

## **Varieties of Censorship: Revisionism in American History**

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### **Introduction**

Censorship has been and continues to be a controversial topic. In the social studies classroom, talking about censorship can be a daily struggle since it is practically ingrained in the preselected texts students read. Public school teachers often have to tiptoe around sensitive subjects and maintain a strict adherence to curriculum provided by a third party. Still, as educators, we want our students to experience history, not just read it from a textbook chosen by someone who has never taught. Students should be made aware of the suppression of ideas, both in curriculum materials as well as other sources of information. This unit is intended to make middle school students analyze how censorship is important in learning history today.

Delaware's eighth grade students are expected to study events in American history from pre-colonization through the Reconstruction Era. Considering some of the major events from this rather expansive time period, it is important for students to learn that history is told through certain perspectives which change over time and may not tell the whole truth. This is why students must examine sources of information in terms of credibility as well as point of view when they are investigating historical phenomena. To get my students to learn that history has been shaped by those who control information, they will explore the idea of censorship through historical revisionism.

### **Demographics**

Conrad Schools of Science (CSS), the school at which I teach, is an exceptional school full of bright students interested in pursuing careers in various health and biology fields. Unlike many young children, when asked what career these students want to practice, the majority will respond with titles such as orthopedic surgeon, nephrologist (I had to look up that one), and forensic scientist. It is a magnet secondary school that serves grades 6 through 12 with a focus on science disciplines. Some of the specialties that the school offers to its high school students include biotechnology, veterinary science, physical therapy/athletic healthcare, and nursing. To better prepare and introduce the younger students to these pathways, science-oriented courses are offered additionally as electives at the middle school level.

Enrollment at CSS is entirely through the choice system, and students must apply and conduct themselves accordingly through an interview process before gaining admission

to the school. Students are accepted for the sixth grade and then must re-apply for ninth grade if they are not granted early admission from CSS. Students may also apply from other middle schools for high school. At the high school level, students declare a pathway, a science track in which they will focus for the remainder of their time at CSS. Social studies is mandatory in all middle schools grades (sixth through eighth grade), and three credits of social studies are required at the high school level. Students attend a ninety-minute social studies class every other day according to the block scheduling utilized by the school. There are additional social studies electives and Advanced Placement courses offered in the high school besides the required history classes that demand a strong background in geography, history, economics and civics.

There are over twelve hundred students including all grades, as CSS maintains roughly one hundred seventy students in each grade level and averages twenty-seven students in a classroom. The school is located in the Red Clay Consolidated School District of New Castle County just south of the city limits of Wilmington. Students attending Conrad commute from different parts of the city, the surrounding towns in New Castle County, as well as parts of Kent County to the south. The student population is diverse; approximately thirty-five percent of students identified as part of an ethnic/racial minority according to the reported data from the 2014-2015 school year. The school has recently used this information to reach out to minority students throughout the district elementary schools in hopes of becoming more diverse.

The district's latest endeavor is in moving to fully inclusive practices in the upcoming school year. This is significant for CSS because it was previously designated as a school for English Language Learners with separate classes for those students. Now all students – general education, English Language Learners, and special education students – will be immersed in the same classrooms.

## **Rationale**

In my 8th grade classroom, students study United States history from pre-colonization through the Reconstruction Era. In thinking about censorship, at first I thought it was quite difficult to link this to anything in my curriculum. I knew that I wanted my students to think about censorship and how it affects their lives now as well as how it has been significant in the past, but I struggled with finding examples of censorship in early American history. Then it dawned on me: everything we do in history class is censored, and it has been censored since historians first started writing textbooks. This revelation eventually brought me around to the idea of teaching my students about revisionism of social studies content.

In fact, the idea of censorship lines up very well with many social studies standards used in the eighth grade curriculum. One Delaware standard states “Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; analyze

change over time, and make logical inferences concerning cause and effect.” When considering analyzing historical phenomena by researching censorship in early American history, I envisioned my students studying events through different perspectives, looking for examples of censorship, and taking into account how history is told through censored artifacts. So what censored artifacts exist between 1500 and 1865? I soon realized that I could not think of censorship in a form of banned books; there’s no way I could force my students to read full text of Roger Williams’s religious writings or Thomas Paine’s The Rights of Man. Not only would they lose interest in the content, they would probably end up hating me.

