Do You See What I See? Viewpoints on Reconstruction
by
Sally Todorow; Helen O’Brien; Lisa Prylucki

Lesson Description: Students will use primary and secondary sources to discover that historical interpretations are affected by individual author’s point of views.

NOTE: This lesson may require some sensitivity training. Please review the lesson before implementation.

Grade Level: 5th

History Standard Three: Students will explain why historical accounts of the same event sometimes differ and will relate this explanation to the evidence presented or the point-of-view of the author.

End of Cluster Expectations (Benchmarks): Explain why historical accounts of the same event sometimes differ and relate this explanation to the evidence presented or the point of view of the author.

Essential Question:
- How could there be different explanations of the same event in history?

Assessment I: Constructed Response

Benchmark Statement: This assessment should give evidence of the student’s ability to identify different points of view and to address why groups of people might feel that way.

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Prompt: Why might groups of people feel differently about the same event? Use the quotes above about Columbus’ Discovery of America to support your answer.
Sample Response:

*All of the quotes in group A, show the viewpoint of someone who idolizes Christopher Columbus. They agree that he has made significant contributions to society. The quotes in group B, show the viewpoints of people who believe Columbus was not as heroic as others might believe him to be. They believe that America was not originally ours for the taking. These people are all talking about the same event, yet may feel differently because of who they are and their point-of-view. Each person’s background will influence the way that they look at a given event.*

**Rubric:**

2 – This response gives a valid interpretation of the quotes, with accurate and relevant details.
1 – This response gives a valid interpretation of the quotes, with inaccurate, irrelevant, or no details.
0 – Inaccurate response.

**Assessment 2: Multiple Choice**

**Benchmark Statement:** This assessment should give evidence of the student’s ability to differentiate between different viewpoints on a given issue.

**Prompt:** New houses are being built on what was once farmland. Which headline will represent the point of view of a company that builds houses?

A) Who Will Grow the Food to Feed the Children?
B) Open Space in Danger!
C) Finally! Affordable Housing Available!
D) Protect Our Farmland!

**Answer:**

C – The students will realize that a new housing company will want to advertise affordable housing that the consumers will purchase. Item A and D are from the point of
view of farmers wanting to protect their land. Item B is from the point of view of an environmentalist.

Objective(s):
1. Students will analyze primary sources to draw conclusions about viewpoints.
2. Students will be able to recognize different interpretations of the same event.
3. Students will explain why there are different points of view concerning the same event.

Prior Knowledge and Skills:
- Students will have worked with primary and secondary sources previously.
- Students will have learned about the concept of analyzing point of view in reading.
- Students will have an understanding of Early American History, including the Civil War period.
- Students will have a basic understanding of Reconstruction.

Time to Complete: 2 -3 days, 45 minute sessions

Materials/resources needed:
1. Choose one of the following picture books for modeling point-of-view:
   a. True Story of the Three Little Pigs by Jon Scieszka
   b. Hey Little Ant by Phillip M. Hoose
   c. George vs. George by Rosalyn Schanzer
   d. Encounter by Jane Yolen
2. Handout 1 – Constructed Response Assessment
3. Handout 2 – Multiple Choice Assessment
4. Handout 3 – Discussion Wheel Graphic Organizer
5. Handout 4 – View Point Graphic Organizer
6. Handout 5 – Joint Resolution of the House of Representatives and the Senate in Delaware
7. Handout 6 – Reconstruction, Lest You Forget
8. Handout 7 – Booklet
9. Handout 8 – Ticket Out of Class

Procedures:

Day 1:
1. The teacher will pose the following questions to the students, to help activate prior knowledge on point of view:
   a. When you hear the term “point of view” what comes to mind?  
      *(How someone sees an issue or an event)*
   b. Can there be more than one point of view about something? Why? 
      *(Yes, because someone may see it differently than the next person.)*
   c. How could you determine which point of view is correct? 
      *(It depends on who the person is and what they have seen or heard.)*
   d. Is there only one correct point of view for any given situation? 
      *(No)*
Based on student responses, the teacher may want to review “point of view” by reading one of the following picture books listed in the materials section. The teacher will then discuss with the class the different points of view that were illustrated in the book.

2. The teacher will review the students’ knowledge on the Reconstruction Era. Students will work in a group setting to create a Discussion Wheel Graphic Organizer (Handout 3) illustrating what they know about Reconstruction. Students will then share responses with the rest of the class. While students are sharing their responses with the class, the teacher may record the responses on an overhead. This activity will show their understanding of the main events that took place during Reconstruction.

