

# Yesterday and Today -- Creating an Online Historical Magazine

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## Overview

My father was a natural storyteller. I loved to listen to him talk about his childhood, about changes that he saw in Pittsburgh, about his views on life. I remember his telling me about the Duquesne Gardens that were located in Oakland at the corner of Fifth Avenue and North Craig Street. I could visualize the circuses and other events that were held there. Sometimes when I drive by that section of town, I try to imagine what it must have been like to have a special events arena where there is now an apartment building. There will come a day when some of our

students will be telling *their* children about Three Rivers Stadium, their memories of it, the games they went to, and the grand implosion event that received wide media coverage.

Before man (or woman) picked up a pen to write, stories were passed from town to town, generation to generation through oral retellings. It has been said, "The ear and not the eye is the nearest gateway to the child-soul, if not indeed to the man's soul" (Edmund Huey, 1968). In this hectic life that many of us lead, it is refreshing to the soul to take time and listen. It is also refreshing for the teller of the story to have someone listen, pay attention, respect the life that he or she has led.

The news media use the feature story to highlight special events or stories of people. This, at times, has been referred to as the "human interest" story. A human interest or feature story offers the opportunity for a person's thoughts, feelings, and experiences to be translated from the oral to the written word enabling a wider audience to share in the experience. It is also the type of story that piques the interest of the reader. In *The Art and Craft of Feature Writing*, William Blundell cautions that the reporter of a feature story needs to be a storyteller and "sensitive to what readers like" (p. 19). While facts are important to a story, the reader is more receptive to a story that contains action or "direct human experience" (p. 21). This is true of feature articles written for newspapers or magazines as well as other types of media. Frequently, stories that capture the human element, that touch the heart, that bring a smile to our faces or a tear to our eyes are incorporated into the medium of television as evidenced by Dave Crawley's reports on KDKA-TV or Steve Hartman's "Everybody Has A Story" on CBS-TV. A link is created between the listener and teller as a result of these positive and, sometimes, simple stories.

This curriculum unit will not only require students to be reporters of stories, but to be collectors. They will learn that in order to write good stories they must be in tune to the stories around them. Yet, they will not be searching for just any story that is "hidden under a rock" but stories with historical context. According to the authors of *History Comes Home*, our students need a stronger foundation in appreciating and understanding history. They can do this by collecting family stories and associating them with historical events (Zemelman, Bearden, Simmons, and Leki, 1999). They write: "We believe when students are given opportunities to identify how their families fit into public history, they are more easily able to make sense of the past, understand why knowledge about the past helps give meaning to the present, and envision themselves in the context of world and national citizenry" (p. 10).

The unit is not really designed to be a history unit, although it certainly could be used in that way. It is interdisciplinary--blending the social sciences with the humanities. In using technology as a tool for writing and publishing, our goal will be to create an historical magazine that will be published on the school's web site. The major emphasis, though, is the telling of a story whether it be HIStory or HERstory.

## **Rationale**

The seminar "Media Revolutions" sparked my interest in how historical events are conveyed in a narrative form. I never learned so much about the bombing of Hiroshima until I read John Hersey's book *Hiroshima*. This was more than a biography of the people who were affected by

the bombing; it was a study of this major historical event that went beyond just the facts and delved into the people's fears, despair, and courage. This led me to take a look at feature articles in the newspapers and listen carefully to the various types of stories on television news programs. Since I am a technology and communications teacher, I am always looking for ways in which I can effectively incorporate the use of computer technology into my communications lessons. Therefore, I turned to the Internet to see what is available on the World Wide Web for examples of stories that I would want my students to write in this unit. I was amazed at the plethora of material that is available and would appropriately fit in with this unit.

On the PBS web site, "The American Experience," there is a section called "WayBack: U.S. History for Kids." Various stories are featured that provide information on desegregation or women aviators in World War II or the first music "video" dating back to the early 1900s. Students can read interviews with people who actually experienced the event such as Melba Beals, one of the Little Rock 9 who entered the first desegregated school in Little Rock, Arkansas on September 23, 1957:

The first day I went to Central High School, I was joyous and hopeful. I was certainly somewhat frightened. But I was frightened like any child would be at a new school. I wondered: Are they going to like my hair? Should I wear a ponytail? Am I going to dress right? As a black child, I knew about prejudice and racism. Of course I did. But did I know it led to violence? The answer is no. ([civilrights/buzz.html](http://civilrights/buzz.html))

Using the Internet for research will help the students to develop their themes and to collect the background information for their own stories. A variety of web sites provide a wealth of information on any number of historical events. We have the technology; why not put it to good use? It certainly will help the students to locate information and read eyewitness accounts that otherwise would be difficult to provide. The intent is to have guest speakers, or interview family members and friends, but when this is not possible, the students will have this technology to supplement their class work. In an issue of *Language Arts*, authors Kinzer and Leu (1997) point out:

We will be challenged to thoughtfully guide students' learning within electronic information environments that are more complexly networked than traditional print media, presenting potentially richer and more integrated learning opportunities for both teachers and students" (p. 126).

In looking for other resources to use that would give the students material for reading and research, I came across the *Chicken Soup for the Soul Cookbook* that had stories for each recipe. I was drawn to one story titled "Doomsday Cookies" that relates the author's memories of the threat of "the bomb" during the 1950s along with baking cookies with her sister and mother. It is interesting that, at times, the very ordinary, everyday things can sometimes reflect more about a period of time or the cultural and social mores than studying or reading a textbook. What newspaper or magazine is published that doesn't have the occasional sections on health, gardening, or cooking? Even in the medium of television such celebrities as Dr. Ruth and Martha Stewart influence our culture. In my mother's time, it was Dr. Spock and Emily Post. Therefore, I thought, wouldn't it be good to include a section in our historical magazine for recipes and

accompanying stories? This started me thinking about my own memories associated with cooking and baking; I began to rummage around to collect cookbooks that gave a glimpse of history along with the recipes.

My mother was married in 1945. She had to wait until her brothers were home from overseas before she could have her wedding. One of her wedding presents was a cookbook, *The Woman's Home Companion Cookbook*. I find the fact that one of her presents was a cookbook interesting, since my mother was a fantastic cook who rarely had to measure anything out. When she was young, she helped her mother cook for the boarders they took into their home. She always "cooked for an army" because that was her experience; there were the boarders plus six siblings. My grandmother never really learned to read or write; she married at 15 and had her first child at the age of 16. She prepared the meals the way she had been taught, never read a recipe and measured "by eye."

My mother's cookbook, which is still the best one I have ever found, was first published in 1942. Her copy was published in 1945 with a "Wartime Postscript" in the Introduction that reads:

As this edition goes to press our country is still at war. Rationing is in force and shortages of many foods have developed. In a fine spirit of patriotism American homemakers have adapted themselves to the changes. Their minds are open to new ideas: foods they have never served before are now appearing on their tables. So, though you may have to wait until the war is over to try *some* of the recipes in this book, there are literally hundreds, which will add interest and novelty to your wartime menus. If, for example, you haven't enough sugar to make Fruit Torte, there's a delicious Cabinet Pudding using only two tablespoons of that precious ingredient; if you can't obtain a sirloin steak, there's an appetite-teasing T-bone Steak, Family Style; if your busy schedule doesn't allow time to make yeast-raised orange bread, there's a quick one that uses baking powder.

Refer to the chapter on nutrition often. It will tell you how to plan meals that will keep your family in top health. A healthy nation is the best contribution our homes can make to our war effort.