Censorship is scandalous by nature, and scandal – or *drama* as middle school students call it – is exciting. Therefore, I wanted to bring this intriguing aspect to the historical texts my students encounter in class. The curriculum is already very active and engaging in my classroom, but it would be great to combine it with more analysis and deeper critical thinking of primary sources and informational pieces. By transforming content from rote memorization into shocking and stimulating activities, my students are more likely to get involved in learning the history and remember the significance of the events we study.

I started looking at censorship in its broadest sense: the suppression of ideas. The most obvious suppression of ideas from early American history is the classic “no taxation without representation” phrase. Surely if the public does not have representation then their ideas are being suppressed. However, the suppression of ideas and information is bigger than taxation. Every day, students are reading and studying information that has been censored by those who approve educational material. Is this not the most heinous and egregious form of censorship in our country, brainwashing the youth of America into conforming to and perpetuating Euro-American perspectives on historical events?

Of course, in studying early American history, my students look into the initial “discovery” of the Americas by Columbus and other explorers. Upon reaching this point in the curriculum, the kids have begun piecing together some of the people and places they have studied in the past. We talk about Pocahontas and John Smith – whom they learned about from a Disney movie – and the beginning attempts at settlement and colonization of the Americas by European countries. This is when it is most obvious that the history most students know to be true has been written by WASPs (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants). Not to say this was acceptable at any point in time, but in this advanced stage of education, one would think that all perspectives would be considered when recording informational text for students to study. However, that is not the case in most classrooms across the country.

If my students learn and remember anything in this class it is that they have the right to free speech guaranteed to them in the First Amendment. In fact, some even use this as an argument when they get in trouble for saying something inappropriate. Can I really

teach my students that they truly have freedom of speech when so many perspectives and stories are omitted in their history curriculum? The idea that government can promise a freedom and then limit it is a difficult concept for middle school students – or anyone else for that matter – to grasp. Therefore, actively engaging students in studying and discussing revisionism from a theme of censorship is a great way to teach content while getting students to think critically about the government under which they live as well as the information they read, hear, and view.

## **Essential Understanding and Questions**

Learner Objectives:

Students will understand that:

- censorship is the suppression of ideas.
- revisionism is the support of ideas and beliefs that differ from and try to change accepted ideas and beliefs especially in a way that is seen as wrong or dishonest.<sup>1</sup>
- history must be studied from different perspectives.

Essential Questions:

- How is censorship good, and how is censorship bad?
- Should people be allowed to speak, write, and/or publish ideas that negatively portray America and/or Americans?
- How does censorship alter history?
- Does revisionism alter history?

## **Narrative**

Impact on Student Engagement and Appreciation

I don't know of a single person who enjoys picking up a textbook and reading it from cover to cover. I love history, but textbook writers lean toward displaying facts to be memorized instead of ideas to be pondered and interpreted. If I, an avid reader and history lover, dread the thought of having to read our textbook, how can my students be expected to get excited about it? When teachers are instructed to use the material from the textbooks provided, this creates a rather uninspiring curriculum. One goal teachers strive to achieve, among many others, is to engage students in meaningful curriculum, not bore them with rote memorization of names and dates.

History is a subject that all students should have the opportunity to enjoy and appreciate because it shapes our present and future. Former president of the American Historical Association, James McPherson, said it best when he “stated that there is no single, eternal, and immutable truth about past events and their meaning. The unending

quest of historians for understanding the past – that is revisionism – is what makes history vital and meaningful.”<sup>2</sup> When we take away the engaging aspects of studying history – analyzing sources, looking at events from different perspectives, and making discoveries – we deny students the chance to fully experience and absorb history.

## Revisionism

Revisionism has three goals; the first is to merge history told from different perspectives so that facts are in accord with one another.<sup>3</sup> When it comes to studying history, there are oftentimes gaps in information and/or conflicting accounts of the same event. Through the process of revisionism, these accounts should be compared, looking for commonalities to conclude what the true story is behind the evidence available. For example, students who study an event such as the American Revolutionary War would know this as a fight for freedom and natural rights, but this is far from how the British viewed the conflict at that time. Although one can find differing perspectives on how people felt about this event, there are certain facts – battle locations, casualty numbers, supplies used, etc. – that will be consistent throughout the different accounts. In this case, the outcome should be the result of multiple sources of information confirming the events of the past not a rewriting of what actually occurred.

