

1950 – 1974

THE RED MENACE

ACTIVITIES

*Created by Michael Young,
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Activity 1: The Red Menace

Activity Grade Level:

4th & 8th Grades

Activity: Define Terms

Ask students what the phrase, "The Red Menace" meant. Ask if they think communism and communists threatened Nebraska. To help with this task, have students define the following:

- Communist
- Joseph McCarthy
- McCarthyism

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

Standard 4.1.6. By the end of fourth grade, students will identify significant individuals, historical events and symbols in their community and in Nebraska and explain their importance.

Standard 4.1.7. By the end of fourth grade, student will use higher level thinking processes to evaluate and analyze **primary** sources and other resources.

Standard 8.4.2. By the end of eighth grade, students will demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

Standard 4.1.3. By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 4.1.4. By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify the resource appropriate for a specific purpose, and use the resource to locate information.

Standard 4.1.7. By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze nonfiction or informational text.

Standard 4.2.4. By the end of the fourth grade, students will demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. By the end of the fourth grade, students will demonstrate the use of self-generated questions, note taking, and summarizing while learning.

Standard 8.1.2. By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.2.4. By the end of the eighth grade, students will demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. By the end of the eighth grade, students will demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.4.1. By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify information gained and complete tasks through listening.

Activity 2: Cold War Memories

Activity Grade Level:

4th & 8th Grades

Activity: Oral History Interview

Interview a person who was living during the Cold War. Follow the guidelines suggested in the *How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interviews* in the Resources section of this document. After the students conduct the interviews, have them read each other's work. Then use the following questions as a basis for classroom discussion:

- Should an oral history interview be considered a primary source document? Why or why not?
- Would you describe your interviews as factual or emotional? If they are emotional, does that diminish their value for interpreting history?

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

Standard 4.1.6. By the end of fourth grade, students will identify significant individuals, historical events and symbols in their community and in Nebraska and explain their importance.

Standard 8.4.2. By the end of eighth grade, students will demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.4.6. By the end of eighth grade, students will improve their skills in historical research and geographical analysis.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

Standard 4.1.4. By the end of the fourth grade, students will identify the resource appropriate for a specific purpose, and use the resource to locate information.

Standard 4.2.4. By the end of the fourth grade, students will demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. By the end of the fourth grade, students will demonstrate the use of self-generated questions, note taking, and summarizing while learning.

Standard 8.2.5. By the end of the eighth grade, students will demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.4.1. By the end of the eighth grade, students will identify information gained and complete tasks through listening.

Activity 3: Red Scare

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Analysis

Have students analyze the "Red Menace" in Nebraska in the 1950s and 1960s and include one or more of the following (including original documents found in this section of nebraskastudies.org) in their analysis:

- McCarthyism
- The Nebraska legislature's attempt to outlaw the Community Party
- Governor Peterson's list of suspected subversives
- Nebraska's Loyalty Oath
- Communism as a threat to labor unions

Have students use the *Written Document Analysis* worksheet in the Resources at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

Standard 12.1.3. By the end of twelfth grade, students will develop skills for historical analysis.

Standard 12.1.8 By the end of twelfth grade, students will recognize and explain the origins and effects of World War II.

Standard 12.1.9. By the end of twelfth grade, students will analyze and explain United States foreign policy since World War II.

Standard 12.2.10. By the end of twelfth grade, students will analyze major 20th century historical events.

Standard 12.3.5. By the end of twelfth grade, students will analyze the fundamental concepts and challenges to democracy by using writing, discussion, and debate skills.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

Standard 12.1.1. By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 12.1.6. By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze non-fiction or informational text.

Standard 12.2.4. By the end of the twelfth grade, students will use multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. By the end of twelfth grade, students will demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing, and outlining while learning.

Activity 4: Violation of First Amendment Rights?

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Mock Trial

Organize a mock trial or role-playing to discuss if First Amendment rights were violated with reference to a Cold War event.

