

# Visual Literacy and Primary Sources

By Dana Paliga

**Grade level:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Duration:** 1<sup>st</sup> day: 50 minutes

2<sup>nd</sup> day: 50 minutes

**Overview/rationale:** Students will first begin by going to the Library of Congress page. They will be exploring and investigating the website to see everything that the website provides. It is an awesome site that provides the students with looking at many visual things. They can identify maps, pictures, and any primary sources. This is important because students can actually see first hand pictures that may have meaning to them. They can relate it to their own lives.

## Objectives:

Students will be able to:

Identify primary sources through the Library of Congress

Compare and contrast at least two different sources on the website

Use higher order thinking questions to complete their presentation

## State goals:

**5.A.3a** Identify appropriate resources to solve problems or answer questions through research.

**5.B.3b** Identify, evaluate and cite primary sources.

**5.C.3b** Prepare and orally present original work (e.g., poems, monologues, reports, plays, stories) supported by research.

**2.B.3b** Compare and contrast common literary themes across various societies and eras

**1.B.3b** Identify text structure and create a visual representation (e.g., graphic organizer, outline, drawing) to use while reading.

## Materials:

Computer, internet, visual imagery

## Procedures:

### Day 1:

1. Tell students that they will be investigating the LOC website.
2. Let them know that they can look up any video, artifact, map, or photograph that may have meaning to them. Make sure that they find something that can relate to their own history.
3. Once they begin their search, the teacher will guide them through it.
4. Model for the students all the important things that students may have trouble finding. Have students follow along.
5. This is a chance for students to do it on their own, but they will be provided with a list of questions. What do you like about this picture? Why do you think it is still saved? What did you learn from this image? Who does this make you think of? What details in this picture are meaningful to you? What year do you think this was made? If you were an interviewer, what questions would you ask this person? Compare and contrast two pieces of work from the same topic. How does the imagery make you feel?

6. Put the information into a semantic organizer.
7. Throughout the investigation, the students can think a loud and ask the teacher anything that they may be having trouble with.

**Day 2:**

1. The students can finish up any art that they may still want to see.
2. They will be giving brief oral presentations on what they established while investigating the Library of Congress.

**Adaptations:**

For students with visual impairments, make sure that the key board has larger letters to type on. For students with cerebral palsy, give them a cue ball that is hooked up to the computer so that they can press it and the mouse will move it.

**Assessments:**

Have the students give a five to seven minute presentation on the sources that they looked up. They can create a PowerPoint or a poster board. The students will have answered several higher order thinking questions along the way.

**Reflection:**

After completing this assignment, I feel that the students learned so much from it. It worked out so wonderfully. Students learned history and integrated visual imagery and literacy from it. They learned new words and were given the chance to explore new technology. This is a very useful resource with many primary sources. Students incorporated things that they wanted to learn about their own history and were able to find information on it.