

**Who is this toolkit for?**

**The Pathways Social Studies team has devoted their work for the year to the creation of a Toolkit for teachers, curriculum specialists, and campus and district leaders. The toolkit is a compilation of resources designed to help educators understand what skills students need to be successful in transition, as well as how to design learning experiences which produce those outcomes.**

**What is in this toolkit?**

***Introduction:*** *For the Leaders and Educators*

***Strategies***

1. **Balanced Assessment: Developing Lessons with the End [Assessment] in Mind**
2. **Social Studies Vocabulary Strategies**
3. **Social Studies Reading and Document Analysis Strategies**
4. **Writing Strategies for Social Studies**
5. **The Best of the Web: Resources, Lesson Plans and Primary Sources**
6. **Self-Assessment**
7. **Reading List**

***Introduction: For the Leaders and Educators***

**House Bill 5** passed by the 83rd Legislature made sweeping changes to graduation requirements for high school students. The clear message emanating from the new law was a restructuring of focus from one of high school graduation, to one of college and career readiness.

Five years ago, Dr. Bruce Leslie, Chancellor of the Alamo Colleges, approached the THECB with a request for funding to study a the growing need for student remediation in math, reading and writing at colleges and universities. Approximately eight in ten students who registered for courses in the Alamo Colleges were being placed in developmental education classes. This created a growing burden on both the colleges for space and instructors, and students who were being required to pay for non-credit courses**. The Pathways Project was born.**

The **Pathways Project** is a grant funded project of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Alamo Colleges. The project was created in 2008 to study the reasons for the number of students entering college who were not deemed college ready and therefore were required to take developmental education courses. The partnership included six school districts ( Edgewood ISD, Harlandale ISD, SAISD, Judson ISD, Northside ISD, and North East ISD), the Alamo Colleges and UTSA. Four vertical teams consisting of high school and college instructors in English, History, Math and Science were created to study the issues in each discipline. Originally envisioned as a curriculum alignment project, the teams for Science, History and English began to focus more on the issues associated with the research of David T. Conley, PhD Professor, University of Oregon; CEO, Educational Policy Improvement Center (EPIC), and author of the book College Knowledge.

David T. Conley, has conducted extensive research on the subject of college and career readiness. He has identified four dimensions describing a range of skills and competencies and seven key principles of college and career readiness. District and Campus leaders must develop a shared vision of this idea if the culture of our educational systems and the outcomes for our students are going to change.

**Seven Key Principles of College Readiness**

**Principle 1:** Create and maintain a college-going culture in the school

**Principle 2:** Create a core academic program that is aligned with and leads to college and career readiness

**Principle 3:** Teach key self-management skills and expect students to use them

**Principle 4:** Make College real by preparing students for the complexity of applying and transitioning to college successfully

**Principle 5:** Create assignments and grading policies in high school that more closely approximate college expectations

**Principle 6:** Make the senior year meaningful and challenging

**Principle 7:** Build partnerships with and connections to postsecondary programs and institutions

**The Four Keys to College and Career Readiness**

College and career readiness consists of four “keys.” Students are ready to the degree to which they have mastered all four. They consist of the following:

***Key Cognitive Strategies***

Key Cognitive Strategies are the ways of thinking that are necessary for college-level work. They include formulating hypotheses and developing problem-solving strategies, identifying sources and collecting information, analyzing and evaluating findings or conflicting viewpoints, organizing and constructing work products in a variety of formats, and monitoring and confirming the precision and accuracy of all work produced.

***Key Content Knowledge***

Key Content Knowledge refers to key foundational content and “big ideas” from core subjects that all students must know well, and an understanding of the structure of knowledge in core subject areas, which enables students to gain insight into and retain what they are learning. Also included in this Key are the technical knowledge and skills associated with career aspirations, the ways in which students interact with content knowledge, its perceived value to them, the effort they are willing to expend to learn necessary content, and their explanations of why they succeed or fail in mastering this knowledge.

***Key Learning Skills and Techniques***

Key Learning Skills and Techniques consist of two broad categories: student ownership which includes goal setting, persistence, self- awareness, motivation, progress monitoring, help seeking, and self-efficacy; and specific learning techniques, such as time management, study skills, strategic reading, memorization techniques, collaborative learning, technology skills, and self- monitoring.

***Key Transition Knowledge and Skills***

Key Transition Knowledge and Skills are necessary to navigate successfully the transition to life from high school. This information is often privileged knowledge that is not equally accessible to all students. Least likely to have this information are students from families and communities historically underrepresented in higher education or certain career pathways. This key includes, among other things, knowing which courses to take in high school in order to be admitted to an appropriate postsecondary program, understanding financial aid options and procedures, being focused on a career pathway or major, understanding college-level and workforce norms and expectations, and knowing how to be a self-advocate within the institutional framework of postsecondary programs.

**Strategies**

*A.) Balanced Assessment: Developing Lessons with the End [Assessment] in Mind.*

Incorporating a balanced assessment plan that includes performance tasks, project based learning and portfolio assessment, in addition to traditional standardized tests required in most states, will provide students with the opportunity to develop evidence that measures the depth of their learning. In addition, these types of assessments help students to make connections by requiring them to apply knowledge and skills to a new or different real world setting. In addition, these types of assessments contribute to development of the “cognitive skills” needed to be successful in transition from high school to college and career. That is the reason these types of assessments are referred to as “Assessments for Learning.”