1. Read the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution.html>
2. Have students organize into groups and choose **ONE** of the following historic events:
 - Nebraska's legislative attempts to outlaw the Communist Party OR
 - Governor Peterson's compiling of the list of suspected subversives OR
 - Nebraska's Loyalty Oath that teachers and other public employees were required to sign
3. Depending on which event they select, have students research and obtain background documents such as:
 - the text of the proposed legislation to outlaw the Communist Party OR
 - background information on Governor Peterson's suspected subversives' list OR
 - the Nebraska Loyalty Oath.
4. Have students in each group play each of the following roles: newspaper reporters, defense attorney(s), defendant(s), prosecuting attorney(s), the judge, and jury members.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

Standard 12.1.8. By the end of twelfth grade, students will recognize and explain the origins and effects of World War II.

Standard 12.1.13. By the end of twelfth grade, students will develop skills for historical analysis.

Standard 12.2.10. By the end of twelfth grade, students will analyze major 20th century historical events.

Standard 12.2.11. By the end of twelfth grade, students will demonstrate historical research and geographical skills.

Standard 12.3.3. By the end of twelfth grade, students will analyze the significance of amendments to the United States Constitution.

Standard 12.3.5. By the end of twelfth grade, students will analyze the fundamental concepts and challenges to democracy by using **writing, discussion, and debate** skills.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

Standard 12.1.1. By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 12.1.6. By the end of the twelfth grade, students will identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze non-fiction or informational text.

Standard 12.2.4. By the end of the twelfth grade, students will use multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. By the end of twelfth grade, students will demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing, and outlining while learning.

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Nebraska Department of Education Social Studies and History Standards http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/documents/SocialStudiesHistoryStandards.pdf	
National Archives http://www.archives.gov/index.html	
Library of Congress Learning Page Lesson Plans http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/index.html	
Six Trait Writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Sentence Fluency, Word Choice, and Conventions. http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/concord/teacherlinks/sixtraits/sixtraits.html http://www.kent.k12.wa.us/staff/LindaJancola/6Trait/6-trait.html	

RESOURCES

How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interviews

By **Michael Young**, former History Department Chair, Omaha Burke High School

Oral history is the process of collecting an individual's spoken memories of his or her life, of the people he or she has known, and the events which he or she witnessed or participated in. Oral history is another primary source technique historians use to help them interpret the past. Oral histories can be used to supplement written records, complement secondary sources (what has been written by historical scholars), and to provide information that would exist in no other form.

But, using oral histories as a source can also pose problems. Interviewees are human. They can forget things. Their memories can play tricks on them. You have to be very careful as a historian when you use oral history as a source.

Teachers need to explore activities that help students strengthen their abilities to develop good interviewing techniques. The teacher might conduct a personal interview with a person representative of whomever the students will be interviewing (an elderly person, etc.) in the classroom.

Students could then practice interviewing one another in the classroom as part of a paired activity. The practice interviews can help students develop awareness of key techniques that will help them when they conduct an actual interview. The teacher and/or students can offer suggestions on what the characteristics of a good interview are. The teacher may also want to review passages from actual transcripts of interviews to illustrate key attributes of successful interviews.

Caution students that oral history (conducting interviews) is not a substitute for basic research. Students should research printed and electronic resources for background information and historical accounts of the issue, event, or personality being studied.

Consider the following suggestions on how to how to conduct and utilize oral interviews.

Preparing:

1. **Decide which individuals would be most appropriate to interview.** There are many ways to find someone to interview. Ask your family members. Contact veterans' organizations, church groups, civic organizations etc. Put a request in your local newspaper. It's a good idea when you find someone to have them complete a brief preliminary questionnaire to give you some background on the person.
2. **Schedule the interview as soon as possible and by telephone if possible.** Confirm the meeting time and date a day before conducting the Interview.
3. **Learn as much as possible about the topic of your interview before conducting the interview.** Contact the local media reporters for suggestions on related topics, sources, etc. Carefully read the person's completed questionnaire. Make up a list of questions from things on the questionnaire. Do enough preliminary research so that you are able to ask intelligent questions. Prepare a brief outline of questions you will be asking.
4. **Make sure you are familiar with your recorder.** Make sure any equipment you will be using is working properly (camcorder, tape recorder, etc.) and secure the interviewee's permission to record the interview. Practice to make sure you can operate. Have an extra tape in case the interview is longer, or in case the tape would break.