A second goal of revisionism is to include multiple interpretations of historical people and events.<sup>4</sup> Ronald Evans, author of various essays and books on social studies pedagogy, supports this aim. In a discussion of his book titled The Social Studies Wars: What Should We Teach the Children, he stated “that multiple alternative approaches to the field exist, in theory and in classroom practice.”<sup>5</sup> Evans admits that each teacher has a unique way of teaching, but that does not mean that students should learn entirely different facts. By approaching social studies lessons from a variety of interpretations and methods, students can still learn the unbiased truth without compromising the educator’s individualized style of teaching.

The third goal of revisionism is to give a larger voice to minority groups.<sup>6</sup> The “winners” write history so we tend to negate the ideas and actions of others. That means that most of the history taught to students is from the perspective of those who were the victors of conflicts and therefore control the “losers” as well as the information. Revisionism is what allows the minority opinions to surface in history texts, such as Native Americans’ accounts of the arrival of Europeans on their shores. Although the natives were pushed westward, populations were decimated, and cultural features phased out by European teachings, do natives’ feelings, opinions, and traditions serve no purpose in a social studies lesson? In fact, it is quite the opposite; the voices of minority groups are precisely the ones we need to remember so that atrocities like the destruction of entire cultures and millions of lives are not repeated.

History textbooks are revised to reflect current societal paradigms. It is important to keep in mind that these materials are not unbiased; they push a specific agenda while trying to maintain political correctness (which is sometimes their agenda in itself). Some claim that history is revised in order to aid a political cause or make past events seem less punitive. This seems to be the case particularly in places where freedom of speech is openly restricted. This is in fact the case which Aleksej Kišjuhas mentions in *Historical Revisionism as Pseudo-History* when he discusses how past events were rewritten by “(anti-communist) elites” in Serbia.<sup>7</sup> Some might argue that Serbia is a more likely place to find such censored historical information, but some of the rewriting of American history textbooks, like the one my students have, is not far from being the same kind of pseudo-history.

While Serbia struggles to put forth unaltered historical text, our own country boasts of freedoms that allow us to speak and write the truth even if it is not a cheerful one. However, Texas is one place in America that has struggled with telling the hard facts in their approved social studies textbooks. In 2010, Texas textbooks were altered to reflect more Christian and pro-American viewpoints of history. A 2014 Washington Post article revisited the issue in that state when new changes were suggested. These recommended modifications to the curriculum, which included removing Thomas Jefferson from the Enlightenment period and replacing him with John Calvin, were called distorted history. Among the different claims proposed to be in the new social studies books were that biblical figures inspired American democracy and that “sometimes” segregated schools were unequal in quality.<sup>8</sup> This is the kind of pseudo-history that must be avoided in revising textbooks.

Texas is not the only state concerned with the information students are accessing in their social studies classrooms. A Florida bill put forth by Governor Jeb Bush, while his brother was President of the United States, says that “American history shall be viewed as factual, not as constructed,”<sup>9</sup> but history is constructed. In fact, I teach my students that history is a representation of the past based on interpretations of evidence available from primary and secondary sources, making it constructed knowledge. When we rely on the information provided by curriculum and textbook writers, we are allowing those select few to construct the history we teach our children. If we are creating knowledge, we should at least take into account multiple perspectives. Still, there are many cases in which revisionism results in a telling of the past that is closer to the truth than it is fiction. This more inclusive, multicultural form of revisionism is the one we should adopt.

## Credibility

It can be difficult to determine the credibility of a source of information, especially when it seems to offer facts that are far from the accepted norm. An author who goes against the traditional views of historical phenomena is often thought to be rogue, but that author may still prove to provide a credible source of information. There are some stories and

facts that have been taken as true that need to be re-examined. For example, when I ask my students to tell me what they know about Pocahontas, they spit out the basic plot of a movie they have seen without connecting any of it to real history. They think that John Smith was a lowly soldier who was present at the founding of a settlement and fell in love with this beautiful Native American woman and through a series of events, the natives and Englishmen learned to get along. What a lovely, endearing, largely incorrect representation of the history of the Jamestown Settlement.

