary sources, including not only her use of a first-hand account of the Pilgrims published in 1622 (Mourt's Relation), but also Ethiopian artifacts sent by Jane Kurtz, the author of The Storyteller's Beads. Edinger shows how to scaffold the learning of upper elementary students so that texts and materials not of "reading appropriate level" are accessible. A CD of primary sources and weblinks is included with her book.
- Kobrin, a professor of education at Brown University, shares his view that students can learn to work as "student historians," sifting through primary sources and drawing conclusions. Most helpful, beyond the specific lessons provided, is his explanation of the importance of developing "readiness" in students to work with primary sources, as well as the teaching examples he offers in support.

-Reviewed by Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz, Director of Curriculum Resources



Connecting With the Past: History Workshop in Middle and High Schools, by Cynthia Stokes Brown. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1994). In a history workshop, students examine historical artifacts, explore documents and literature, and write about what they have learned. Using the Holocaust as an example, this book takes readers into a classroom, showing how to put history workshops into practice through theoretical knowledge and step-by-step details.

History Workshop: Reconstructing the Past With Elementary Students, by Karen L. Jorgensen. (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1993). On the belief that children construct historical meaning as they talk, read, write, draw, and reflect, the author adapts the history workshop to create an environment where children discover and rethink historical theories. Transcripts of student-teacher discussions and examples of student work are included to show how the studio workshop approach works.



-Reviewed by Linda R. Silver, JECC Librarian

The Writing on The Wall. SVE & Churchill Media. 1995, 45 minutes, color.

Coinciding with the anniversary of Kristallnacht (the night of destruction of synagogues and businesses in 1938, Germany) three Catholic teenage boys deface a local Jewish temple and its rabbi's home. The boys are caught and the judge is about to give them a harsh sentence, when the rabbi asks the judge to remand the boys to him. In innovative ways, the rabbi teaches the boys about Judaism and tolerance, including a lesson in the origins of Christianity and Judaism and a personal look at the horrors of the Holocaust.



-Reviewed by Bonnie Shapiro, Ratner Media & Technology Center Associate



Teaching With Documents: Using Primary Sources From the National Archives. Washington, DC: National Archives and National Council for the Social Studies, 1989).

Interesting and varied primary sources have been assembled in this collection, including maps, letters, and censuses. Background information, teaching suggestions, activities for students, and a photograph of the document are given for each source included. The activities could be adapted to other primary sources so the use of the book is not limited to American history.

-Reviewed by Linda R. Silver, JECC Librarian

Teaching for Justice in the Social Studies Classroom: Millions of Intricate Moves (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2000).

This book is an edited collection of articles written by classroom teachers in various projects and curricula they developed to teach justice to their students. These are honest accounts, with one author even admitting, "Before I end up sounding like a movie script starring Michelle Pfeiffer, let me quickly insert into this idyllic classroom a word or two of other things you might see: kids whining and competing my attention, *Right now*; etc." But these are professionally written accounts that offer ideas and issues for teachers to consider. For example, one author (Sandra Childs) describes an experiment she did in her classroom to introduce a unit on the Holocaust, and discusses moral issues of what she did in the name of education. There are articles on social justice and Vietnam, economics, immigration, social protest, and child labor (this latter article complements a JECC curriculum department problem-based learning unit on the same topic). For Jewish and general studies teachers looking for thoughtful perspectives on the "big idea" of social justice, this book is a fascinating one to read.

-Reviewed by Nachama Skolnik Moskowitz, Director of Curriculum Resources

Websites

Jewish-American History on the Web (<http://www.jewish-history.com>) - Particularly strong collection of primary source documents, diaries, and journals by Jews living during the Civil War period and in the Wild West. A great resource for teachers who want their students to hear from the mouths those who lived the history our students are learning.

Eyn Parparim Po (There Are No Butterflies Here) (<http://galim.org.il/parparim>) - A collection of poetry and art by the children in the Terezin Ghetto. **In Hebrew.**

Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs (<http://www.israel-mfa.gov.il>) - A gold mine of primary source documents, photographs, graphs, and statistics on Israeli society, economy, history, archeology, and government.

-Reviewed by Maury Greenberg, Director, Technology Resources & Professional Development