If your goal is college ready students your assessment must be development assessment you must develop college level performance tasks. <https://edpolicy.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/publications/creating-systems-assessment-deeper-learning_0.pdf>

Transforming Assessment An Online Resource for Educators

This website is brought to you by *connect2learning*, Canada’s leading assessment *for* learning publisher developing and delivering innovative programs, products, and services that empower K-12 educators to support the success of each learner. We value and respect the life-long learning and diverse learning needs of students and educators. We remain committed to publishing quality practical resources and providing personalized capacity-building services that truly empower educators to support the success of each student.

Some of our more recent publications include *Quality Assessment in High Schools: Accounts from Teachers* as well as our Leaders’ Series: *Leading the Way to Assessment for Learning: A Practical Guide* and *Transforming Schools and Systems Using Assessment: A Practical Guide*.

<http://annedavies.com/transformingAssessment.html>

Rick Stiggins

<http://www.schoolimprovement.com/experts/rick-stiggins/>

Assessment for Learning

Sharing assessment strategies that help students learn.

<http://salemafl.ning.com/>

Authentic Education - Grant Wiggins

<http://www.authenticeducation.org/index.lasso>

*B.) Social Studies Vocabulary Strategies*

Ensure your students are knowledgeable in the terminology both in the cross-curriculum vocabulary as well as content-specific. Students commonly become confused because of the wording not necessarily associated with the unit. Some students have demonstrated a lack of comprehension of testing terminology that inhibits their ability to demonstrate accurately their knowledge of core subject areas.

**Ideas for your toolkit:**

1. Create a student-made glossary at the back of their class journal of terms students need to master that are not part of their unit vocabulary. Add terms as you go, maybe a couple per week as they come up. Embedding these terms in unit tests can check for understanding. The glossary will be unique to the class. Be sure to include derivatives of the word and definition.

Example: **Infer**: to form (an opinion) from evidence : to reach (a conclusion) based on

 known facts, to hint or suggest (something). in·ferred: in·fer·ring **…**

*(www.merriam-webster.com)*

2. Reverse-Read techniques can help students identify terms they are unfamiliar with prior to reading a passage so when they do read it those words are no longer a hindrance. This strategy asks students to begin at the end of the passage, reading toward the beginning, and identify words requiring further explanation. As a class, the teacher and students define these words. Students should annotate their papers with brief definitions. At this point the student should be able to read the passage to find the historical content and context without additional unknown vocabulary, greatly enhancing their success rate. (*7 Steps to a Language-Rich Interactive Classroom*, Seidlitz & Perryman)

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| **Cross-Curriculum Terminology Examples:** | **Social Studies Terminology Examples** |
| Align/Alignment | Advocate/Advocacy |
|  Analyze | Civilize/Civilization |
| Category/Categorize | Contribute/Contribution |
| Chronology/Chronological | Dynamic |
| Compare/Comparison | Emerge/Emergence |
| Demonstrate | Entity |
| Differentiate/Differentiation | Escalate/Escalation |
| Disseminate | Heritage |
| Evaluate/Evaluation | Historiography |
| Formulate | Innovate/Innovation/Innovative |
| Generalize/Generalization | Insurgence  |
| Infer/Inference | Legacy |
| Interpret/Interpretation | Litigate/Litigation |
| Predict | Resurgence |
| Sequence/Sequential | Revolution/Revolutionary |
| Speculate/Speculation | Solvent/Solvency |
| Support | Valid/Validity |

**Academic Vocabulary**

***We think with words, therefore to improve thinking, teach vocabulary.* -- A. Draper and G. Moeller**

Understanding academic vocabulary is a key component to success in both a high school and college classroom. Oftentimes, academic vocabulary is not explicitly taught. This part of the social studies toolkit seeks to provide some strategies for teaching vocabulary.

Marzano describes a six step strategy for teaching vocabulary. Many of the activities on this page encompass one or more steps.

**A. Marzano’s Six Step Strategy for Teaching Vocabulary**

1. Provide a description, explanation, or example of the new term.

2. Ask students to restate the description, explanation, or example in their own words.

3. Ask students to construct a picture, pictograph, or symbolic representation of the term.

4. Engage students periodically in activities that help them add to their knowledge of the terms in their vocabulary notebooks.

5. Periodically ask students to discuss the terms with one another.

6. Involve students periodically in games that enable them to play with terms.

**B. Teaching Academic Vocabulary Strategies**

The following sites offer suggestions for teaching Marzano’s strategies such as vocabulary activities and games.

 **1. Vocabulary Activities**

**This section includes activities and graphic organizers that can be used to teach academic vocabulary.**

[**http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/VocabularyGraphicOrganizers.html**](http://wvde.state.wv.us/strategybank/VocabularyGraphicOrganizers.html)

**Examples of types of**

Knowledge Rating Scale

Frayer Model

Word Detective

Vocab-O-Gram Graphic Organizer

Vocabulary Cluster

Own the Word Graphic Organizer

Verbal and Visual Word Association (VVWA)

Concept Map Graphic Organizer

Alphaboxes

 **2. 15 Vocabulary Strategies in 15 Minutes!**

[**http://learningtasks.weebly.com/vocabulary-strategies.html**](http://learningtasks.weebly.com/vocabulary-strategies.html)

1. Frayer Model

2. Graffiti Vocabulary

3. Making Meaning

4. Word Wall Match-Up

5. Vocabulary Anchor

6. Vocabulary Cartoons

7. Essential Prefix

8. Wordsplash

9. Interview a Word

10. Word Sorting

11. Vocabulary Frames

12. K.I.M. Strategy

13. Crossword Puzzles

14. Vocabulary Squares

15. Learning Maps

**3. Concept circles**



**Use concept circles to connect words to figure out which word does not belong and why**

**4. Flashcards**

[**http://www.flashcardmachine.com/**](http://www.flashcardmachine.com/)