3. The teacher will then ask:
   “What were the different points of view about Reconstruction?”
   (The people in the North who came to help rebuild the South; The people in the South who did not want the North invading their territory; The slaves who were finally freed; The people in the North who came to take advantage of the South; The women who felt discriminated upon)
   “Why do you think that these views differed?”
   (Each viewpoint is represented by a different group of people who are coming from different backgrounds and have a strong belief about Reconstruction.)

Day 2:

1. The teacher will need to prepare the class for the sensitive language that they will be reading in the documents, i.e. negro. The teacher will remind students about the time period when these articles were written.

2. The teacher will introduce Handout 4, the Viewpoint Graphic Organizer. The teacher may want to make an overhead of this organizer to help guide the students’ discussion.

3. The teacher will begin discussion, by displaying Handout/transparency 5, Chapter 612, Laws of Delaware, Joint Resolution. The teacher will read through the document with students and will ask the following questions, filling out the graphic organizer as they go.
   Note: It may be helpful to underline/highlight important details on the overhead.
   The teacher will have to guide students through this document due to the vocabulary.
   “What is the point of view of this document?” (viewpoint)
   (These people are against the Civil Rights bill being passed)
   “What evidence do you have to support your opinion?” (evidence)
   (They state: uncompromising opposition to a proposed act of Congress, opposing every measure designed to promote equality of the negro with the white man, unceasing opposition to making Negros eligible to public offices to sit on juries, etc.)
   “Who do you think wrote this document?” (who)
   (Representatives in the State of Delaware)
   “During what time period in history, do you think this document was created?”
   (In the Civil War time period; actually 1873, but students may think it was written pre-civil war because of the content)
   “Do you agree or disagree with the viewpoint in this document, why?”
(Disagree, because the slaves were free and should have been treated equally.)

4. The teacher will then pass out Handout/transparency 6, Reconstruction, Lest You Forget, to students.

5. Students will read through passage with teacher and will discuss the viewpoint of the author, completing the second part of the graphic organizer.

6. This would be a recommended natural place to stop for day two. Students will report out to the rest of the class their findings. Students will look for similarities in their work. Teacher will give the students some food for thought: “Do you think these are the only viewpoints that people had during Reconstruction, why?”

   (Yes, because there were more groups of people that were affected by Reconstruction)

   “Tomorrow we will explore some other viewpoints about this time period.”

**Day 3:**

1. Warm-up: The teacher will begin to review point of view, through a student led skit. The teacher will choose two willing students to come up front. (This is only a suggestion, the teacher may use their own ideas) The students and the teacher will role play their behavior during art class. The teacher will blatantly praise one student for their good behavior, while blaming the other student for their misbehavior and poor habits. The two students will then step outside the classroom, while the rest of the class discusses what they just saw. The teacher will then pull the other two students back into the classroom, and they will verbalize what they experienced. The teacher will then include his/her viewpoint, of just wanting a smoothly running class period. The class will see that all accounts will be different. This will lead into the continuation of the point of view lesson.

2. The teacher will then pass out the booklet, Handout 7, Do You See What I See (contains various viewpoints on Reconstruction) for the next activity. The teacher will explain to the students:

   “Today you are going to be working with your partner to read and interpret the various quotes to determine the view point of the author. Be sure to find evidence that will support your interpretation of the quote.”

   “Following each quote, you will find an organizer similar to what we used in class yesterday. Be sure to complete this organizer and be prepared to share with the rest of the class.”

3. Allow students time to complete the activity, assisting them as needed.

4. Toward the end of the period, the teacher will bring the class back together to share what was found inside their viewpoint booklet. The teacher will pose the following questions:

   “What different viewpoints did you uncover about Reconstruction?”

   (A woman who was unhappy about not having equal rights, A Southerner who just wanted the North to leave them alone; A man who tries to help a recently freed slave, but realizes that life is not easy for them even though they are free; A Northerner who doesn’t understand why the Southerners are not appreciative of what they are doing.)

   “Why do you think there are so many different viewpoints?”
(There were so many different viewpoints, because there were many different groups of people who were impacted by Reconstruction. Each group comes from a different region of the United States and the area where they grew up and their background influenced what they believed.)

“What can we learn from reading about these different viewpoints?”

(That this event has impacted each person differently.)

“Can we determine if Reconstruction was a success or failure, based on the work we have completed?” (Open ended question)

(It depends on which historian or author’s viewpoint you are interpreting.)

Closure:
The teacher will provide each student with Handout 8, their Ticket Out of Class. Students will need to answer the essential question:

- How could there be different explanations of the same event in history?