Although introducing students to topics through creative films might cause students to become more engaged in learning about the past, it is not giving them an accurate depiction of the relationship between the natives and Europeans. This is only presenting a Euro-centric perspective on the conflicts of early America. Students should be familiarized with both sides of the story. At first, students who read an excerpt from a Powhatan Nation member titled “Thirty Million . . . And Counting” might think that the writer of the piece is incorrect in his or her telling of the problems natives faced when the white man arrived in America; just because the point of view is different does not mean the information is wrong.<sup>10</sup> Students should be given the opportunity to discover all angles of history and understand that the “winners” are not the only credible sources of information.

### Purpose

I want my students to rely on the most objective information when they are conducting research; however, I also make it clear to them that all sources of information are created with a distinct purpose. Because middle schoolers are rather naïve, they are likely to believe anything they read or view. This is why it is crucial to teach students to look for the reason the information was created. Students need to gain critical thinking skills to be able to determine if someone is simply providing information or trying to push an agenda. Is the creator trying to persuade the viewer into believing a certain idea? Is the creator trying to make something bad sound good? These are ways that textbook writers – and all writers – influence their audience. It can make people believe something that is not true, and as my pre-teens would think, if enough people say it then it must be a fact.

### Perspective and Multiculturalism

As stated above, the best way to approach teaching history is to give a variety of perspectives. This can be a challenge with younger students since many are still at a developmental level when they have difficulty understanding someone else’s point of view. However, history cannot be told from just the victors; we must include a multitude of opinions and perspectives so that students can learn to be more aware and understanding of differences among people. If we only heard about World War II from the American or Jewish perspectives, it might be quite difficult to befriend a German. However, as history has taught us, we cannot generalize about an entire country or

culture; we must take differing and minority perspectives into account and approach social studies lessons from a multicultural and inclusion methodology.

## **Strategies**

My students are still developing note-taking skills. This is something that many students struggle with throughout their educational careers, so learning good note-taking strategies has become a focus of my curriculum. Also, because this unit is intended for middle school students, there is a lot of value in having the students work in collaborative pairs, present ideas to an audience, and move around. This builds social skills, provides more perspectives and knowledge, and gives students an opportunity to be active in the classroom.

### Cornell Notes

I have my student use the Cornell notes method because it provides a mainstreamed visual representation of information, and my students have consistently given me positive feedback about them. In this strategy, students can take notes on a variety of informational pieces, such as PowerPoints, lectures, videos, and textual pieces. Student split the note paper into three sections: Vocabulary, General Notes, and Summarizing the Main Idea. See Appendix B for an example of the Cornell Notes I use. Students can take this a step further and also color-code their notes, highlighting or writing the Vocabulary in one color, the General Notes in a second color, and the Main Idea in a third color. This not only organizes the note-taking process, but the titles guide students in finding the important pieces of information to write (ex. Vocabulary) and makes it easier to find information when reviewing the notes later. In this unit, the Cornell Notes are used when the students take notes from the textbook as well as completing their own research.

### Collaborative Pairs/Think-Pair-Share

Using collaborative pairs is a great way to ensure that all students are engaged in the activity and learning from the experience. It challenges students to collaborate with their peers instead of keeping information to themselves. By keeping it to pairs, you eliminate the option for students to be overruled by a majority, which might happen in a group of three or more students. Additionally, students have the opportunity to discuss their knowledge and opinions on the content without the pressures of answering in front of the entire class. During a Think-Pair-Share activity, students are asked to think about a prompt provided by the teacher. Then the students pair up with other students to discuss their thoughts on the prompt. In the end, one or both of the students share their ideas with the class. In this unit, the collaborative pairs are used to facilitate classroom discussion of Native American populations before and after the Columbian Exchange began.