 **5. Seed Discussion Organizer with a focus on vocabulary**

[**http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/printouts/SeedDiscussionOrganizer.pdf**](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/printouts/SeedDiscussionOrganizer.pdf)

**6. Text Resource for teaching vocabulary**

1. Targeted Vocabulary Strategies for Secondary Social Studies; Tina Heafner and Dixie Massey

*C.) Social Studies Reading and Document Analysis Strategies*

Reading is a college and career readiness skill many students struggle with. It is a stumbling block for students who are not proficient. Many students read the words but fail to find meaning. They must think about what they are reading! There are various strategies that can be utilized to help students find meaning.

**Ideas for your toolkit:**

1. Use analysis methods like APPARTS,PERSIA, OPTIC or SOAPS:

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| **A** | **Author**Who created the source?What do you know about the author? What is the author’s point of view? |
| **P** | **Place & Time**When and where was the source produced? How might this affect the meaning of the source? |
| **P** | **Prior Knowledge**What do you know that would help you further understand this source? |
| **A** | **Audience**For whom was the source created?How might this affect the reliability of the source? |
| **R** | **Reason**Why was this source produced at the time it was created? |
| **T** | **The Main Idea**What point is the source trying to make? |
| **S** | **Significance**Why is this source important?As yourself, “So what?” in relation to the question asked. |

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| P | **Political**Who is in Charge?Who gives that person or group power? Is there a contract? What’s the government? |
| **E** | **Economic**How do people earn their food?Is it based on agriculture, commerce, small trades or professions, or industry, like manufacturing or technology? Where’s the money? |
| R | **Religious**What is the meaning of life? Where did the group come from? What happens when they die? How do they spend their lives? Who talks to god(s)? |
| S | **Social**How does the group relate to one another? How do people communicate? What do people do together? How is the group organized? |
| I | **Intellectual**Who are the thinkers?What groups are given the chance to learn? How do people learn? Where does knowledge come from? |
| A | **Artistic**How do they express themselves? What commitment to self-expression do they have? What technology or resources are given to art? |

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| **O** | **Overview**What are the main elements? What sticks out most? |
| **P** | **Parts**Describe the details, or smaller elements. |
| **T** | **Title**What is the title? |
| **I** | **Inter-Relationship**What is the connection between the large and small parts of the illustration? |
| **C** | **Conclusion**What do you think the illustration is about? |

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| **S** | **Speaker/Subject**Identify the person or group that created the information. What do you know about this person or group? |
| **O** | **Occasion**What is the time and place the information was created? |
| **A** | **Audience/Author**Who is the information intended for? |
| **P** | **Purpose**Why was this information created? What was the author’s/ speaker’s goal? |
| **S** | **Significance/So What?** What is the greater significance of this source? |

2. Another method to add meaning to a document is for students to create a conceptual

ladder. Students write a question about the article on each rung of a ladder using question

stems from Bloom's Taxonomy. Students then share questions with each other. Their thinking begins to build from facts to critical thinking. Rungs would include the following:

**Example of a Concept Ladder using Atomic Bomb as Subject:**

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| **Compare** *the use of the atomic bomb in WWII to the strategy of trench warfare in WWI.* |
| **Why** *was the decision made to use the bomb?* |
| **Explain** *what is meant by a “mushroom cloud.”* |
| **Describe** *the effects of the atomic bomb on Japanese cities.* |
| **List** *the people involved in making the decision to develop and use the atomic bomb.* |
| **What** *is an atomic bomb?* |

As you can see, as a student moves farther up the “ladder,” the questions are a higher level. (*Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction for the Thinking Classroom,* H. Lynn Erickson)

3. In order for students to develop reading skills they should read every day. From short articles to primary and secondary source documents, there are many exercises to get students reading. Refer to the websites found in the **Best of the Web: Resources, Lesson Plans and Primary Sources** section to locate a vast number and types of readings. Use the skills above to analyze these.

4. Analyzing questions on a test or for some other purpose is a skill many students lack proficiency at. Using an ERA model of Analysis can help them develop this skill:

|  |  |
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| **E** | **Examine**What is the question asking you to do? |
| **R** | **Recall**What concepts and facts from the question do you remember? |
| **A** | **Apply**Sometimes it helps to answer the question before you even look at the answer choices. Eliminate any choices that are obviously wrong. Then select your final answer. |

5. Meaningful questioning can scaffold reading skills as students begin to recognize what is

 necessary. It is important to move from a Level One to a Level Three when questioning

 students. The higher the level, the more thinking takes place.

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| Three Levels of Questions**Level One -** These questions can be answered by facts or information usually stated in the source. Can you put your finger on the answer in the text? If yes, then this is a Level One question.**Level Two -** These questions are answered through analysis and interpretation of the source. Answers are not actually stated in the text but are implied by the text. Think inference that is supported by facts.**Level Three -** These questions are open-ended and go beyond the text. One would not expect to read the text to answer the question, but the question must deal with a universal theme or issue found in the text. |

Use the chart below from *Rigor is Not a Four-Letter Word,* by Barbara Blackburn, to help create higher level questioning for your students. A good practice is to have this chart available nearby to use as you question. You can scaffold by starting with the lower level question stems and then gradually move to the higher level stems.

The important thing here is to have your students read and analyze every day if possible, whether it be a short warm up, an exit after a lesson, or in the lesson itself, the more a student reads for meaning, the better prepared that student is for college and career.

