

Picture This!

A Discover It Yourself program for Year 9 students

Teachers Notes

Aims

This program is designed to teach History skills as outlined in AusVELS, specifically *Historical Questions and Research, Analysis and Use of Sources, Perspectives and Interpretations and Explanation and Communication*.

Pedagogy

This program adopts a student-centred approach of purpose, choice and ownership. The purpose is to create a convincing, visual, argumentative essay. Students have a choice of topics and therefore take ownership of their learning.

Task

Students are challenged to use the Sovereign Hill outdoor museum to gather evidence to create a visual argumentative essay. They use their own digital devices to take photos to create a movie or other visual presentation modelling argumentative essay writing.



Activity sequence

Before the Excursion

1. Teachers explain the purpose of the activity: To learn how to construct good argumentative history essays using a visual rather than written form.
2. Teachers explain to students that a reasoned argument must consider all sides of a contention. To present only evidence that supports your own opinion is, at best, advertising or, at worst, propaganda!
3. Teachers describe a simple formula for argumentative essay writing:
Paragraph 1. Introduction: Define the topic
Paragraph 2. Describe one point **supporting** the contention
Paragraph 3. Describe one point **against** the contention
Paragraph 4. Describe another point **for** the contention
Paragraph 5. Describe another point **against** the contention
Paragraph 6. Other points for or against
Paragraph 7. Any last considerations
Paragraph 8. Conclusion: A Simple conclusion is Therefore, I believe because...
The best conclusions present a strong insight into the topic showing you have thought deeply about the contention or topic.
4. Teachers might show students *Vodcasting at Sovereign Hill*, a short movie explaining the project <http://education.sovereignhill.com.au/students/podcasts/teaching-and-learning/#vod>
5. Many students need a concrete example to see what they might produce. Teachers show students *A Great Place to Visit*, an example of the sort of movie students might make. <http://education.sovereignhill.com.au/students/podcasts/teaching-and-learning/#place>
6. Students choose a contention to argue. Possible contentions include:
 1. There was no time for fun on the goldfields.
 2. Today's women have an easier life than those of the 19th century.
 3. 1850s fashion had more style than today's.
 4. The past might be a good place to visit, but you wouldn't want to live there.
 5. The best technology is simple technology.
 6. Horses were essential to business and the economy in the 19th century.
 7. Mining was not the only way to make a living on the goldfields.
 8. The goldfields were not really a multicultural society.
 9. Sovereign Hill is not an accurate representation of the past.
 10. The Industrial Revolution transformed work during the nineteenth century.
 11. The Industrial Revolution had no impact on women's lives during the nineteenth century.

7. Students explore Sovereign Hill's interactive map to find locations where they might take photographs relevant to their contention. <http://www.sovereignhill.com.au/tour/index.html>
Teachers may ask students to annotate a different pdf map to explain their choices. <http://sovhill-education.s3.amazonaws.com/Sov-Hill-Education-Map-2012.pdf>

On the excursion

- Students are allowed only one hour to undertake their research. It is important to restrict their time in order to keep students on task
- Teachers may wish to book a half hour education session to facilitate this program. An education officer will be able to answer student questions and present ideas about where they might take suitable photographs.
- Make sure you book other activities like mine tours and the Gold Pour Demonstration. See <http://education.sovereignhill.com.au/programs/other-activities/>



Back at school

- Students sort their photographs into three groups
 1. Those that support the contention
 2. Those that do not support the contention (or oppose it)
 3. Those that are irrelevant (an important skill to develop!)
- Students then sort photos from groups 1 and 2 above into different groups with a similar idea or point. (These become your visual paragraphs)
- Students sort their photographs in a logical order possibly using the [argumentative essay formula](#).
For some students the above three activities might be done in hard copy to make the exercise more concrete.
- Sovereign Hill is a secondary source of historical information. Everything is recreated. Teachers discuss the need for primary sources in history and the value and limitations of both primary and secondary sources.
- Students are given one hour to conduct internet research for images that will make their visual essay stronger. A good website is the National Library of Australia's portal [TROVE](#). Students may need to develop a list of suitable search terms.
- Students put their presentation together.



S.T. Gill *Zealous Gold Diggers* Gold Museum Collection