### Jigsaw

Employing the Jigsaw strategy provides a way to teach a lot of information in a short amount of time. In this method, each student or group of students is a single piece in a bigger puzzle. The student or group of students must become the master of a piece of information to share with the rest of the class as all students move about the room trying to get all the pieces of the puzzle. Once each student has all the pieces of the overall puzzle, the bigger picture is revealed. In this unit, the Jigsaw strategy is used to have students compare differing perspectives on the impact of the Columbian Exchange on Native American populations.

### K-W-L Chart

The K-W-L Chart is a great strategy to use when you want students to question their original thoughts. In a concept like revisionism, students often have very different ideas and opinions about a topic or event after learning more information. The K-W-L Chart can be seen in Appendix C. Under the K, students write what they know about the historical phenomenon. Under W, students write what they want to discover about the same historical phenomena. After the lesson, under the letter L, students write what they learned about the historical phenomenon. This is an awesome way to engage students in discussion of the material by comparing their thoughts on the topic before versus after the lesson.

### Adaptable Expository Writing Rubric

I always use rubrics to grade my students. The strategy here is to provide the rubric ahead of time. This put students and teacher on the same page and explains what is expected so there are no surprises to the students. This expository writing rubric is a strategy used to guide students' responses to a question or prompt. Students frequently take the shortest path to an answer without relying on evidence or supporting details. This rubric requires students to form a complete response by restating the question/prompt, answering the question/prompt directly, providing reasons for their answers through citing evidence from the texts, and stating examples and/or explaining the evidence as they pertain to the topic. In this unit, students respond to questions and prompts using the Expository Writing Rubric to ensure full comprehension of material (see Appendix D).

### Triangle Learning – Spurious Relationships

It is important for students to learn that some events occur simultaneously but are not actually related to each other. For this, I like to use a triangle learning method to demonstrate spurious relationships. Draw a triangle and write the two events at the bottom points (see Appendix E for an example). This can be done on the board as a class, in groups on paper or smaller white boards, or as an individual assignment. To really get kids engaged, you can tape the triangle on the floor and have students come up with

different factors of the events and then place them in the triangle. The point is to get students to see that there can be hidden factors impacting people and events, so proving causation is not as easy as it seems.

### Gallery Walk Through – Varying Perspectives

A gallery walk through is a great way to engage students in learning about people. In this strategy, students pretend they are statues of a person. He/she can be a historical figure or a character from a novel. The student does an in-depth evaluation of the person and then comes in ready to present their analysis and conclusions about the character. As students line up like wax figures in a museum, other students can approach them to hear about the findings. For example, a student might study Abraham Lincoln. That student would then come to class dressed as Abraham Lincoln and be ready to give a speech about who he was and what he did. To do this within a class, have half the students stand up as statues while the others walk around to see the presentations, then switch.

### **Classroom Activities**

Title: Censorship versus Revisionism

*Essential Question: How does censorship alter history?*

This lesson is intended to get students thinking about how their knowledge of the past can be impacted by censorship of information.

Anticipatory Set: Is censorship a problem in America?

Lesson details: There are a variety of ways to approach this essential question. Students can start with a K-W-L Chart to demonstrate what to know and want to know about censorship. Then, students should have access to different readings and visuals of how material is censored in America. This can be video game ratings, movie ratings, song ratings, or banned books. Then students should create a visual representation of the ways that censorship can be seen as a problem for American citizens. This should be easy because most students are intrigued by the very things they are censored from seeing and hearing. At the end, students should record what they learned about censorship in America on their K-W-L Chart.

Title: Censorship: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

*Essential Question: How is censorship good, and how is censorship bad?*

This lesson is intended to engage students in a discussion about the pros and cons of censorship.

Anticipatory Set: Are there censored items that you think you should be allowed to read and/or see? Explain your answer.

Lesson Details: Pre-teen and teenage students despise when they are told they are too young for a certain experience. They want to buy R-rated games and listen to explicit lyrics and watch gory films. Students should look at the effects of these censored items on their own lives. Does exposure to things like profanity, nudity, and criminal activity affect the way people behave? This is a great opportunity to use the Spurious Relationship Triangle. Use censored items as “Event 1” and inappropriate behavior as “Event 2”. Many students will originally think that these censored items might cause someone to behave poorly, but after looking at other possible influences, they will discover that R-rated material does not necessarily cause bad behavior in people.