*D.) Writing Strategies for Social Studies*

**Purpose**: to increase the writing skills of student, especially when pertaining to historic inquiry and perspective. The ultimate goal is to produce a higher level of understanding of broad historic concepts so that students may transfer these concepts and perspectives between time periods. Writing also makes students take a more active role in their learning as it forces them to record their thoughts and evaluate them to see if they make sense.

**Ideas for your toolkit:**

* Writing to learn -
	+ Freewrite/ Directed Freewrite
		- Freewrite- giving students total freedom to write what comes to mind, the objective is just to get them writing.
		- Directed Freewrite - pose an open ended question to the students, perhaps about the day's topic, a person, an event, etc. and allow them to free write from that point. ex: Did you find the author, and their story of what happened at Pearl Harbor, to be believable?
* Silent conversations
	+ Put students into pairs. The teacher sets forth a topic, question, idea… from there the students must have a conversation about the said topic, but it must all be written. If the teacher times each response, maybe 30 seconds each, it keeps the “conversation” moving.
	+ with this method students are required to write rather than speak, which prompts them to think a little more formally than they would in spoken conversation.
* Sentence starters (as seen in Barbara Blackburn’s book, Rigor is not a four-letter word.)
	+ give students a reading or source of some kind to delve into.
	+ once students have gone through the source, hand each student a sentence starter(s) which they must use to formulate questions about the given source. I would recommend giving each student a variety of starters, so perhaps sorting them into envelopes would make handing them out a little easier. *(The sentence starters below increase in complexity as you go down and across {left to right} the table.)*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **what** **is** | **when****is** | **where** **is** | **which****is**  | **who** **is** | **why****is** | **how****is** |
| **what** **did** | **when****did** | **where** **did** | **which** **did** | **who** **did** | **why****did** | **how****did** |
| **what** **can** | **when****can** | **where** **can** | **which****can**  | **who** **can** | **why****can** | **how****can** |
| **what** **would** | **when****would** | **where****would**  | **which** **would** | **who** **would** | **why****would** | **how****would** |
| **what** **will** | **when****will** | **where** **will** | **which** **will** | **who** **will** | **why****will** | **how****will** |
| **what** **might** | **when****might** | **where** **might** | **which****might**  | **who****might**  | **why****might** | **how****might** |

* Writing from/ with perspective
	+ Have students take a perspective on a historic event
	+ Example: Write about WWII from the perspective of FDR, an Army Nurse, a German, and wife on the homefront.
	+ Once the perspective piece is written, students can reflect on their piece & how it made them see the events in a new light.
* Writing for an authentic audience
	+ Rather than having student write a plain old paper, give them an authentic audience that is anachronistically appropriate.
	+ Example: when talking about the Election of 1912 have students write to a newspaper audience discussing the Bull Moose Party. If discussing the Election of 2008 have students create a series of “tweets” that detail a Obama's position on certain policy or campaign issues.
* Take a stance... Defend a position on an issue, topic, etc.
	+ When discussing issues that tend to be polarizing (or maybe were polarizing at the time in which they happened) assign students a perspective which they must defend.
		- Example: Malcolm X & Civil Rights, using violence IF necessary. Even if a student does not agree with this stance, have them defend the stance so that they can gain a greater understanding of the story of Malcolm X’s thinking, and even evaluate the story of their own thinking.
* Dialogue- students take a topic and create a dialogue between two people pertaining to the topic. Dialogue can be between the student and a fictitious person, 2 historic people, or the student and a historic/ famous person.
* Warm Up T.W.E.D.Y. (To what extent do you… agree or disagree…) - pose a quote, state a position or opinion and have students respond briefly to it using T.W.E.D.Y.
	+ Example: “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn't pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same.” Ronald Reagan
		- students would then respond based on how they feel about this quote… do they agree or disagree.
* Writing logs or journals- have students keep a journal that is dedicated to writing in the social studies classroom. This journal can include all types of writing scenarios including the ones listed above. The journal serves a place to contain all the writing for the year and makes it simple when it comes to assigning writing assignments no matter their length. It also makes it easy for the teacher to comment on the students writing and see progress as the year goes on.

**More information**: **h**[**ttp://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/22206**](http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides/22206)

*E.) The Best of the Web: Resources, Lesson Plans and Primary Sources*

**BROAD RESOURCES:**

***America’s History in the Making*** [*http://www.learner.org/courses/amerhistory/*](http://www.learner.org/courses/amerhistory/) *Annenberg Learner site contains all the materials necessary to complete the America’s History in the Making professional development course. Each content unit covers an era of American history from pre-Columbian America through the present day, as outlined by the National Center for History in the Schools (NCHS). Additional units review and extend content and introduce assessment concepts to deepen teachers' knowledge of American history…**Units are organized thematically, with the exception of the classroom application units. On the unit home page, teachers can find in-depth information on the unit's themes and content. Teachers can also download the text chapter or the facilitator guide, stream the**videos online, and find a list of additional resources.*

***Stanford History Education Group*** *<http://sheg.stanford.edu/> has produced some of the most thoughtful and usable work on history education on the web. Two of their projects are particularly useful,* ***Reading like a Historian*** *which models curriculum and* ***Beyond the Bubble*** *which models assessment. “****The Reading Like a Historian***[*http://sheg.stanford.edu/rlh*](http://sheg.stanford.edu/rlh) *curriculum engages students in historical inquiry. Each lesson revolves around a central historical question and features sets of primary documents designed for groups of students with diverse reading skills and abilities.” There are 73 U.S. History and 17 World history lesson available. You need to register but the lessons are free. Many of these lessons ask students to evaluate, assess or collaborate primary or secondary document.*

