

TAHSC Summary Essay

I absolutely loved this course! It was so interesting connecting everything that we teach in fourth grade social studies to events in our own state. Differentiating between primary and secondary sources and understanding how to use them in social studies helps the students not only to see the real world of history, but also allows the teacher to easily integrate language arts with social studies.

Differentiating between primary and secondary sources was a difficult topic for some of my students. They needed a lot of assistance when it came to analyzing the memoir. It is great to see now when most of my students recognize primary sources in our textbook or outside of the classroom.

Last week I spent a few days discussing our first president, George Washington, because of Presidents' Day and we just finished up the Revolutionary War. We used several primary sources in class such as portraits containing Washington and four different documents to help my students analyze George Washington's life. Having recently taught my students primary sources and how to analyze them using the PAST handout, I had them once again use that handout to evaluate the Washington primary sources. This time the study of the documents went much smoother and with even more practice in the future using primary source documents, it will become even easier for the students.

Professor Anderson is very knowledgeable with every topic of history he taught us. When he lectured, it would be like story time. He brought history to life and that's what I want to do for my students. Instead of hearing, "Oh, no it's social studies," I want to hear "Let's do social studies all day long!" The required readings were an excellent choice for this time period. When teaching the Stono Rebellion to my students this year, I knew more about it and could even share information I received from Professor Anderson's class and the book, *Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt*.

The master teacher sessions were very informative. I especially enjoyed all of the handouts and information that was included in the TAHSC binder. Mandy had some neat group activities that I have adapted and used in my classroom, such as the PAST handout. She taught us several strategies to make analyzing and teaching primary sources student friendly. The primary source documents that she used in her sessions were also interesting to learn about and be able to have for my fourth grade classroom. I will certainly use the Campbell letters when I teach Civil War. It was ironic that those letters were one of my favorite primary sources that were shared during this course and we were given the book, "Him on the One Side and Me on the Other" at our fall meeting which is the book containing the Civil War Letters.

Having the opportunity to visit so many cultural institutions and listen to several speakers that work with an institution was very rewarding. It gave me many ideas for places to go on field trips or have guest speakers come in and talk to the students. My favorite cultural institutions would have to be going to the different houses: Hanover and Hopewell Houses, Ashtabula Historic House, and Fort Hill. I enjoy seeing a piece of

architectural history and the way they lived years ago. Cowpens was also helpful to go visit since that was what my lesson was on. Just walking the trail and visualizing that an actual war occurred there is exciting. We walked where Patriots and Redcoats did! Seeing the actual park and the layout of the land helped me understand the Battle of Cowpens when I read and studied it.

The students loved learning about the Battle of Cowpens. They really put themselves in that part of history as they wrote their journal entries. Pretending to be a Patriot soldier at the Battle of Cowpens was like playing a game for some of them. I even had one student compare it to one of their war games they played on their computer at home. After discussing the Memoir of Major Thomas Young, they knew what it felt to be there, cold and nervous about the next day, but yet excited because of the morale General Morgan gave them around the campfire that night. They felt a connection after reading the memoir and when they wrote their own journal entries, as if they were a Patriot ready to fight in the Battle of Cowpens, their words seem to just fall on the paper. None of the students said to me, "I don't know what to write!" Using primary source documents in social studies brings it all to life and I believe it also motivates the students to want to know more about the topic being discussed.

This class has been wonderful and I am so glad I've had the opportunity to participate in it. Using primary source documents in social studies allows the students to make connections with people and things in history and allows teachers to integrate language arts skills. I would definitely recommend this class to anyone. I liked history before, but after learning about using primary sources and how much fun it is, I can now say I love it!