Title: Censorship as Revisionism

*Essential Questions: Does revisionism alter history?*

This lesson is intended to introduce students to the term “revisionism” and get them thinking about the way social studies material has been revised throughout time to reflect different perspectives and agendas.

Anticipatory Set: Is there a reason to “revise” history? Explain your answer.

Lesson Details: Students will think of revising history as altering it to make it better than the original account. However, we know that revisionism can be quite different from that interpretation.

Show students a video clip from a cartoon film about Pocahontas that portrays the meeting between Native Americans and Europeans as one of mutual wonder and eventual love. Students should record their observations about the video, focusing on the perspective from which the clip is portrayed and what feelings it is meant to evoke. Students will most likely write that the video is created from someone who has a positive opinion on the initial union of the two cultures that conjure feelings of friendliness and even intimacy.

Then provide students with a copy of “Thirty Million and Counting.”<sup>11</sup> Have students analyze this article in terms of perspective and emotion as well. They should record a

rather different point of view from this author along with much more negative emotions, such as anger and resentment.

Have students create a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting the two accounts. Students should find some similarities in the actual events taken place but also some striking differences between the two items. Then have students determine if one version is better or more accurate than the other. Discuss that history changes as new evidence is discovered and recorded. This is why it is important to revise history over time.

### **Appendix A: Common Core Standards**

Because this is a social studies unit in which student will be engaged in analyzing informational text, the following anchor standards are used.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1.b: Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant, accurate data and evidence that demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text, using credible sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.8: Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.