***Beyond the Bubble.***[*http://beyondthebubble.stanford.edu/*](http://beyondthebubble.stanford.edu/)*provides ten model assessment activities based on primary sources that are less time consuming that Document Based Questions and more rigorous than multiple choice questions:*

* *Take only a few minutes and are easy to score*
* *Come with rubrics and samples of student work*
* *Promote academic literacy*
* *Provide windows into students’ thinking*

***Edsitement.***[*http://edsitement.neh.gov/subject/history-social-studies*](http://edsitement.neh.gov/subject/history-social-studies) *was developed by the National Endowment of Humanities. The site contains lessons on several humanities subjects including U.S. and World History from Grades K-12. You can search lesson by subject and grade level. Most of the lessons are built around primary sources and are useful for finding sources even if you do not use the actual lessons.*

***HERB: Social History for Every Classroom.***[*http://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/*](http://herb.ashp.cuny.edu/) *is developed by the City University of New York. The site contains primary sources and lesson plans on a wide variety of U.S History topics. Many of the primary source documents contain vocabulary annotations, and many of the lesson plans are built around Common Core think and writing standards.*

***Digital History.*** [*http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/*](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/)*Provides multimedia resources and links for teaching American history and conducting basic research, while focusing on slavery, ethnic history, private life, technological achievement, and American film. Presents more than 600 documents pertaining to American politics, diplomacy, social history, slavery, Mexican American history, and Native American history, searchable by author, time period, subject, and keyword, and annotated with essays of 300–500 words each. The site offers a full U.S. history textbook by historian Steven Mintz, and has more than 1,500 searchable and briefly annotated links to American history-related sites. This Web site was designed and developed to support the teaching of American History in K-12 schools and colleges. It is underwritten by the College of Education at the University of Houston.*

***Teachinghistory.org.*** [*www.Teachinghistory.org*](http://www.teachinghistory.org) *funded by the U.S. Department of Education, is the central online location for accessing high-quality resources in K-12 U.S. history education. The site includes Teaching Materials, History Content, and Best Practices. Questions posed for many American historical events including: Causes of the American Revolution, Slavery, Girls Labor and Labor in the Progressive Era, Rise of the Automobile... Each module includes: What Textbooks Say, What Historians Say, and What Sources Say.*

*One particularly useful area of this site for teachers is a set of teaching-guides* [*http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides*](http://teachinghistory.org/teaching-materials/teaching-guides) *that provide a wide variety of tips and lesson plans focus on specific strategies in history education.*

***Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History****.*  [*http://www.gilderlehrman.org/*](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/) *This large site provides high-quality material on American history for historians and teachers. The collection contains more than 60,000 “rare and important” American historical documents from 1493 to the present includes more than 34,000 transcripts. Teaching modules cover more than 20 topics corresponding to major periods in American history, each with a historical overview, lesson plans, quizzes, primary source material, visual aids, and activities.*

***History Matters.***[*http://historymatters.gmu.edu/*](http://historymatters.gmu.edu/) *Developed by the Created by the American Social History Project / Center for Media and Learning (Graduate Center, CUNY) and the Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media is one of the most established and extensive resources available to instructors. The site contains both lesson plans and primary source materials.*

***Best of History Websites.*** [*http://www.besthistorysites.net/*](http://www.besthistorysites.net/) *Created by* [*EdTechTeacher Inc*](http://edtechteacher.org)*, is an award-winning portal that contains annotated links to over 1200 history web sites as well as links to hundreds of quality K-12 history lesson plans, history teacher guides, history activities, history games, history quizzes, and more.*

***The UC-Davis History Project.***[*http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/*](http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/) *has two useful components. The first is a well-developed set of lesson plans, many of which contain different versions of the lesson for each grade level.* [*http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/lessons/*](http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/lessons/) *The second is that resources are cataloged in an image archive* [*http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/ic/*](http://historyproject.ucdavis.edu/ic/)

***Docsteach.*** [*http://docsteach.org/*](http://docsteach.org/) *Developed by the National Archives this site has two useful components. First are pre-made activities that allow students to interactive with primary sources new in ways such as chronicle organization.* [*http://docsteach.org/activities*](http://docsteach.org/activities) *Teachers can also create their own activities using documents from the national archives.* [*http://docsteach.org/tools*](http://docsteach.org/tools)

***Investigating U.S. History.*** [*http://investigatinghistory.ashp.cuny.edu/*](http://investigatinghistory.ashp.cuny.edu/) *This website has teaching modules that faculty members from City University of New York have created on various subjects in American history. Each of the modules is a detailed recipe for teaching about a subject by having college students use various primary sources—documents, photos, drawings, oral history transcriptions, audio, and video, which are linked to their online locations. Each module has an introductory essay, links to primary sources, and a description by the author of the module, suggesting, in steps, how to use the sources in a class, including possible questions to pose to students, additional assignments, and recommendations on how the readings might be added into various kinds of courses. Lesson module subjects include: 18th-century slave society, Stamp Act protests, drafting and debating the Constitution, antebellum Evangelicalism, John Brown’s raid, emancipation during the Reconstruction, the Spanish-Cuban-American War, women in 19th-century public life, the Triangle Fire, labor unrest in the Great Depression, the Black Freedom Movement, and Lyndon Johnson in 1960s political culture.*