The time was World War II. Today our students learn the facts, dates, significant heroes and enemies but what is particularly helpful is that they learn about the people--what they felt, thought, and did in times of distress and times of joy. Just as they can learn from others about that period of time, they can learn through the oral and written stories of other times. The Vietnam War, for example, was a period of considerable unrest and change in our nation. A different form of patriotism was evolving. People were questioning the government and our leaders' decisions. Many of our children today are directly or indirectly affected by the events of that time. They can have a better understanding of what their aunts, uncles, grandparents experienced by asking questions and understanding their stories.

*History Comes Home* recaps some of the thoughts that a group of fifth graders had when they were participating in a pilot project on collecting family histories. One fifth grader states: "I didn't really like history at first, but I really like it now. I've lived through the Million Man

March, the O. J. trial, three Bulls championships, and the Oklahoma bombing. It's something that I'll be able to tell my kids about" (p. 4).

The history stories become to some degree genealogy stories. Susan Beller in *Roots for Kids* writes: "Every family has its own stories. You may find someone very famous among your ancestors, or all your stories may be about regular, everyday people. You will find people who have done very good things in their lives. You may also find people who have done very bad things. The idea behind finding your ancestors and the stories is not to find someone great. The important thing is to find all those normal everyday people who make up your past" (p. 14).

At the Middle Gifted Center, the students are encouraged to develop their interests by engaging in independent exploration of a particular topic. This approach is called "project-based learning," which is derived from several theories of learning such as Constructivism. In this theory, the student is actively engaged in the learning process (Moursond, 1999, p. 39). While a concept such as the elements of a feature story is presented in group learning, the students take what they have learned and implement it in a project of their choice with the teacher acting as facilitator.

Using this method, the students in my sixth grade technology and communications class will become a news writing team with the goal of creating an historical magazine. They will learn the basics of conducting interviews, doing Internet searches, compiling stories from various sources, and the mechanics of creating an online magazine.

## **Objectives**

The students have a definite advantage with the accessibility of technology and the Internet to locate information. However, they need to learn how to establish their topics, develop themes, and conduct research. Throughout the unit, the students will need to gather information so that they know enough about the topic in order to do effective interviews. This will be done through reading from a variety of sources: books, periodicals, the Internet, and multimedia software.

Once they have enough information for their articles, they will learn how to structure the narratives in order to make them informative and appealing. This section of the curriculum will also necessitate ensuring that the student has the requisite skills for using word processing and desktop publishing. Since a goal of the unit is for the students to publish their historical magazine on the Internet within the school's web site, they will also be shown how to transfer the stories from word processing files into a web page.

Effective group communication is also important since the students will be working as teams to put together the publication. This includes determining the theme of the magazine's issue, the types of stories that will be written and who will write them, the processes for gathering information, and the final layout and publication.

## Strategies

### Know Your History – Developing Background Knowledge

In *History Comes Home* the authors point out that "studies have shown that American students are not strong on historical knowledge, nor do they regard history as a particularly exciting subject" (Zemelman, Bearden, Simmons, Leki, 1999, p. 4). The students will need to develop their background knowledge on the topic they are going to pursue so that they will be able to ask the questions that will give them the information they need to write clear and accurate stories. In a writing piece in which the purpose is primarily to inform, a performance indicator would be to "develop a report using notes from a variety of sources." William Blundell makes the observation in the Introduction to his book *The Art and Craft of Feature Writing*: "We're supposed to be tellers of tales as well as purveyors of facts." The beginning of this unit, then, will have students taking the time to research major historical and/or current events. The students will learn how to stay true to the facts while also learning the techniques required for retelling the story based on the information they collect. Therefore, the curriculum will also focus on addressing those standards that require them to learn how to use technology for research, distinguish between primary and secondary sources of information, adjust their reading according to the complexity of the text, and organize the material they have collected into cohesive narratives. Students will access web sites and multimedia encyclopedias in their search for information that will provide a factual base for their stories. This type of reading and writing activity will also help the student to learn how to distinguish between retelling and summarizing a story.

Students will examine other sources of information to broaden their knowledge of a topic or event. For instance, in the *Woman's Home Companion Cook Book* there is information about the beginnings of government grading and stamping of meat. I've always been intrigued by the chapter on "Table Setting and Decoration." In today's world of microwave ovens and take-out foods due to the hurried and full schedules of families, statements like the following may be very foreign to children today yet are very revealing about that era and the people: "No matter how simple the home meal you are preparing, you and your family will enjoy it all the more if you sit down to an invitingly set table and your luncheon and dinner, or whatever it may be, is attractively served" (p. 39). There is a section of "Do's and Don'ts" that shows the change in our society: "*Do* put cigarettes and ash trays on the table. In spite of the custom of passing these after the salad course, people will smoke throughout the meal and you might as well be prepared" (p. 40). In another book, *Good Old Days in the Kitchen*, there is a story called the "Day Grandma Stopped Baking" in which grandma is introduced to fresh baked goods being delivered door to door by the bakery man in his truck. As a result, grandma says "This is the day I stop all that baking and sweating and hustling around. I'm going to start being a little selfish and a little lazy and . . . oh, whatever!" (p. 123). This type of story could be the impetus for asking questions of parents, grandparents, and people of another generation giving the students an understanding of another time.

Another good source for helping students to increase their knowledge base of historical information is the book *We Interrupt This Broadcast: The Events That Stopped Our Lives* students can read about major news events from the explosion of the Hindenburg to the

death of John F. Kennedy Jr. in an airplane crash. With an accompanying audio CD they will be able to listen to news broadcasts that relive those moments. This along with other sources will enable the students to broaden or add to their knowledge of these historical events to that they will be prepared for the next step in the curriculum – conducting interviews.

### The Interview – The Story

This section of the unit would have students interviewing people of another generation to write their stories or to share with each other a personal experience through their writing. It is through dialogue with family members that children can associate the development and growth of their families with significant historical events. However, prior to actually collecting these oral histories, the students will need to learn the techniques of interviewing, how to draw the stories from others, and how to be sensitive to those stories that may require tact. They will learn how to structure their questions so that they get more than yes or no answers. Also, they will need to frame their questions so that they are not too general. Beller writes, "The rule for asking questions is to make the questions simple enough that they can be easily answered" (p. 34).

In this part of the curriculum the students will have the opportunity to communicate with news reporters in order to get advice on how to get a story and to conduct interviews. This will be done via email or direct mail. The *New York Times* has a web site designed for students that gives them the opportunity to write in questions to several of their feature storywriters. The *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and *Tribune-Review* also list their feature reporters and, in some cases, provide email addresses. This will provide the students with practice in asking questions as well as giving them the opportunity to learn from people in the field about how to conduct interviews. These activities fulfill the standards in which the students learn how to ask questions and apply their communication skills in situations beyond the classroom.

### Telling the Story and Publishing It

In developing literacy, it is important to understand the connection between oral and written communication skills. Children can learn story development and elements if given the opportunity to listen to stories as they can by reading and retelling a story. They will learn how to set their purpose for writing. Will it be simply to narrate a story? Or, will it be to provide information? In most cases, it will be a combination of the two since in their narratives they will also be providing information on historical or cultural events that have shaped society and their lives. They will need to be conscious of how well they can keep events in a sequential order, as well as pay attention to the overall development of the story. I have read student writings in which they have a good beginning, and even a good ending, but the student writer lacked the ability to link together his thoughts and pieces of information that constitute the middle of the story. The story basically had no substance. To combat this, the students will learn how to carefully scrutinize their own stories and those of their team to be sure that they have provided the necessary details and descriptions that give the story its body.