RESOURCES

Oral Interviews (continued)

5. **When selecting the location for the interview, ask the interviewee where he or she would be most comfortable.** Choose a place that is quiet, where there won't be a lot of distractions.

Conducting the Interview:

1. **Dress appropriately and create a good impression.**
2. **When you get to the interview, chat briefly with your interviewee to get him or her feeling relaxed and comfortable with you.** Explain, again, to the interviewee your purpose for the interview. Do not begin the interview abruptly. Introduce yourself, make the interviewee as comfortable as possible, and review the interview process you will be using. Be sure to let them know how much you appreciate getting the chance to talk with them.
3. **During the interview, keep things moving.** Express an interest in what the interviewee is saying and listen carefully. Make a conscious effort to be unbiased and try not to influence how the interviewee will answer your questions. Have your questions ready, but do not rely totally on them. By listening carefully to what the person is speaking about, you can come up with additional questions. Avoid too many open-ended questions that require long complicated answers.
4. **Use a tape recorder or camcorder to more accurately record the interview.** In addition, take notes and accurately record the correct spelling of name, places, etc. Silence can be productive. Do not rush the narrator to respond.
5. **You may need to have the interviewee sign a legal release form** enabling you to use any information gained through the interview for research purposes.
6. **Know the physical limitations of the person you are interviewing.** If the person has a hard time hearing, make sure you speak up loudly and clearly. Don't let an interview drag on endlessly. If you still have areas to cover, you might want to take a short break.
7. Have a good closing question that helps the interviewee summarize his/her statements and helps bring closure to the interview.
8. **Be sensitive.** Indicate to the interviewee that his/her answers will be reported anonymously if requested. Some subjects may provoke an emotional response. If a person starts to cry, you might turn off the tape recorder for a few minutes.
9. **After the interview,** send a thank you note to the person being interviewed within one week of the interview. If you transcribe the tape, send your interviewee a copy of the tape, or if you don't transcribe the entire tape, send them the paper you wrote.

Examining:

1. Prepare a written summary, note cards, and/or outline of the key points discussed in the interview that are relevant to your topic.
2. What perspective did the interviewee give you about the topic?
3. What did the interviewee tell you about the lifestyles, culture, political atmosphere, economic issues, education, etc. of the time period being studied?
4. Is the interviewee a dependable source of information? Did the interviewee have a difficult time remembering dates, places, and events?

RESOURCES

Oral Interviews (continued)

5. Compare/Contrast the information given to you by the interviewee with the factual information you have learned from researching other primary and secondary sources.

Determine Its Usefulness:

1. What information from this interviewee is useful for the development of your topic?
2. What does this information contribute to the development or analysis of your topic? How can incorrect information or biased viewpoints be used?
3. How can the information gained from your interview be most effectively used in your research project?
4. Oral history can be used to validate other data, to collect opinions reflecting different points of view, to acquire background or perspective, and to collect "up-to-date" data.
5. In summary, oral history can also demonstrate cause and effect, objectivity versus subjectivity, reality versus abstraction, fact versus opinion, and attitudes then and now.

Bibliography:

American Memory. Life History Manuscripts from the Folklore Project. WPA. Federal Writer's Project 1936-1940. Summary of Resources. U.S. History Content.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpaintro/wpahome.html>

Lanman, Barry A. and Mehaffy, George L. *Oral History in the Secondary Classroom.* Oral History Association, 1988. "Pointers How to Prepare for and Use an Oral Interview". Indiana History Day. Indiana: Historical Bureau, 1989. Located in Magazine of History. Summer 1990. p. 54.

RESOURCES

National Archives Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Map | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram | <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patent | <input type="checkbox"/> Press release | <input type="checkbox"/> Census report |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum | <input type="checkbox"/> Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten | <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Typed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seals | |

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT: _____

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT: _____

POSITION (TITLE): _____

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Why do you think this document was written?

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

Designed and developed by the Education Staff
National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408
<http://www.archives.gov>