***Crash Course US History.***[*http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtMwmepBjTSG593eG7ObzO7s*](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8dPuuaLjXtMwmepBjTSG593eG7ObzO7s) *John Green teaches the history of the United States of America in 46 episodes on YouTube. Green is a “Blues Clues”-type of teacher, who is both informative and entertaining but he does move fast! Each episode is under fifteen minutes.*

**SPECIFIC TOPIC SITES:**

***Historical Maps of the United States.*** [*http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/histus.html*](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/histus.html) *This division of the Perry-Castaneda Map Collection of University of Texas- Austin provides access to 500 historical maps of the U.S. Maps are sorted thematically and include three maps of early inhabitants, 11 of exploration and early settlement from 1675 to 1854, and 15 of territorial growth from 1775 to 1970.*

***Avalon project: Documents in Law, History, and Government.***[*http://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp*](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp) *This website, sponsored by Yale Law School with the International Relations and Security Network (ISN), is a collection of over 3,500 full-text documents relevant to the fields of law, history, economics, politics, diplomacy, and government. The documents are divided into four century categories: pre-18th, 18th, 19th, and 20th. Although most of these documents are directly related to American history, the site also includes over 100 documents on ancient, medieval, and Renaissance history, European history, and modern diplomatic documents.*

***Discover History and Historic Preservation in the National Park Service.***[*http://www.nps.gov/history/*](http://www.nps.gov/history/)*Historical aspects of many of the National Parks are presented in this expansive site. A “Links to the Past” section contains more than 25 text and picture presentations on such diverse history-related topics as archeology, architecture, cultural groups and landscapes, historic buildings, and military history. Of particular interest to teachers, a section entitled “Teaching with Historic Places” features more than 60 lesson plans designed “to enliven the teaching of history, social studies, geography, civics, and other subjects” by incorporating National Register of Historic Places into educational explorations of historic subjects.*

***Nature Transformed: The Environment in American History.*** [*http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nattrans/nattrans.htm*](http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/nattrans/nattrans.htm) *The National Humanities Center’s TeacherServe website features a variety of scholarly essays and teaching guides focused on American environmental history. Each essay—on topics ranging from the Columbian Exchange to Environmental Justice—explores the ways in which people have conceived of the environment and their place in it. Organized into three sections, “Native Americans and the Land,” "Wilderness and American Identity,“ and ”The Use of Land,“ the website includes 17 topical essays spanning from pre-history to the present.*

***Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record.*** [*http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/index.php*](http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/index.php)*A collection of more than 1,230 images depicts the enslavement of Africans, the Atlantic Slave Trade, and slave life in the New World. Images are arranged in 18 categories, including capture of slaves, maps, slave ships, plantation scenes, physical punishment, music, free people of color, family life, religion, marketing, rebellion, and emancipation.*

***Divining America: Religion and the National Culture.*** [*http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/divam.htm*](http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/divam.htm)*This site offers an interactive curriculum enrichment service offering teachers creative lesson plans and access to materials for the secondary school classroom. To help teachers convey the importance of religion in the development of the United States, this site highlights the intersections between American history and religion at key points like the Puritan migration to New England, abolition, and the Civil Rights Movement.*

***Famous Trials.***[*http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/ftrials.htm*](http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/ftrials.htm) *This website created by Douglas Linder of the University of Missouri, Kansas City, Law School, provides primary documents and other information from the Trial of Socrates to the Trial of Zacarias Moussaoui. There are 72 trials on the site. The vast majority of them deal with American court cases including the trials of John Brown, Susan B. Anthony, Lizzie Borden, Sacco & Vanzetti, Scopes, Scottsboro Boys, and the Rosenbergs.*

***Picturing U.S. History: Lessons in Learning.***[*http://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/mtr.php*](http://picturinghistory.gc.cuny.edu/mtr.php)

*This site contains two lessons on how to read visual source. The Lessons are detailed, but are worthwhile to either use as models or do in a more advanced classroom.*

***Who Built America Badges.*** [*http://badges.ashp.cuny.edu/*](http://badges.ashp.cuny.edu/)

*This site is a free online professional development program built around the common core.*

***The Journal of Life and Culture in San Antonio***. [*http://www.uiw.edu/sanantonio/index.htm*](http://www.uiw.edu/sanantonio/index.htm) *Published by the University of Incarnate Word*, “*The Journal” is committed to publishing writers who analyze critical information about the history of San Antonio. Writers represent the gamut of research experience from high school students to Ph.D. researchers, from amateur to professional writers, as long as the quality of writing of submissions meets “The Journal’s” standards.*

***Interactive History Project*** [*http://pacweb.alamo.edu/interactivehistory/*](http://pacweb.alamo.edu/interactivehistory/) *is devoted to original student research of oral histories and Texas small town histories. Published by Palo Alto College in San Antonio, the oral history projects are an integral part of Professor Peter Myers's History 1302 course, while Professor Robert Hines's History 1302 students research the history of small towns in Texas. History--omitted from the traditional textbook--is alive and well when Palo Alto students go beyond the large sweep of the past by interviewing their elders who have stories to tell about the past. From the immigrant grandmother who came to America to find a better life for herself and her young child to the grandfather who was a pinsetter at a local bowling alley, each oral history weaves another patch into the American tapestry… Americans started as a rural people. Much of our cultural foundations are grounded in rural America. Our economy is dependent upon it; our religious beliefs are steeped in it. Our increasing national ignorance of the economic and historical importance of rural America bodes ill for the future. To ignore the farm and small town is to ignore ourselves. Thus by studying small towns in Texas, students are involved in a more personal way by "doing" history.*

*F.) Self-Assessment*

One of the keys to effective teaching is our periodic self-assessment. Just as we hope to foster that habit in our students, we too practice it in an effort to determine how successful we are in guiding our students’ learning and growth. Classically, teachers have seen the graded achievements of their students as the primary indicator of teaching effectiveness, and these remain important data. Now as we reflect on how we go about our tasks, we have available to us a variety of means to gauge what additional things we might do and how effectively students are grasping our instruction.