Assessment: (Note: May administer assessment on the following day)

Administer the constructed response and multiple choice questions. See Handouts 1 and 2.
### Handout 1 – Constructed Response Assessment

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Handout 3 – Discussion Wheel
Handout 4 – Viewpoint Graphic Organizer

Handout #4 Viewpoint Graphic Organizer:
Issue: Reconstruction

Who

Viewpoint

Evidence

Who

Viewpoint

Evidence
Handout 5 – Chapter 612, Laws of Delaware, Joint Resolution

CHAPTER 611.
JointResolution authorizing the Destruction of certain State Bonds.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met, That a committee of two members on the part of the Senate and three members on the part of the House of Representatives be and they are appointed in conjunction with the State Treasurer to count and destroy certain State Bonds now deposited in the vaults of the Farmers’ Bank at Dover.

Adopted at Dover, April 10, 1873.

CHAPTER 612.
JointResolution in opposition to making Negroes the equals of White men, politically or socially.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met, That the members of this General Assembly, for the people they represent, and for themselves, jointly and individually, do hereby declare uncompromising opposition to a proposed act of Congress, introduced by Hon. Charles Sumner at the last session, and now on file in the Senate of the United States, known as the “Supplemental Civil Rights Bill,” and all other measures intended or calculated to equalize or amalgamate the negro race with the white race, politically or socially, and especially do they proclaim unceasing opposition to making negroes eligible to public offices, to sit on juries, and to their admission into public schools where white children attend, to their admission on terms of equality with white people in churches, public conveyances, places of amusement, or hotels, and to any and every measure designed or having the effect to promote the equality of the negro with the white man in any of the relations of life, or which may by possibility conduce to such result.

Resolved, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representative requested to vote against and use all honorable means to defeat the passage by Congress of the bill referred to in the foregoing resolution, known as the “Supplemental
RECONSTRUCTION; LEST YOU FORGET

I was born in Friars Point, Coahoma County, Mississippi in 1871. I am 83 years old and have lived there my entire life. I was a child during the Reconstruction period.

I read and hear of much talk of integration and equality between the Negroes and the white people. This idea seems to come, as always, from the North where the Negro is a small minority. I wish that the young people of the South today could know what we older people do about racial equality here in the South.

When I was a little girl we had racial "equality" in Mississippi. My earliest recollection was having a Negro sheriff in Coahoma County. I remember the hardship brought to us by the Yankee Carpetbagger and the Southern Scalawag who sought the all powerful Negro vote.

But especially do I remember the horror of Negro rule. It is the most vivid recollection of my 83 years. I remember the threats and insults by the Negroes in power. I remember the Friars Point race riot in 1875. My father, Jackson Sessums Fisher rode with General Chalmers and Major Witt Alcorn, Captain T.S. Aderholt, and others in the civilian cavalry charge that ended the race riot and the Negro rule. There were hundreds of Negroes and they had nearly all the guns and ammunition. There were only 75 white men and boys, poorly armed. I remember the terror stricken white women and children and how neighbors' families were sheltered in our home. Yes, I remember "equality", when the Negro had the balance of power. I could write volumes on the subject.

I have had Negro friends all my life. I hope they will continue to progress and have pride in their own race and accomplishments. I hope and pray that integration of the races will never come about.

I hope my great-granddaughters will never know the horror of a race riot. Times have changed in eighty years, but people have not. Integration would bring nothing but trouble and misery to the people of Mississippi.
Social Studies Coalition of Delaware
Handout 7 - Booklet

Signature Lesson

Senate, the House and the Mississippi in both
his home state of
Davis represented
Warren Jefferson
before the Civil
States of America;
the Confederate
the only President
mourn for serving as
Jefferson Davis.
Albert and alone
About the Author:
Jefferson Davis
1865

(When asked about
the 15th Amendment.)
"A woman had
had a right to have
just
as much as a man."
Sojourner Truth
1871

About the Author:
Sojourner Truth (1797-
1883) was born into
slavery in NY State. At
the age of 36, she
escaped to Canada
but returned 2 years
later to work as a
domestic servant. So-
journer went on to
become active in both
the Abolitionist and
women's rights move-
ments.

William Ferguson, Proprietor of
the “Shaving Emporium” Ex-
change Hotel:

"I saw a drunken white man
assault a colored boy, for
some time the boy made no
resistance, but finally seized
and threw the white man. He
was arrested and strung up by
his arms in front of the Ex-
change Hotel. I saw him there
suspended, and made his case
known to two Northern indi-
ces, one of whom went with
me to the office of the Pro-
vest Marshal where I stated
the facts of the case and the
boy was released, together
with another man who was
being punished in a similar
manner..." -1865

The need for our set
South looking to make a
clientele was a Union
about the anchor:
Floyd Carroll 1871
with open arms? not embarassed
voices... Why are they
Southerners are in
The deceased
Handout 8 – Ticket Out of Class

How could there be different explanations of the same event in history?