At this stage of the curriculum, the students will first compile all the information they have collected from various sources and, then, write the stories. They will learn how to organize their stories so as to give an accurate account of the information garnered from interviews or research. Some of the key elements in this type of writing are making the story interesting for the readers and being true to the original story or the facts. During this time they will learn the mechanics of web page development and apply their skills in word processing and desktop publishing. They will examine the processes of putting together a news publication and follow the writing processes of prewriting, drafting, proofreading, editing, and revising. Other areas to be covered are how to cite the sources from which they got the information. They need to be aware, for instance, that material taken from the Internet is copyrighted and so they must cite the appropriate reference in their writings.

From this point on, the curriculum will be recursive in that once one publication is done the cycle begins again so that we can constantly update our information. One of the constraints is that we see the students only once a week for an hour per class at the Gifted Center. Regularly scheduled vacation days or student absenteeism sometimes hinders the process. On the other hand, because we also have a different group of students each day from all over the city, we will be able to have the historical magazine published at different times by different teams of students.

## **Classroom Activities**

### **Our History**

In *Far Away and Long Ago: Young Historians in the Classroom*, Edinger and Fins write: "No history can be more immediate than our own. If history can be seen as narrative, the stories of our own past are the historical events that are the most emotional, memorable, and significant to us (p. 24). The lessons would begin with explaining the purpose of the curriculum unit which is to write and publish an historical magazine and, then, prompting the students to consider some of the major events that have occurred in *their* lifetimes; calling to mind one event that made an impression on them. An excerpt from William Saroyan's "The Coldest Winter Since 1854" can be read as an example of how an event can be interwoven with something else in a person's life:

It was very cold the year I tore a ligament in my right leg. That was the year I fell in love with Emma Haines. I also got a job as a messenger boy after school. And I sent away for a booklet about how to be a success.

It was the coldest winter since 1854. The newspaper said it was, so I guess it was.

The story goes on to describe the problems he had with his leg and how he was able to overcome them, his falling in love and then out of love with Emma Haines, all tied into the fact that it was the coldest winter on record. A more timely story written by Barbara Cloud, fashion writer for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, can also set the stage for the ways in which we are affected by a news-making event such as the death of a sports hero:

Much has been written about the late Willie Stargell. I have my own story, which touched me in a personal way, far from the baseball field of dreams. When he passed away early the morning of

April 9, I felt the sadness and found myself going into my son's bedroom and looking at a small frame on the wall. "To Drew, Willie Stargell." Many must have such an autograph from his years of play and his accessibility to fans. This was written on a small lined sheet of notebook paper. It was my working notebook. I was attending a fancy dinner in Manhattan. . . I don't remember the year, but I am guessing it was soon after the Pirates won the 1979 pennant. . .

. . . At this event, Stargell raised some eyebrows when, if asked for an autograph, he would say "It'll cost you a dollar." But he explained he did that for charity, and so far he had raised about \$600 to fight sickle cell anemia. We were together on an escalator after the dinner, and I did what I had wanted to do all evening. I handed him my dollar and he took my notebook and wrote, "To Drew," followed by his name in that familiar and legible backhand swirl. I stared at it the morning he died in North Carolina. I called my son to tell him I would take good care of his treasure. He hadn't forgotten he had it. He was remembering it, too.

--*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Sunday, May 6, 2001

A "memoir" is a story that has a factual base to it but is imbued with the feelings and emotions of the author. This type of writing at times mixes fact with fiction. Monica Edinger writes: "juxtaposed with history . . . memoirs could be works of art, based on the truth, but not locked into it" (*Far Away and Long Ago*, p. 29). A "feature story" intermingles the facts with the personal providing touches of color that are not often found in the typical news story that needs to just provide the facts. This is where the students can engage in a discussion on the differences between retelling and summarizing a story. A summary of a story concentrates primarily on providing the key points or facts whereas a retelling includes the descriptive language necessary to help the reader "experience" the event.

In a five to ten minute writing session, the students will pick a news-making event that they recall and write a brief story that retells the facts of the event and relates the impact it had on them. After writing, they will orally share their stories with the class. It would be interesting to note if several students wrote about the same event and record the similarities and differences. Students would also provide feedback to one another as to the clarity of the topic, the sequencing of events, and the resolution or closing of the story.

### Testing Your Knowledge of History

In order for the students to gather information for stories, they will need to check their own knowledge of history-making events. The students will conduct a self-examination of what they feel they already know about important events that have occurred during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. At this point, the emphasis will not be on accuracy as related to specific dates, but more towards what events can be recalled either from personal experience or from what they have learned in social studies classes. Students will, individually, make up simple lists, then form groups of four to five to compare what they recorded and compile a team list. After a few minutes of small group discussion, the teams will be asked to share with the whole class and pull together their information.

At this point, they will use such multimedia programs as *Encarta Encyclopedia* or *Grolier's Multimedia Encyclopedia* to check the facts. For instance, both multimedia encyclopedias have a Timeline feature that will help the students to quickly search time periods and the major events that occurred in each. As a way to familiarize the students with using this feature, they should look up the year they were born and take note of the historical events that occurred during that year. Similarly, they could review the event that they wrote about in the previous writing exercise to see what other newsworthy events occurred at the same time.

A class timeline will be constructed and displayed for students to use as a reference as they continue with the remainder of the unit. They can decide the starting and ending points of the timeline. As they progress through the unit, they can add additional events as they come across them. These timelines can be hand-drawn, or students can use the software program *Timeliner* (Tom Snyder Productions) that is a computer-generated timeline.

### Zeroing in on a topic

The students will be given the opportunity to select an event that they want to learn more about. Again, this is to help them to broaden their background knowledge. In the future, when they have to conduct interviews, they will have the foundation necessary to ask appropriate questions. It is feasible for more than one to select the same event but caution must be taken so that it is not overdone. Therefore, they will be instructed to select at least two major events to research. This can be done independently or with a partner.

Each student will create an Event Notebook (Appendix A) to keep track of pertinent data. They will use a variety of resource materials to gather information to add to their notebooks. Before they begin, a short lesson should be done on the difference between primary and secondary sources of information.

### *Primary and Secondary Sources of Information*

Primary sources of information are "materials on a topic upon which subsequent interpretations or studies are based, anything from firsthand documents such as poems, diaries, court records, and interviews to research results generated by experiments, surveys, ethnographies, and so on" (Hairston and Ruskiewicz, *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 1996, p. 547). Secondary sources of information are an analysis or interpretation of the primary source such as found in encyclopedia articles, textbooks, essays on a particular topic, and biographies.

For both primary and secondary sources, it is important to know the extent of the interpretation. One web site<sup>1</sup> shows a clear breakdown of the differences between primary sources of information and secondary sources. In selective records of the event such as pictures, films or videos, the extent of interpretation is what the camera captured. While this is a primary source, the information is still determined by the photographer and may not show the full extent of what actually happened. In the case of other types of primary sources such as diaries, interviews, memoirs that retell an event based upon what was remembered there is likelihood that the facts will have been altered or colored. Secondary sources are pieces written by someone who did not witness the event but retells it from what was investigated or read. The extent of interpretation is

based upon the recorder or writer's view and understanding of the event, the degree of research and examination of primary sources.

Any number of materials can be provided for the students to examine and label which would be PRIMARY SOURCES or SECONDARY SOURCES. Discover Enterprises, Ltd.<sup>2</sup> publishes a series of books that contain photographs of events, newspaper articles, letters, poems and descriptions of the events. Once students have categorized different pieces of materials, a chart should be created that will be on display for future reference by the students. It is important for them to understand how to distinguish between primary and secondary sources and to know what sources are reliable references.

### Searching the World Wide Web

As in the previous lesson, some time is needed to review some of the important points of determining reliable Internet sources and conducting effective Internet searches. Frequently, a great deal of time is wasted when the students don't take the time to think through the questions they want answered. Prior to using the Internet for research, they will spend some time learning the in's and out's of search techniques, structuring queries, using keywords, and selecting the appropriate search engine(s).