I. *Activities to Enhance Student Learning*

Excellent suggestions to enhance our effectiveness were the result of research done by Chickering and Gamson resulting in a faculty inventory of the *7 Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education*. While the inventory was initially aimed at college faculty and specific recommended actions may vary with the level taught, the principles apply throughout education. You may even feel that you have suggestions to add to the recommended steps faculty can take to support each of the principles, steps you’ve found successful or feel are well-adapted to what you teach.

You’ll find the inventory below and at:<http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p4_6>

*Enhancing Student Learning: Seven Principles for Good Practice*

 The Seven Principles Resource Center - Winona State University

 The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education grew out of a review of 50 years of research on the way teachers teach and students learn (Chickering and Gamson, 1987, p. 1) and a conference that brought together a distinguished group of researchers and commentators on higher education. The primary goal of the Principles’ authors was to identify practices, policies, and institutional conditions that would result in a powerful and enduring undergraduate education (Sorcinelli, 1991, p. 13).

The following principles are anchored in extensive research about teaching, learning, and the college experience.

 **1. Good Practice Encourages Student – Instructor Contact**

*Frequent student – instructor contact in and out of classes is an important factor in student motivation and involvement. Instructor concern helps students get through rough times and keep on working. Knowing a few instructors well enhances students’ intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Share past experiences, values, and attitudes.

 Design an activity that brings students to your office during the first weeks of class.

 Try to get to know your students by name by the end of the first three weeks of the term.

 Attend, support, and sponsor events led by student groups.

 Treat students as human beings with full real lives; ask how they are doing.

 Hold “out of class” review sessions.

 Use email regularly to encourage and inform.

 Hold regular “hours” in the Michigan Union or residence halls where students can stop by for informal visits.

 Take students to professional meetings or other events in your field.

 **2. Good Practice Encourages Cooperation Among Students**

*Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one’s own ideas and responding to others’ reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Ask students to share information about each other’s backgrounds and academic interests.

 Encourage students to prepare together for classes or exams.

 Create study groups within your course.

 Ask students to give constructive feedback on each other’s work and to explain difficult ideas to each other.

 Use small group discussions, collaborative projects in and out of class, group presentations, and case study analysis.

 Ask students to discuss key concepts with other students whose backgrounds and viewpoints are different from their own.

 Encourage students to work together.

**3. Good Practice Encourages Active Learning**

*Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to instructors, memorizing assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Ask students to present their work to the class.

 Give students concrete, real life situations to analyze.

 Ask students to summarize similarities and differences among research findings, artistic works or laboratory results.

 Model asking questions, listening behaviors, and feedback.

 Encourage use of professional journals.

 Use technology to encourage active learning.

 Encourage use of internships, study abroad, service learning and clinical opportunities.

 Use class time to work on projects.

 **4. Good Practice Gives Prompt Feedback**

*Knowing what you know and don’t know focuses learning. Students need appropriate feedback on performance to benefit from courses. In getting started, students need help in assessing existing knowledge and competence. In classes, students need frequent opportunities to perform and receive suggestions for improvement. At various points during college, and at the end, students need chances to reflect on what they have learned, what they still need to know, and how to assess themselves.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Return examinations promptly, preferably within a week, if not sooner.

 Schedule brief meetings with the students to discuss their progress.

 Prepare problems or exercises that give students immediate feedback on how well they are doing. (e.g., Angelo, 1993)

 Give frequent quizzes and homework assignments to help students monitor their progress.

 Give students written comments on the strengths and weakness of their tests/papers.

 Give students focused feedback on their work early in the term.

 Consider giving a mid-term assessment or progress report.

 Be clear in relating performance level/expectations to grade.

 Communicate regularly with students via email about various aspects of the class.

**5. Good Practice Emphasizes Time on Task**

*Time plus energy equals learning. There is no substitute for time on task. Learning to use one’s time well is critical for students and professionals alike. Students need help in learning effective time management. Allocating realistic amounts of time means effective learning for students and effective teaching for instructors.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Communicate to students the amount of time they should spend preparing for class.

 Expect students to complete their assignments promptly.

 Underscore the importance of regular work, steady application, self-pacing, scheduling.

 Divide class into timed segments so as to keep on task.

 Meet with students who fall behind to discuss their study habits, schedules.

 Don’t hesitate to refer students to learning skills professionals on campus.

 Use technology to make resources easily available to students.

 Consider using mastery learning, contract learning, and computer assisted instruction as appropriate.

**6. Good Practice Communicates High Expectations**

*Expect more and you will get it. High expectations are important for everyone—for the poorly prepared, for those unwilling to exert themselves, and for the bright and well motivated. Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when instructors hold high expectations for themselves and make extra efforts.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Make your expectations clear at the beginning of the course both in writing and orally. Tell them you expect them to work hard.

 Periodically discuss how well the class is doing during the course of the semester.

 Encourage students to write; require drafts of work. Give students opportunities to revise their work.

 Set up study guidelines.

 Publish students’ work on a course website. This often motivates students to higher levels of performance.

