

World War I

Lesson Plan

The Story of the Pandemic through Primary and Secondary Sources:
A group project

Introduction: For historians, there are two types of sources: primary and secondary. Toward the end of World War I the “Spanish Influenza” swept through America and killed thousands of people. This event is often overlooked since it falls between the two World Wars. This project will consist of a group presentation and individual research papers constructed through the use of primary and secondary sources.

Objective: This lesson is designed to help students understand the impact that the “Spanish Influenza” had on America. Throughout the project, students will be exposed to primary and secondary sources and will gain experience in using them to retell the story of the “Spanish Influenza.” The students will also gain experience in preparing and delivering a presentation while working in groups.



Standards:

A.12.8. Analyze how public health and social policies, along with

government regulations, influence health promotion and disease prevention.

B.12.1 Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches.

B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion.

C.12.1 Prepare and deliver formal oral presentations appropriate to specific purposes and audiences.

Level: This lesson is designed for students at the high school grade level. This lesson can be modified to meet lower grade requirements by shortening the length of the presentation or paper, or asserting a more simple focus for the presentations and papers.

Procedure: The teacher should divide the class into groups. The groups can either be randomly assigned, picked by the teacher, or picked by the students. Groups of four to five are recommended. Tell the students what is expected in each of their presentations and papers.

Recommended guidelines are:

- A paper anywhere from 3 to 5 pages. (Teacher's discretion on citation style and type of bibliography)

- A 5 to 10 minute presentation to the class.

The students are to break into their groups and research primary and secondary sources that will allow them to tell a (non-fictional) story about the "Spanish Influenza" in America. The students can choose how narrow of a focus they would like to follow. A broad, overview approach is just as acceptable as a narrow approach that focuses in on Wisconsin, a city, or even a family, as long as the research is rooted in primary and secondary sources.

As a group, the students are to prepare a presentation which they will deliver to the class. This presentation will delineate the research the students have done and tell their story on the "Spanish Influenza." This part of the project is to help foster group work skills.

Individually, the students should prepare a research paper that has the same central idea as the group presentation, but should not be a repetition of the presentation, but display a different facet of the central idea. Depending on the teacher's preference, if a student chooses to pursue an idea not related to the group's focus that is also acceptable. This part of the project is to help students find an interesting aspect of a subject and elaborate on it. It will also allow some students the chance to follow a path that they were interested in, but the group did not want to use.

Materials: Students will need access to computers to type up their papers. They will need access to the Internet and, if possible, online journals, in order to find primary and secondary sources. The students should also be allowed to access magazines, journals, newspaper articles and books in their school library and be encouraged to visit their local libraries and museums

(such as the Neville Museum in Green Bay, WI) to gather information.

Duration: This lesson can be used to occupy an entire school week. The first day can be used for introduction to the project, relaying the guidelines of the presentation and the paper, and also discussing examples of primary and secondary sources. The following three days can be used for research (visiting the library or using a computer lab) and to begin writing the paper. The fifth day the papers would be due and the presentations delivered.



Sources: Here is a short list of sources that students can use to begin their search:

- 1) Billings, Molly. *The 1918 Influenza Pandemic*. Stanford.edu.
<http://virus.stanford.edu/uda/>.
- 2) PBS Online. *Influenza 1918*.
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/american/influenza/>.
- 3) Lynch, Eileen A. *The Flu of 1918*. The Pennsylvania Gazette.
<http://www.upenn.edu/gazette/1198/lynch.html>.

- 4) Cummings, Sarah. *Spanish influenza Outbreak*. Haverford Biology Department.
http://www.haverford.edu/biology/edwards/disease/viral_essays/cummingsvirus.htm
- 5) Burg, Steven B. "Wisconsin and the great Spanish flu epidemic of 1918." *Wisconsin Magazine Of History*, 84, no. 1 (2000-2001).
- 6) Taubenberger, Jeffrey K and David M Morens. "1918 influenza: the mother of all pandemics." *Emerging Infectious Diseases*. 2006 Jan.
<http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/EID/vol12no01/05-0979.htm>
- 7) *Influenza of 1918 (Spanish Flu) and the U.S. Navy*. U.S. Navy Department Library.
http://www.history.navy.mil/library/online/influenza_main.htm
- 8) "The 1918 flu virus is resurrected." *Nature* 437, (2005) 794 - 795.
- 9) St. Pierre, Marc. *The Spanish Flue Epidemic in 1918 in Ottawa*.
<http://www.bytown.net/flu1918.htm>
- 10) McBean, Eleanora. *Chapter 2: The Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918 was caused by Vaccinations*.
<http://whale.to/vaccine/sf1.html>.
- 11) Crosby, Alfred. *America's Forgotten Pandemic*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.