#### *Conducting Internet Searches*

Students, based on the topic(s) previously selected, will write questions that they need to have answered. For instance, if someone is looking up information on the survivors of Pearl Harbor and formulates the question "What happened at Pearl Harbor?" they will find everything related to Pearl Harbor. This is a very broad topic that needs to be streamlined. A structured query involves determining the keyword(s) and how the keyword should be written. If a student types, Pearl Harbor he might get information on pearls or harbors. Using the plus sign (+) before the phrase will give the same result. However, putting the phrase in quotation marks, "Pearl Harbor," will result in the search engine looking for the words together. Some search engines as *AltaVista* allow for advanced searches using Boolean or the connectors AND, OR, NOT. So, typing pearl *and* harbor *and* survivors will bring more accurate links to web sites that provide information on the Pearl Harbor survivors. Other search engines such as *Ask Jeeves* will allow the student to type in the question without worrying about quotation marks or connectors. It searches using natural language. Even still, the student needs to learn how to narrow the topic.

Search engines often show what is called "subject trees" to show how one topic links to another. Students can predetermine their own subject tree by listing all the points related to the topic. There are also "open directories" that help to narrow the topic. For instance, a student goes to the search engine *Yahooligans* and clicks on "School Bell" the directories and subject trees are as follows:

School Bell > Social Studies > History > United States History >

Wars and Battles > World War II > Pearl Harbor

In clicking on the directory for "Pearl Harbor" he will then have a more specific listing of web sites to view such as "A Day That Will Live in Infamy: The Bombing of Pearl Harbor"<sup>3</sup> shows information about what occurred that day, including interviews with survivors.

#### *Determining the reliability of web sites*

Linda Joseph's *Net Curriculum* provides ways to rate web sites for content (pp. 20-21). The student should look for whether or not the information providers have clearly identified their sources, if the content is bias free, and if it links to other sites that also are reliable. The web site should designate the site's author, affiliation, and complete mailing address. Another good indicator for checking the credibility of a web site is whether it is free of grammatical errors or misspellings. The stability of the site (i.e., revision date) is also helpful in checking for reliability.

This would also be a good time to review the URL suffixes that are used at the end of web site addresses. These are also called "domains." For example, *gov* are government-related sites, *edu* are education-related sites, *org* stands for organization, *net* is a network, *mil* refers to the military, and *com*, the most frequently used suffix, is an abbreviation for "commercial." Whatever the case, students need to develop a critical eye for web site information and cannot assume that just because it is published on the Internet it is a good and reliable site.

#### *Appropriate citing of electronic sources*

Students should know the proper way to cite electronic sources – articles from multimedia encyclopedias, photographs, maps, and web sites. There are various styles that can be used and, in many cases, guidelines can be found on the Internet. An important note to make is that the access date should be included with the information about the web site source since Internet sites change frequently.<sup>4</sup>

In the Appendix there is a handout that will provide students with the way to properly write the citations for the sources found on the Internet using MLA style (Appendix B). A discussion of copyright and plagiarism should also be done at this time.

#### *Planning the components of the historical magazine*

Once the students have had the opportunity to think through their topics and build onto their prior knowledge by doing multimedia searches, they should take a closer look at the narrative style of writing by reviewing stories – print and electronic media. This will help in deciding exactly what they will want included in their magazine.

#### *Review of narrative writing – the memoir*

Nancie Atwell makes some significant points about the qualities of a good memoir. For instance, the voice in the story is in first person singular, the main character is the person retelling the memory, the action can be visualized by the reader, and, perhaps most important, "the writer

isn't acting like a reporter: the writing is subjective, the writer's truth" (*In the Middle*, p. 391). She goes on to further describe what a memoir is:

Memoir calls for strong language; for metaphors and similes; for characters in action and a good story; for problems and themes; for humor and voice; for rich specifics; for rhythm and repetition; for the telling detail (p. 392).

The students will, in this next writing exercise, examine what they had written earlier in a personal experience – or, try a new piece of writing. This time they will concentrate on the use of action verbs, the dialogue as conversation, the use of descriptive words and phrases, and the specifics that will help the reader to picture the event as if they were also present.

#### *Another review in narrative writing – the feature story*

Scattered around the room for the students to peruse should be numerous articles cut from newspapers and magazines plus other samples from books – the types of feature stories that the students will also be writing. In this case, the stories should reflect the chronicling of an event in history or the story of a person and how it was affected by an historical event.

The Defense Information School through the Department of Defense has a web site that details the courses and news writing techniques offered to enlisted and civilian personnel in the armed services. It describes two basic structures for a feature story – the BME (beginning, middle, end) and the Hourglass.<sup>5</sup> For instance, it identifies seven feature endings found in a BME structure story like the "climax ending" that "provides a natural ending to a story told in chronological order" or, the "stinger ending" that is "a surprise ending designed to jolt the reader." In the "hourglass" structure there is more emphasis on facts with little action. An example given is the story about a person's hobby.

Students will use a worksheet that describes these two structures and will attempt to identify the structure used in two or three different articles (Appendix C). They will also take note of descriptive words and the action of the story, as well as noting the difference between retelling and summarizing.

#### *Using online magazines as a guide*

Since the ultimate goal of this project is to publish the students' magazine in a web site, they can use some time to review newspapers and magazines that are found online. In the bibliography, I have listed some that would be good to use as a guide for the way articles are written and for the layout design of the magazine. Keep in mind, though, that web sites change frequently; what is online and current today may be gone or changed tomorrow. Those published by newspapers or magazines such as *Time* magazine or *The New York Times*<sup>6</sup> will more likely be constant and reliable sites. Even though the stories may change from day to day, the sites will be available.

#### *Deciding on the sections of the magazine*

What goes into the magazine or newspaper? What are the various departments? Students will be provided with various indexes or tables of content from different magazines and newspapers. Additionally, they should look at the departments that are part of online publications. There are stories related to home and garden, to fashion, to reviews of books, movies, and television. Photographs and cartoons play an important part in the publication. At this point, students will begin to decide what stories they will write that ties in with their interests and topics.

Carolyn Coil's *Teaching Tools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* addresses the importance of students making choices--not only the gifted learners but also all learners when she states:

Choice affects education like all other goods and services in our advanced modern economy. Schools in the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to market themselves and attempt to satisfy the expectations of their clients—the parents and students. Within the classroom, students need to have choices in their learning as well . . . Why is this important? Students feel a sense of ownership in the tasks they are to do when teachers give choices in classroom assignments. When teachers include the element of choice in learning experiences, they increase the chances that students will achieve optimal learning (p. 11).

The need to be accountable and address educational standards does not negate the possibility that students can make choices about their learning. Coil writes, "meeting standards can work hand in hand with student-directed learning when teachers guide student choice making. The choice comes in HOW to meet the standards, not in whether or not the standards will be met" (p. 13).

The students will begin to frame their magazine around their areas of interest, the historical relationship, and decide who will do what. The teacher becomes the publishing editor and the students, the reporters. Students who like to work with partners can divide the tasks or cooperatively decide how they will tackle their subject. In the Appendix, I have listed a variety of suggested topics and ideas that the students can use as a springboard for getting the magazine off the ground (Appendix D).

### The Art of Interviewing

Key elements in conducting an interview are knowing the subject and some background information on the person being interviewed. Additionally, there are certain tools to assemble prior to the interview. They are: notepad and pencil, tape and tape recorder, permission letters, set-up questions, and the ability to listen well.