**Appendix C: K-W-L Chart**

What I <b>K</b> now	What I <b>W</b> ant to know	What I <b>L</b> earned

## Appendix D: Teacher Adaptable Writing Rubric

Names \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period # \_\_\_\_\_

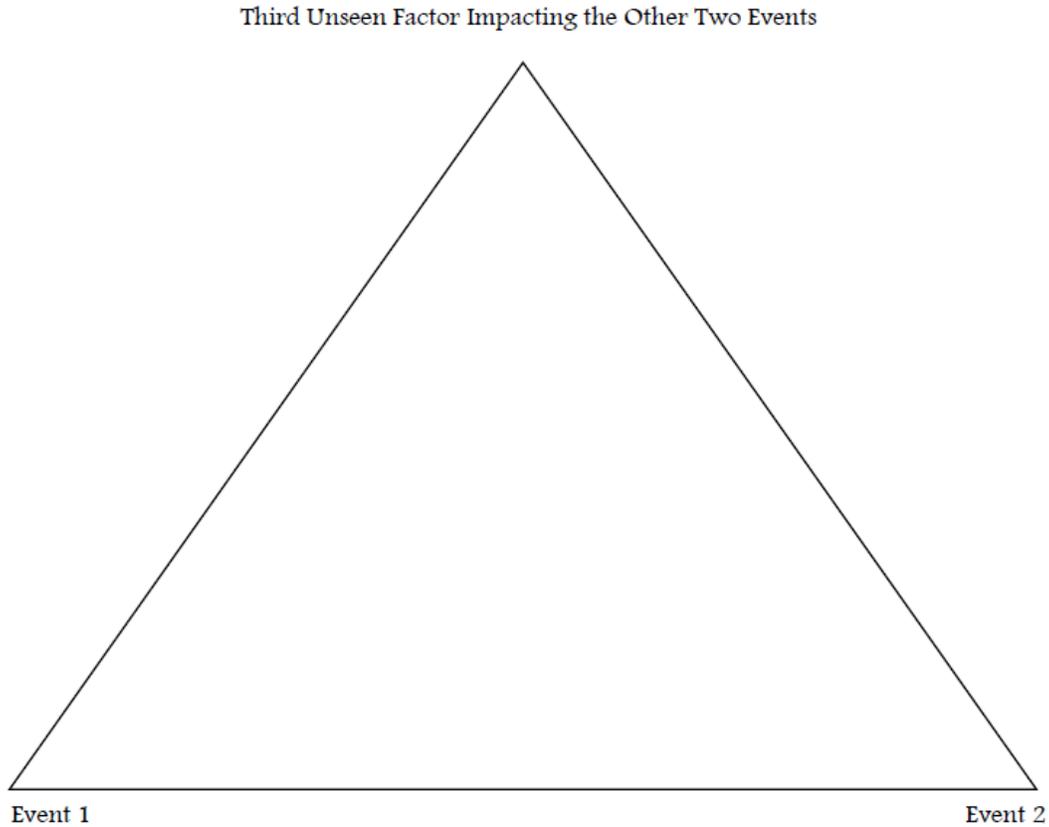
### The Expository Writing Rubric

*Instructions:* Respond to the question/prompt in full detail using complete sentences.

CATEGORY	Ideas and Evidence	Organization	Language
Advanced 4 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The central idea presents a specific idea about the works.</li> <li>Concrete, relevant details support the key points.</li> <li>The question/prompt is answered directly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key points and supporting details are organized effectively and logically.</li> <li>Transitions successfully show the relationships between ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language is precise and captures the group's thoughts.</li> <li>Grammar, usage, and mechanics are correct.</li> </ul>
Competent 3 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The central idea sets up criteria for the analysis.</li> <li>Some key points need more support.</li> <li>The question/prompt is answered indirectly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organization of key points and supporting details is mostly clear.</li> <li>A few more transitions are needed to clarify the relationships between ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most language is precise.</li> <li>Some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics occur.</li> </ul>
Limited 2 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The central idea only hints at a main points.</li> <li>Details support some key points but often are too general.</li> <li>The question/prompt is not fully answered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most key points are organized logically, but many supporting details are out of place.</li> <li>More transitions are needed throughout in order to connect ideas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language is repetitive or too general at times.</li> <li>Many errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics occur, but the group's ideas are still clear.</li> </ul>
Emerging 1 point	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The central idea is missing.</li> <li>Details and evidence are irrelevant or missing.</li> <li>The question/prompt is not answered directly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A logical organization is not apparent.</li> <li>Transitions are not used.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language is inaccurate, repetitive, and too general.</li> <li>Errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics obscure the meaning of the group's ideas.</li> </ul>

\_\_\_\_\_ / 12 points

## Appendix E



### Resources

Atanacković, Petar, Milivoj Bešlin, and Zoran Petakov. "Historical Revisionism as Pseudo-History." In *Nation as a Problem or Solution: Historical Revisionism in Serbia*, 99-102. Novi Sad: FUTURA Publikacije, 2008.

This text examines historical revisionism in Serbia. It analyzes the concept of revisionism as an untrue form of history.

Craig, Bruce. "History Defined in Florida Legislature." *Perspectives on History: The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*. 2006. Accessed December 14, 2015. <https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2006/history-defined-in-florida-legislature>.

This article gives information on the Florida Bill passed by Governor Jeb Bush concerning history education.

Crosby, Alfred W. "Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America." *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 289-298.

This source was used to find information on the impact of the Columbian Exchange on Native American populations. While studying this source, the focus was on how Native American populations were negatively affected by small pox and other European diseases after Columbus's arrival in the Americas.

Evans, Ronald W., and Jeff Passe. "Dare We Make Peace: A Dialogue on the Social Studies Wars." *The Social Studies* 98, no. 6 (2007): 251-56. Accessed December 14, 2015. ERIC.

This article is a reflection on Evans's previous article about revisionism. It includes his and others' perspectives on the topic.

FitzGerald, Frances. *America Revised: History Schoolbooks in the Twentieth Century*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1979.

This text looks at the revision of history textbooks in America. It examines the conflict among information in textbooks and impact of non-historians on the writing of history.

Garcia, Jesus, ed. *Creating America: A History of the United States*. Evanston, IL: McDougal Littell, 2005.

This is the textbook used in eighth grade social studies classrooms in Red Clay Consolidated School District. It is a prominent source of information utilized by the students studying U.S. History I.

González, Ignacio. "Thirty Million . . . and Counting." Mexica Web Page. 1994. Accessed October 25, 2015. <http://www.azteca.net/aztec/literat/Columbus.html>.

This is an article written about Christopher Columbus's impact on Native American population. It challenges Columbus's reputation as the discoverer of America and instead shows him as someone responsible for millions of deaths.