 Be energized and enthusiastic in your interaction with students.

 **7. Good Practice Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning**

*There are many roads to learning. People bring different talents and styles of learning to college. Students rich in hands-on experiences may not do so well with theory. Students need the opportunity to show their talents and learn in ways that work for them. They can be pushed to learning in new ways that do not come so easily.*

Implementation Ideas:

 Use a range of teaching activities to address a broad spectrum of students.

 Provide extra material or exercises for students who lack essential background knowledge or skills.

 Identify students’ learning styles, backgrounds at the beginning of the semester.

 Use different activities in class – videos, discussions, lecture, groups, guest speakers, pairwork.

 Use different assignment methods – written, oral, projects, etc. – so as to engage as many ways of learning as possible (e.g., visual, auditory).

 Give students a real-world problem to solve that has multiple solutions. Provide examples and questions to guide them.

Sources Cited:

 Angelo, T.A., & Cross, K.P. (1993). *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

 Chickering, A.W., & Gamson, Z.F. (1987). ‘Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education.’ AAHE Bulletin, 39(7): 3-7.

 Sorcinelli, M.D. (1991). ‘Research findings on the seven principles.’ In A.W. Chickering & Z.F. Gamson (Eds.) ‘Applying the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education (pp. 13-25).’ *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No. 47. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Adapted with permission from The Seven Principles Resource Center, Winona State University, Winona, Minnesota.

 *II. Means to Assess Classroom Effectiveness*

In addition to the formal means we use to assess student understanding – tests, projects, reports, etc. – there are ways to get quick, informal feedback from our students to give us a ‘meta-understanding’ of what seems to be working and what isn’t. Cross and Angelo compiled numerous short feedback forms with which we can get such information. These are termed ‘Classroom Assessment Techniques’ and can help us to gauge students’ knowledge, confidence, or attitudes at the outset, as well as their questions, concerns or level of understanding at the conclusion of class. Below are some of the topics addressed by these CATS:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lecture OutlineClass OutlineLab OutlineWhat's Exciting To MeDo Your Own QuizClass NotesClass Notes - DecisionsStudy Time LogKey Points In The ReadingA Key Question On The ReadingLinking Ideas - ClassLinking Ideas - ReadingTest Feedback - StudentMe, StudyingStudy PartnersBest Friend, Worst EnemyBeginning of SemesterWhat Worries Me About This CourseBackground Knowledge ProbeWays I Can HelpCourse ObjectivesExpectationsFeedback on TeachingA Question I HaveClass FeedbackConfidence LevelsWhat's Exciting To Me | Questions, QuestionsFocused ListingPut It In Your Own WordsGuiding PrinciplesMost Useful - Least UsefulThose Little ThingsBeginning ClassEnding ClassFirst ClassI've HeardI've Heard - And Now I BelieveMost Exciting - Most BoringExperiential Exercises FeedbackCourse Chatroom FeedbackDistance Learning FeedbackFilm FeedbackCases FeedbackFinding The Course HardThe Class At WorkFeedback On My CommentsAdvice To The NewcomersObjective CheckingAre We Meeting Expectations?Put It In Your Own WordsDo Your Own QuizMisconceptions Check |

These are some of the many topics available with the CATS forms. You can find many of the types of ‘CATS’ at the link below, as well as helpful prefatory information.

<http://www.samford.edu/ctls/archives.aspx?id=2147484103>

[www.lcc.edu/cte/pdf/cats.pdf](http://www.lcc.edu/cte/pdf/cats.pdf)

You can find much more information about them, how to use them, what situations lend themselves to their use, etc. with a web search that uses the terms ‘Cross,’ ‘Angelo,’ and ‘Classroom Assessment Techniques.’ You can easily construct your own forms or see the ones that those authors offer in their 1993 work, Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers (Jossey-Bass, 2nd edition, ISBN 978-1555425005).

It’s important to keep in mind as you use these that they are to be completed anonymously by students. Why? Your objective is not to assess individual students but to get a sense of what is ‘getting through’ (or not) to the class. They will be more candid if they are confident that doing so will not affect their grades. You’ll find a form that is appropriate to virtually any teaching situation you face – lectures, labs, internships, student discussions, etc. By using some of these ‘quick hits’ systematically, you can begin to see what is working well in your instruction and what may need some attention in order to be effective.

Other helpful sites:

A self assessment checklist:

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/professional/selfassessment/checklist/>

The Silver Strong Self Assessment

<http://usny.nysed.gov/rttt/teachers-leaders/practicerubrics/Docs/SilverStrongSelfAssessmentRubric.pdf>

A Compendium of Teaching Tips (Hawaii.edu)

<http://www2.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm>

G.) **Suggested Readings**

* Angelo, T.A., & Cross, K.P. *Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
* Bernabei, Gretchen & Hall Dorothy The Story of my Thinking(book on expository writing, but can be helpful in teaching kids how to meaningfully expressing their ideas)
* Blackburn, Barbara Rigor is not a four-letter word
* Chickering, A.W., & Gamson, Z.F. ‘‘Seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education.’ AAHE Bulletin, 39(7): 3-7
* Erickson, H. Lynn Concept-Based Curriculum and Instruction for the Thinking Classroom.
* Korbin, David, Beyond the Textbook: Teaching History Using Documents and Primary Sources(1996)
* Sorcinelli, M.D. ‘Research findings on the seven principles.’ In A.W. Chickering & Z.F. Gamson (Eds.) ‘Applying the seven principles for good practice in undergraduate education (pp. 13-25).’ *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, No. 47. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.