While the students may use a tape recorder to get the bulk of the information, especially if the speaker is telling a story, it is important that they take notes as the interview progresses in the event that the tape is unclear or certain words are garbled. Prior to the interviews, students should acquire permission from the interviewees with the understanding that the stories will be published. In terms of the types of questions, an important rule-of-thumb is to avoid asking questions that will receive "yes" or "no" answers. Therefore, the students need some practice in phrasing questions that will provide them with the information they need but avoiding short or one-word responses. In the PBS web site, "Way Back: U. S. History for Kids,"<sup>7</sup> students have

the opportunity to look at interview questions and read the answers that were given. This would be a good model for students to follow when preparing their own questions.

Probably most important is the ability to listen to the speaker. A student may have prepared a series of questions, but in listening to the person telling the story, the student needs to be in tune with what is being said and, therefore, prepared to change some of the questions as the interview progresses. Another reason for the pad and pencil is that the student can note facial expressions or body language that can be just as important to the story as the words spoken. An optional tool could be the use of a video camera.

### *Practicing the interview*

Before the students actually conduct interviews, they need some time to practice the techniques of formulating questions, asking questions, timing, listening attentively, taking notes, and transcribing their handwritten notes as well as the recorded interview. Using the exercise in which they searched important events that occurred in their lifetime or the year they were born, the students would prepare questions to interview one another. Some time will be given to brainstorming general types of questions that can be asked to start the interview. Pre-writing should also include checking background information, i.e., knowing something about World War II or the Vietnam War before interviewing someone who served or lived during those times.

List the students' topics and pair the students so that the interviewer and interviewee have similar topics to cover since each will have the background information necessary for the interview. An alternate activity would be to have a random assignment or assign students with different topical areas to practice doing an interview. Give the students time to write questions that will provide for more open-ended answers and avoid the short responses. As the interview is conducted, explain to the students that they should watch for changes in facial expression (a smile, sadness) and take note of what the person is saying and what they look like at the time. This would add color to their writing piece.

Following the mock interviews, the students should have the time to transcribe their notes from the handwritten and recorded. This is when they will put in place the points learned about this type of writing. They should initially concentrate on getting the important pieces of information in place and then "flesh out" the story. Of course, each person has his/her own style of writing and this should be encouraged. The students by this time have had enough opportunity to view samples of feature stories that will help them in forming their own stories.

There are also ways in which the students can ask actual reporters for information on how to conduct interviews, gather stories, and more. *The New York Times on the Web: Learning Network* has a section for students to access called "Ask the Reporter."<sup>8</sup>

Putting it together – collecting and writing the stories

At this stage, students will either be writing their articles based on interviews they have conducted or from information they have gathered in their research. Arrangements should be made for the students to have someone to interview. This can be within their own circle of family or friends, members of the community can be invited in, or contacts can be made online through the Internet. One Internet source is *Classroom Connect*.<sup>9</sup> This web site provides opportunities to establish online partnerships with teachers and students around the world.

The Suggested Projects page in the Appendix will serve as a guide for other types of articles that can be included in the students' magazine. A decision may need to be made as to how eclectic you want your magazine to be. Will you include articles from any historical event or will your magazine be more topical or thematic concentrating on one time period or event at a time? The latter may be a little more inhibiting in that some students may not have an interest in a particular time period but it would also allow for more continuity. A suggestion would be to plan future issues based on the topics students have selected.

### Creating the web page

Students will not need to know how to write in hypertext markup language or HTML in order to do the web page. Nearly any word processing program will provide the option of saving the page as an HTML document, which can later be inserted in a web page editor such as *Front Page*. Other software that can be used is *Microsoft Publisher*, *Works*, or even *PowerPoint*. Any of these can be used to type in the articles that the program converts to HTML files.

### *Publishing the web page*

If the school has a web site, this would be an ideal location for publishing the web page(s) of the historical magazine. Ask your technology support person for assistance in uploading the pages to the web site. Some web sites such as *Classroom Connect* or *Scholastic* also allow for classroom web pages to be published within their web sites.

Depending upon the number of students involved in this project, the online magazine could be published at least quarterly throughout the school year. At the Middle Gifted Center we have different groups of students each day and this would allow for a regular updating of the web site. As the magazine "takes off," hyperlinks could be created on the web page so that anyone can view archived copies of the magazine even if the site is updated on a regular basis.

### *Print versus Electronic Magazine*

This curriculum is not dependent on whether or not the magazine can be published to a web site. The important point to make here is that the curriculum is *not* technology-driven but that the technology is used to help make it more accessible to a wider audience than printing the magazine in a hardcopy.

Internet usage in this curriculum affords the student the opportunity to truly be a part of a global classroom. The doors are opened for the student to use the World Wide Web for information and for providing information to others. The following quote sums up a reason for using the Internet:

The Internet isn't magical, but with you at the helm guiding your students, its resources can enhance your classroom and the quality of education. *Gregory Giagnocavo, Classroom Connect 1997.*

If this was true in 1997, then how much more so in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are, as is said in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*, "Changing the world one story at a time."

## Notes

- 1 A web site for identifying primary and secondary sources: <http://www.libraries.psu.edu/crsweb/infolit/andyou/mod3/timeline.htm>
- 2 Discovery Enterprises, Ltd. – Researching American History Series such as *Children at Work* or *Woman's Suffrage*.
- 3 "A Day That Will Live in Infamy: The Bombing of Pearl Harbor" web site: [http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112601/survivor/survivor\\_frameset.html](http://library.thinkquest.org/J0112601/survivor/survivor_frameset.html)
- 4 "Citing Electronic Sources – MLA" from Middlebury College website (Retrieved 5/27/2001): <http://www.middlebury.edu/~lib/citing.mla.html>
- 5 Defense Information School, Department of Defense, web site describes the seven feature endings in a BME structure and the patterns of an Hourglass structure (Retrieved 5/27/2001): [http://www.dinfos.osd.mil/DOT\\_Web\\_Pages/jweb/hjc/features/humint.htm](http://www.dinfos.osd.mil/DOT_Web_Pages/jweb/hjc/features/humint.htm)
- 6 Newspaper and magazine web sites such as *Time for Kids* or *New York Times Online*
- 7 PBS American Experience web site containing interview questions with Melba Beals on the impact of the civil rights movement that desecrated schools in Little Rock, Arkansas (Retrieved ): <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/civilrights/buzz/index.html>
- 8 "Ask the Reporters" section of the *New York Times Online Learning Network* (Retrieved ): [http://www.nytimes.com/learning/students/ask\\_reporters/index.html](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/students/ask_reporters/index.html)
- 9 A source for establishing online partnerships with schools around the world located on the *Classroom Connect* web site (Retrieved 5/25/2001): <http://www.classroomconnect.com>

## Annotated Bibliography

Atwell, N. 1998. *In the Middle: New Understandings about Writing, Reading, and Learning*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook Publishers, Inc. ISBN 0-86709-374-9.

This is a good reference and guide for writing personal narratives and memoirs.

Beller, S. P. 1989. *Roots for Kids*. White Hall, VA: Betterway Publications, Inc. ISBN 1-55870-112-5.

A good source for how to construct interviews and writing oral histories.

Dooley, D., ed. 1975. *Better Homes and Gardens Heritage Cook Book*. Meredith Corporation. ISBN 696-00760-6.

A history of America's growth and development and coinciding recipes, stories, and more.

Blundell, W. E. 1988. *The Art and Craft of Feature Writing: Based on the Wall Street Journal Guide*. New York: Penguin USA. ISBN 0-452-26158-9.

An excellent guide for collecting stories and writing feature stories.

Bowersox, B. 1999. *My Family's Best*. New York: QVC Publishing Inc. ISBN 1-928998-00-3.

The introduction in this cookbook is a good example of how one can tie in family stories with best-loved recipes.

