

“It’s News to Me!”
Teaching with Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection
Model Lesson Format

Fill out the list of the components to be included in a lesson using primary source materials that is aligned to Colorado Model Content Standards.

Lesson Title:

Social Changes of Divorce in America over the Past 100 Years

Subject and Grade Level:

History - 8th grade

Focus of Lesson: A brief explanation of what students are to learn in this lesson (content and/or skills). What is the purpose of the lesson?

In pairs, students will research and explore how society’s view of divorce has changed, if at all, since the late 1800s and early 1900s. By developing their research skills in accessing news articles through the Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection (CHNC – www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org), as well as through current news sources such as Post-News Educational Services (www.postnewseducation.com), they will create and attempt to answer one fundamental question of their choice about the social changes of American divorce.

Standards Assessed: Which standards will you be assessing in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.

History 2.1: Students gather historical data, from multiple sources (for example oral history, fiction, nonfiction, interview, diaries, letters, newspapers, speeches, texts, maps, photographs and art work).

History 2.2: Describe source of historical information, and distinguish between primary and secondary sources.

Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students will apply critical thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing. Students will make predictions, analyze, draw conclusions, and discriminate between fact and opinion in writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Assessment: Explain the assessment. (Include the formal 'assessment assignment' and any forms, worksheets, etc. in the Materials Section).

1. Students will retrieve three articles from CHNC, as well as three articles from modern sources, using any topical keyword of their choice, such as “divorce”, “alimony”, “women’s rights”, “religion”, etc.
2. Based on their research and readings, they will then write a 1 page article answering their fundamental question and compare or contrast the social changes, if any, that may have occurred during that time frame.
3. See Rubric.

Standards Addressed: Which standards will you be addressing (but not assessing) in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

History Standard 1: Students understand the chronological organization of history, and know how to organize events and people into major eras to identify and explain historical relationships.

History 1.3: Explain themes and patterns in related events over time in US history.

History Standard 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.

History 2.2: Distinguish between primary and secondary sources.

Time: The number of class periods required for the lesson as well as the length of class period.

5 class periods of 45 minutes each.

Materials / Teacher Preparation Section: List the technology, handouts, chart paper, text resources, etc. needed to complete the lesson. Include what you need to do to prepare ahead of time for your students to complete the lesson.

Lesson Planning Document: Teacher Lesson Plan with background information, necessary vocabulary, daily lessons, an overview of the CHNC, and topics for class discussion.

Technology: School computers and printers with internet access for researching the CHNC and other websites.

Handouts: A student lesson guide with background information, instructions, schedule, and vocabulary.

Rubric for the final writing exercise.

Possible Procedures: Enumerate the procedure teachers can follow to teach the lesson to students. Provide the URL for the digital primary sources that you will use.

Day 1: Introduction to the topic of divorce and the reasons for exploring it. Classroom discussion about statistical and social perceptions of modern divorce versus from a century ago, plus explanation of the writing rubric.

Day 2: An overview of the CHNC and its functions, plus technical training on using the site, done on school computers.

Day 3: Research time using various keywords, for news articles leading to each pair's fundamental question.

Day 4: Continued research time, and facilitation of the process of matching information to a hypothetical question.

Day 5: Each pair of students will write a one page article supporting or disclaiming their fundamental question, by comparing an aspect of divorce over the past 100 years.

Additional Resources:

CHNC, www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org

US Census Bureau, www.USCensusBureau.gov

Marriage and Divorce Magazine, www.DivorceMagazine.com

Modern and 19th Century Divorce Facts Sheets, <http://womenshistory.about.com>

Prof. Hendrik Hartog Interview of 19th century marriage in the US,

http://his.princeton.edu/people/e80/hendrik_hartog_inter.html

Post-News Educational Services, www.postnewseducation.com

Created by Jeff Stratton, Bookcliff Middle School, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Social Changes of Divorce in America over the Past 100 Years

Scoring Rubric:

(3= Strong 2= Average 1= Weak)

1. Student develops a research plan and conducts an organized search. 3 2 1
2. Student seeks out three sources from the CHNC Collection. 3 2 1
3. Student seeks out three articles from modern sources. 3 2 1
4. Student uses and describes at least one source each from primary and secondary sources. 3 2 1
5. Student will write at least a one-page article. 3 2 1
6. Student collaborates cooperatively with his/her partner. 3 2 1
7. Student will use online technology to research this project. 3 2 1
8. Student will state and answer his/her fundamental research question. 3 2 1
9. Student will state research findings in own language. 3 2 1
10. Student will analyze, predict or evaluate those findings. 3 2 1