"Revisionism." Merriam-Webster. Accessed October 25, 2015. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revisionism>.

This website provides a simple definition for the term "revisionism".

Strauss, Valerie. "Proposed Texas Textbooks Are Inaccurate, Biased and Politicized, New Report Finds." *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2014. Accessed October 25,

2015. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/12/proposed-texas-textbooks-are-inaccurate-biased-and-politicized-new-report-finds/>.

This article examines the revisionism of textbooks in Texas. This provides a negative perspective on revisionism in which historians take the liberty of deciding what students should learn.

Thompson, Franklin T., and William P. Austin. "The Impact of Revisionist History on Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Worldviews." *Education* 132, no. 1 (Fall2011 2011): 39-53. Education Full Text (H.W. Wilson), EBSCOhost(accessed December 13, 2015).

This text offers ideas on the impact of revisionism on teaching practices. It also discusses the goals of historical revisionism in the classroom.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/revisionism>

<sup>2</sup> Franklin T. Thompson and William P. Austin. "The Impact of Revisionist History on Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Worldviews," *Education* 132, no. 1 (Fall2011 2011): 39-53, Education Full Text (H.W. Wilson), EBSCOhost (accessed November 28, 2015), 39.

<sup>3</sup> Thompson and Austin, "The Impact of Revisionist History on Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Worldviews," 41.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 41.

<sup>5</sup> Evans, Ronald W., and Jeff Passe. "Dare We Make Peace: A Dialogue on the Social Studies Wars." *The Social Studies* 98, no. 6 (2007): 251-56, accessed December 14, 2015. ERIC.

<sup>6</sup> Thompson and Austin, "The Impact of Revisionist History on Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Worldviews," 41.

<sup>7</sup> Petar Atanacković, Milivoj Bešlin, and Zoran Petakov, "Historical Revisionism as Pseudo-History," In *Nation as a Problem or Solution: Historical Revisionism in Serbia*, 99-102, Novi Sad: FUTURA Publikacije, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> Valerie Strauss, "Proposed Texas Textbooks Are Inaccurate, Biased and Politicized, New Report Finds," *The Washington Post*, September 12, 2014, accessed October 25, 2015.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/12/proposed-texas-textbooks-are-inaccurate-biased-and-politicized-new-report-finds/>.

<sup>9</sup> Bruce Craig, "History Defined in Florida Legislature," *Perspectives on History: The Newsmagazine of the American Historical Association*, 2006, accessed December 14, 2015,

<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/september-2006/history-defined-in-florida-legislature>.

<sup>10</sup> Ignacio González, "Thirty Million . . . and Counting," Mexica Web Page, 1994, accessed October 25, 2015, <http://www.azteca.net/aztec/literat/Columbus.html>.

<sup>11</sup> González, "Thirty Million . . . and Counting."

**KEY LEARNING, ENDURING UNDERSTANDING, ETC.**

- Censorship is the suppression of ideas.
- Revisionism is the support of ideas and beliefs that differ from and try to change accepted ideas and beliefs especially in a way that is seen as wrong or dishonest.
- History must be studied from different perspectives.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTION(S) for the UNIT**

- How is censorship good, and how is censorship bad?
- Should people be allowed to speak write, and/or publish ideas that negatively portray America and/or Americans?
- How does censorship alter history?
- Does revisionism alter history?

**CONCEPT A**

Censorship throughout History

**CONCEPT B**

Censorship: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

**CONCEPT C**

Censorship as Revisionism

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS A***How does censorship alter history?***ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS B***How is censorship good, and how is censorship bad?***ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS C***Does revisionism alter history?***VOCABULARY A**

Banned Books

Censorship

**VOCABULARY B**

Explicit

Spurious Relationship

**VOCABULARY C**

Perspectives

Revisionism

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/MATERIAL/TEXT/FILM/RESOURCES**

Atanacković, Petar, Milivoj Bešlin, and Zoran Petakov. "Historical Revisionism as Pseudo-History." In *Nation as a Problem or Solution: Historical Revisionism in Serbia*, 99-102. Novi Sad: FUTURA Publikacije, 2008.

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