Canfield, J., Hansen, M. V. & Wentworth, D. 1995. *Chicken Soup for the Soul Cookbook*. Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc. ISBN 155874-354-5.

A helpful resource for providing examples of how personal stories can relate to favorite recipes.

Cohen, H. and Coffin, T. P. 1991. *America Celebrates! A Patchwork of Weird and Wonderful Holiday Lore*. Detroit, MI: Visible Ink Press. ISBN 0-8103-9407-3.

This is a collection of stories centered around favorite holidays and customs in America.

Coil, C. 1997. *Teaching Tools for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Marion, IL: Pieces of Learning. ISBN 1-880505-55-X.

This is a good resource for finding out ways to implement technology into the curriculum.

Deitch, J. W., ed. 2000. *Children at Work: Researching American History*. Carlisle, MA: Discovery Enterprises, Ltd. ISBN 1-57960-065-4

One in a series of books published by Discovery Enterprises that provides primary and secondary sources of information on an historical event or time period. Another one in the series is titled *Woman's Suffrage* ISBN 1-57960-066-2.

Edinger, M. & Fins, S. 1998. *Far Away and Long Ago: Young Historians in the Classroom*. York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers. ISBN 1-57110-044-X.

This is very helpful for ideas on how to collect personal histories and writing reports. It provides helpful suggestions for teaching units on such historical events as the Pilgrims or immigration.

Garner, J. 2000. *We Interrupt This Broadcast: The Events That Stopped Our Lives, Updated Second Edition*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc. ISBN 1-57071-535-1.

The foreword is written by Walter Cronkite and leads into a fascinating narrative of famous broadcasts that "shook the world" ranging from the explosion of the Hindenburg to the death of John F. Kennedy, Jr. The book has accompanying audio CDs for students to listen to the actual broadcasts.

Giagnocavo, G., Houseley, K. & Mautner, C. 1997. *Web Guide: Language Arts* Lancaster, PA: Wentworth Worldwide Media, Inc. ISBN 0-932577-59-8.

This guide provides a listing of web resources and a section on teaching with technology.

Joseph, L. 1999. *Net Curriculum: An Educator's Guide to Using the Internet*. Medford, NJ: Information Today, Inc. ISBN 0-910965-30-7.

This book provides numerous online projects and web sites. It also gives guidelines for evaluating web sites, using search engines, and research tips.

Kinzer, C., & Leu, D. J. 1997. The challenge of change: Exploring literacy and learning in electronic environments. *Language Arts*, 74 (2), 126-136.

Kirk, D., ed. 1945. *Woman's Home Companion Cook Book*. P. F. Collier & Son Corporation.

This cookbook is out of print but it provided background information for this curriculum.

Moursund, D. 1999. *Project-Based Learning Using Information Technology* Eugene, OR: International Society for Technology in Education. ISBN 1-564-84-145-6

This is an excellent resource for developing a curriculum that is project-based. It provides the rationale for project-based learning, project planning, and creating lesson plans.

Rather, D. 2001. *The American Dream*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. ISBN 0-688-17892-8

A collection of stories from ordinary and extraordinary people from all over America.

Saroyan, W. "The Coldest Winter Since 1854," in *Scholastic Scope Literature*. Scholastic Inc.

Simons, E. R. 1990. *Student Worlds, Student Words*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton/Cook. ISBN 0-86709-256-4.

A helpful book for knowing how to gather family stories and/or folklore.

Stillman, P. R. 1989. *Families Writing*. Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books. ISBN 0-89879-345-9.

Another source for information on the importance of gathering family stories and how to write them.

Tate, K. & Tate, J., ed. 1998. *Good Old Days in the Kitchen*. Berne, IN: House of White Birches. ISBN 1-882138-39-2.

Another cookbook that recalls stories from "the good old days" to help give students background information. House of White Birches also publishes a magazine titled "Good Old Days." They have a web site—GoodOldDays-magazine.com.

Zemelman, S., Bearden, P., Simmons, Y., & Leki, P. 1999. *History Comes Home* York, ME: Stenhouse Publishers. ISBN 1-57110-308-2

Stresses importance of learning about history through family history and provides a step-by-step guide for implementing this in the classroom.

### **Annotated Bibliography for Students**

Tonya Bolden. *And Not Afraid To Dare: The Stories of Ten African-American Women*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-590-48080-4

Biographies of such women as Mae C. Jemison, Leontyne Price, and Mary McLeod Bethune—women who refused to let anyone stop them from taking a stand or making a contribution to society.

Ruby Bridges. *Through My Eyes*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-590-18923-9

The story of Ruby Bridges and her experiences as a six-year-old child in 1960 going to one of the first desegregated schools. This book includes quotes from people who observed Ruby and many photographs.

Eve Bunting. *Dreaming of American: An Ellis Island Story*. Troll Communications, L.L.C. ISBN 0-8167-6521-9

A fictionalized telling of the story of Annie Moore who was the first immigrant to be processed on Ellis Island in 1892.

Penny Colman. *Girls: A History of Growing Up Female in America*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-590-37129-0

Stories of young girls taken from diaries, memoirs, household manuals and more revealing the courage, heartaches, and dreams they experienced.

Christopher Paul Curtis. *The Watson's Go to Birmingham—1963*. Bantam Books. ISBN 0440414121

The story of a young boy visiting his grandmother in Birmingham, Alabama during the time of the burning of the Sixteenth Avenue Baptist Church with four young girls trapped inside.

Kieran Doherty. *Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients (Collective Biographies)*. Enslow Publishers, Inc. ISBN 0766010260

From the first medal awarded in 1863, this book tells the stories of 11 recipients of the honor given for "bravery above and beyond the call of duty."

Zlata Filipovic, et. al. *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo*. Penguin, U.S.A. ISBN 0140242058

The story of 11 year old Zlata during the turmoils experienced in Sarajevo.

Priscilla Galloway (compiler). *Too Young to Fight: Memories from Our Youth During World War II*. Stoddart Kids. ISBN 0773731903

The stories of 11 Canadian children and their experiences growing up during the second world war.

Alison Leslie Gold. *A Special Fate: Chiune Sugihara Hero of the Holocaust*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-590-39525-4

The story of Chiune Sugihara, a Japanese diplomat, who helped to rescue many thousands of Jews during the Holocaust.

Joyce Hansen. *Women of Hope: African Americans Who Made a Difference*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-590-93973-4

Stories of African American women from all walks of life who "opened the doors" for other women. These biographies are accompanied by photographs of these remarkable women.

Tomika Higa, Dorothy Britton (translator). *The Girl with the White Flag*. Kodansha International. ISBN 4770019467

At the age of seven, Tomika was separated from her family during World War II in Okinawa and the story of her survival.

Laurel Holliday. *Why Do They Hate Me? Young Lives Caught in War and Conflict*. Archway. ISBN 0671034545

Stories of children growing up in Northern Ireland, Israel, Palestine, and during the Holocaust.

Hanneke Ippisch. *Sky: A True Story of Courage During World War II*. Troll Communications, L.L.C. ISBN 0-8167-45274-2.

This is the true story written by the author, Hanneke Ippisch, of her time in the Dutch Resistance when she risked her life to help Jews escape to safety. An excellent resource for primary and secondary sources of information.

Ann T. Keene. *Peacemakers: Winners of the Nobel Peace Prize*. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0195103165

Accounts of the winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, how they are selected, and a "Peace Timeline."

David Kherdian. *The Road from Home: A True Story of Courage, Survival, and Hope*. Beech Tree Books. ISBN 068814425X

The story of an Armenian girl and her journey to America.

Willie Morris. *My Dog Skip*. Vintage Books. ISBN 0679767223

The story of a boy growing up in the rural South of the 1940s.

Jim Murphy. *Blizzard!* Scholastic Publications, Inc. ISBN 0-590-67309-2

A story about the Great Blizzard of 1888, one of the most devastating natural disasters, told through the eyes of survivors and victims.

Jim Murphy. *The Great Fire*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-590-47267-4

A recreation of one of the most disastrous fires that nearly destroyed Chicago in 1871. Includes personal accounts of actual survivors.

Margot Theis Raven. *Angels in the Dust*. Troll Communications, L.L.C. ISBN 0-8167-5608-2

The fictional account of a young girl growing up on an Oklahoma farm during the Depression.

Ruth Minsky Sender & Jim Coon. *The Cage*. Aladdin Paperbacks. ISBN 068981321X

A young Jewish girl's trials growing up through the German invasion of Poland in 1939 and her experiences in a concentration camp.

George Sullivan. *Mr. President: A Book of U.S. Presidents*. Scholastic, Inc. ISBN 0-439-23566-9

Short biographies of each of the presidents from Washington to George W. Bush. It provides interesting facts not commonly known about the presidents.

Ken & Janice Tate, editors. *Spring Cleaning*. House of White Birches. ISBN 0-54525-30389-4

A series of stories and poems about what "spring cleaning" was as far back as 80 years ago. It provides an insight to a time and custom from days gone by.

John Hudson Tiner. *100 Scientists Who Shaped World History*. Bluewood Books. ISBN 0912517395

The stories of scientists and their influence on the world.

Laurence Yep. *The Lost Garden*. William Morrow & Co. ISBN 0688137016

The author's story of growing up amidst anti-Chinese feelings in San Francisco and the Chinese-American culture of the 50s and 60s.

### **Internet Resources**

All sources checked and retrieved from the World Wide Web on June 10, 2001

*Allegheny County History*. (N.D.) The Allegheny County—Communications Division.  
<http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/comm/index.asp>

Provides information about Allegheny County's flag, seal, government, courthouse, jail and more.

*American Heritage*. (2001) Forbes Inc. <http://www.americanheritage.com>

Provides articles on events in American history and has two interesting sections: Time Machine and In The News.

*American History: The Magazine of the American Experience*. (2000) PRIMEDIA History Group, Inc. <http://www.thehistorynet.com/AmericanHistory/>

*American Memory: Historical Collections from the National Digital Library* (June 8, 2001) Library of Congress. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amhome.html>

*Ancestors in the Americas a PBS series*. (2001). NAATA.  
<http://www.pbs.org/ancestorsintheamericas/>

Ayers, E.L. *The Valley of the Shadow: Two communities in the Civil War*

(2001) <http://jefferson.village.virginia.edu/vshadow2/>

*The Brookline Connection* (June 3, 2001) hosted by Three Rivers Free-Net.  
<http://trfn.clpgh.org/bacc/>

Provides information and photographs about such schools as West Liberty, Brookline, and more.

*Classroom Connect.* (2001) Classroom Connect. <http://www.classroomconnect.com>

Provides e-mail pen pals.

*Defense Information School.* (2001) Department of Defense([http://www.dinfos.osd.mil/DOT\\_Web\\_Pages/jweb/bjc/features/humint.htm](http://www.dinfos.osd.mil/DOT_Web_Pages/jweb/bjc/features/humint.htm))

*Discover Pittsburgh* (N.D.) Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and hosted by Three Rivers Free-Net.  
<http://trfn.clpgh.org/pgh/history.shtml>

Pittsburgh history and photographs.

*Electronic Reference Formats Recommended by the American Psychological Association.* (N.D.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved May 27, 2001, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.apa.org/journals/webref.html>

*Eyewitness: History Through the Eyes of Those Who Lived It.* (2001) Ibis Communications, Inc.  
<http://www.ibiscom.com/>

*HistoricTraveler.com* (2001) Primedia Enthusiast. <http://www.historictraveler.com>

*National Geographic Online.* (2001) National Geographic Society.  
<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/index.html>

*Photographic Archives.* (1999). Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center Library and Archives. <http://www.pghphotos.org>

*Time for Kids* (N.D.) Time, Inc. <http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK>

*Voices of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Sounds from the Past.* (2001) Ibis Communications, Inc.  
<http://www.ibiscom.com/vofrm.htm>

Provides an opportunity to listen to recordings of actual broadcasts such as Charles Lindbergh after his historic flight or a humorous discussion by Jack Benny and Gracie Allen about gas rationing in 1942. Require RealPlayer.

*WayBack U.S. History for Kids--PBS "The American Experience"* (1999) WGBH Educational Foundation. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids>

*Weekly Reader*. (2001) Weekly Reader Corporation.  
<http://www.weeklyreader.com/features/gfivesix.html>

This site provides a section called "This Week in the News"

*World War II Remembered* (N.D.) Scholastic

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/wwii/memory/howto4.htm>

Provides information on how to conduct interviews, write oral histories, and publish the stories

### **Specific newspaper web sites:**

*Los Angeles Times*. (2001) Los Angeles Times. <http://www.latimes.com/>

*New York Times*. (2001) The New York Times Company. <http://www.nytimes.com> and  
<http://www.nytimes.com/learning>

New York Times Learning Network provides numerous educational resources, an "On This Day in History" section, and "Ask the Reporters"

*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. (2001) PG Publishing. <http://www.post-gazette.com/> and

<http://www.post-gazette.com/columnists/>

This web site has up-to-date news and archived articles. It lists the major columnists of the paper and provides their articles.

*Tribune-Review*. (2001) The Tribune-Review Publishing Co.  
<http://www.triblive.com/news/columnp.html>

This particular site also provides the email addresses of several columnists.

*USA Today*. (2001) USA TODAY a division of Gannet Co., Inc. <http://usatoday.com/>

*The Washington Post*. (2001) The Washington Post Company. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>

### **Other news-related sites:**

*The American Journalism Review*. (N.D.) <http://ajr.newslink.org/news.html>

This has links to other newspapers and media around the world.

*The Columbia Journalism Review*. (N.D.) <http://www.cjr.org/database/papers.asp> provides a newspaper and magazine finder.

*Everybody Has A Story* by Steve Hartman on the CBS News website

<http://cbsnews.com/now/story/0,1597,66202-412.00.shtml>

Yahoo (2001) Yahoo! Inc. <http://dailynews.yahoo.com/fc/US/FrontPages>

This web site provides an overview of news from around the world, print media, etc. and lists the daily headlines from major U.S. newspapers.

## Appendix A

### Events Notebook

Name Date

Identify the historical event that you want to learn.

Take notes on the information and record the source.

## Appendix B

### Style Guide

### How to Cite Electronic Sources

Author. "Article Title." (Date of Publication or Revision for web sites; N.D. for No Date). *Title of CD-ROM or Web Site*. [online]. Available: <full web address>. (Date of Access).

*Samples:*

***Citing a source from a CD-ROM:***

Smith, J. T. "The Civil War." (N.D.) *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia CD-ROM*. 1999.

***Citing a source from a web site:***

Stephens, J. (September 2, 2000). "Remembering the Day of Infamy" [online]. *The Historic Traveler*. Available:  
<[http://www.historictraveler.com/primedia/military/remembering\\_the\\_day\\_1.adp](http://www.historictraveler.com/primedia/military/remembering_the_day_1.adp)> (Retrieved May 28, 2001).

***Citing a web page or site:***

*Time for Kids*. (N.D.). [online]. Available: <<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/>> (Retrieved May 1, 2001).

**Note:** If you find a web site or article that does not show the author's name, start with the title of the article or web page.

## **Appendix C**

### **Feature Writing Information**

From the  
American Forces Information Service  
Defense Information School

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**The following information pages are derived from the Defense Information School's web site on human interest and news feature stories. For more information to the web site:**

**<http://www.dinfos.osd.mil/frame2.html>**

**(Retrieved 6/4/2001)**

### **News Feature**

A news feature is a "perishable story related to a current event or situation that is of interest to your readers and combines various feature writing techniques with elements of straight news writing."

The news feature format combines the best elements of news and feature writing styles to present the news in its context—with the human elements included.

Feature writing involves interpretation, style, imagery, description and emotional appeal. It gives depth to facts and records human drama.

### **Purpose**

News features have a news peg and a focus. The focus plays a dominant role in telling the story and is usually featured in the lead.

### **Content**

The writer presents the human side of the news along with the facts. The writer does this by using feature-writing techniques such as quotes, vivid verbs and descriptive writing.

## **Ending**

A news feature is the skilled telling of a complete story and needs a strong feature conclusion where the writer makes or reinforces a point. There are seven types of feature endings (same as the BME found in Human Interest Feature stories).

A **SUMMARY** ending summarizes the points made in the story. It usually keys on impact, effects or outcome.

A **TIE-BACK** ending plants a fact, idea or scene in the lead and completes it at the end.

A **WRAP-UP** ending ties up loose ends, answers questions or solves problems posed in the lead.

A **CLIMAX** ending provides a natural ending to a story told in chronological order.

An **UNENDING** ending leaves a key question unanswered. It is used to stimulate reader thinking—to get the reader involved with the situation posed in the story.

A **STINGER** ending is a surprise ending designed to jolt the reader.

A **COMBINATION** ending combines two or more of the above.

## **Human Interest Feature**

The purpose of a human interest feature is to engage readers emotionally. Human interest is a very broad feature category. Basically, any feature topic that can interest people is considered a form of human interest feature. Human interest features are written to inform, entertain or involve readers emotionally. Immediacy, in human interest features, is replaced by reader interest.

## **Structure**

The most common feature structures are the BME--beginning, middle and end (*see News Feature*) and the Hourglass.

### **Hourglass**

When a story is made up mostly of facts and information, with little or no action, hourglass is the best structure (Example: A story about someone's hobby, a unit feature, seasonal stories).

The hourglass body should be organized, using one of the following patterns:

TOPICALLY—the most common organization pattern and related topic-by-topic.

SPATIALLY—Information is explained according to physical arrangement—left to right, top to bottom, front to back.

GENERAL TO SPECIFIC—Especially good when introducing the reader to something new or technical. General background information is written so the reader can easily understand.

FUNCTIONALLY—Tells what something does and relates it to a larger function.

DESCENDING ORDER OF IMPORTANCE—Used most often with feature stories that have a strong news peg. In an hourglass ending, the writer usually can go back to the reason the story was written.

## Appendix D

### Ideas for Feature Stories

Choose an event or time period and interview a family member, friend, or someone in your neighborhood to gather information on their memories about the event or time period. For example, ask questions such as the following: What do you remember about the POW bracelets worn by many people during the Vietnam War? Where were you when (*specify event*) ?

Review a cookbook from another time period. What kind of information can you find that makes it different from recipes that you would find today? Make a comparison of the recipes.

Ask a family member or friend if there is a story behind a special recipe especially if it relates to a time period? For example, when my grandmother immigrated from Italy she brought with her family recipes that have been handed down through the generations.

Study the photographs of an historical event and write your own accompanying story.

Research the information on your school or neighborhood. Tell a story about what you discovered, perhaps comparing a typical school day when the school was first established to what might occur today. You can visit the following web site on the history of education in Brookline (<http://trfn.clpgh.org/bacc/Gallery/History1.html>) or <http://trfn.clpgh.org/pgh/photos.shtml> for other photo stories of Pittsburgh. Look at a photo of students in a home economics class at Sterret School in the 1950s at <http://www.pghphotos.org/TITLES/misc-ttl/mis8.html> (Retrieved 6/4/2001). Describe what you see and how times have changed. There are additional photos that can be found at this web site -- Photographic Archives of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania.

Create a calendar showing events that happened each day or week corresponding to the current date.

Do some research on the following and compare/contrast to today's styles

Fashion

Architecture – homes and other types of buildings

Theater and Music

Transportation

Ask someone or do some searching for the following and write about it: Have you ever heard of . . . or, try to accumulate some of your own and write a little quiz for the magazine.

Penny candy

Nickleodeons (not from TV)

Hula hoops

The five and dime store

Roller skate keys

Newsreels before a movie

Telephone numbers that started with a word like Mayflower-4567

Visit one of the following web sites for ideas and information (all retrieved as of 6/4/2001):

Eyewitness -- History through the Eyes of Those Who Lived It

<http://www.ibiscom.com/>

HistoricTraveler --<http://www.historictraveler.com/index.adp>

➤•The History net -- Where history lives on the web -- <http://www.thehistorynet.com/home.htm>

PBS: The American Experience -- WayBack U.S. History for Kids -- Stand Up for Your Rights -  
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/kids/civilrights/>

PBS: Ancestors in the Americas -- <http://www.pbs.org/ancestorsintheamericas/>

The Library of Congress American Memory Collection --  
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amhome.html>

Scholastic: Immigration -- Stories of Yesterday and Today -- Coming to America  
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/immigrat/>

Scholastic: World War II Remembered -- <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/wwii/>

## **Appendix E**

### **Interview Preparation Worksheet**

What is the reason or topic for the interview?

Who are you interviewing?

Where is the interviewee from?

Other background information:

List three start-up questions to the interview:

List three questions related to the topic of the interview:

List two or three closing questions:

## **Appendix F**

## **Standards Addressed**

The Pittsburgh Board of Education has adopted Core Curriculum Frameworks to help the district meet the National Education Standards proposed by the Department of Education. This unit addresses the following standards in the areas of Communications and Citizenship:

### **Communications**

1. All students use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.
2. All students read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.
3. All students respond orally and in writing to information and ideas gained by reading narrative and informational texts and use the information and ideas to make decisions and solve problems.
4. All students write for a variety of purposes, including to narrate, inform and persuade, in all subject areas.
5. All students analyze and make critical judgments about all forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias, recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.
6. All students exchange information orally, including understanding and giving spoken instructions, asking and answering questions appropriately, and promoting effective group communications.
7. All students listen to and understand complex oral messages and identify their purpose, structure and use.
8. All students compose and make oral presentations for each academic area of study that are designed to persuade, inform or describe.
9. *All students communicate appropriately in business, work and other applied situations.*

### **Citizenship**

1. All students demonstrate an understanding of major events, cultures, groups and individuals in the historical development of Pennsylvania, the United States and other nations, and describe the patterns of historical development.

2. All students demonstrate understanding of themes and patterns of geography, know the location of major bodies of water, landmasses and nations, and describe the relationships between geography and historical, economic and cultural development.
3. All students describe the development and operations of economic, political, legal and governmental systems in the United States, assess their own relationships to those systems, and compare them to those in other nations.
4. All students examine and evaluate problems facing citizens in their communities, state, nation and world by incorporating concepts and methods of inquiry of the various social sciences.
5. All students develop and defend a position on current issues, confronting the United States and other nations, conducting research, analyzing alternatives, organizing evidence and arguments, and making oral presentations.
6. All students explain basic economic concepts and the development and operation of economic systems in the United States and other nations, and make informed decisions about economic issues.
7. All students demonstrate their skills of communicating, negotiating and cooperating with others.
8. All students demonstrate that they can work effectively with others.
9. All students demonstrate an understanding of the history and nature of prejudice and relate their knowledge to current issues facing communities, the United States and other nations.