Lesson Plans and Resources for
Local Voices Past and Present

Bringing History to Life: Cemeteries as a Primary Source

Getting Personal: Oral Histories on the Palouse

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I. Overview

From these lessons the students will:

* Learn the local history of Pullman and the Palouse area.

* Use primary sources of gravestones and older living individuals.

* Visit cemeteries to look at historical trends of population, illness, and so on.

* Conduct oral histories of family to help bring to life underlying themes.

The objectives have been taken from the State of Washington OSPI objectives for history CBA (Classroom Based Assessment), Why History?, for middle school: http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/Assessments/MiddleSchool.aspx.
II. Bringing History to Life: Cemeteries

Cemetery Visit Lessons: We will visit the Pullman City Cemetery as a class, since it is close enough to the school to visit in one block class lesson, but students will be encouraged and empowered to visit other local town and county cemeteries closer to their homes or with specific personal connections to the student. Students will use gravestones as primary sources.

Lesson Plan One: Visiting the Pullman City Cemetery

Objective: To explore, experience, and find what a cemetery is

EALR:

Activity: Students will walk the half-mile to the cemetery. In groups, they will read headstones, look for names or symbols or dates of interest, and record data, meet again as a whole group to compare notes.

Product: Students will keep cemetery notes; rubbings of stones of interest.

Resource: Cemetery Records Online: http://www.interment.net/

See Appendix A for a sample gravestone rubbing.

See Appendix B for John Riley Headstone, John Riley and Sons, and “The Land Where I'm From”
Appendix C for Examples of Different Headstones for William Shakespeare

Lesson Plan Two: Computer Lab research

Objective: Students will utilize the worldwide web to research initial items of interest.

EALR:

Activity: Students will use a variety of websites to find information clarifying the initial data they gathered at the cemetery and print or add to their notes: at this point, the students are still in search mode, and they are looking for questions and answers more than a final product. Some sample results might be:

- What does this symbol mean?
- Now that I have the name of the symbol or the meaning, is there still a local connection with the group, association, church, or family?
- Where can I find more information?

Product: Students will have cemetery notes with the new computer lab search notes and questions and answers. Students will record website addresses and questions to continue their searches.
Lesson Plan Three: Guest Speaker Series

Objective: Connecting students with community resources and will use older living individuals as primary sources.

EALR:

Activity: In this series of guest lectures, students will have a chance to meet and question community members with connections to research functions and institutions, and those with unique knowledge of our local cemeteries and history. These speakers will include the Head of the Washington State University Archives, a local genealogy expert, a Whitman County Historical Society member, and a curator from the Pullman City Cemetery.

Product: Students will compile a list of questions specific to their chosen research topic and the teacher will submit those beforehand to the speaker. Students will ask questions and share initial results of their research. Students will put together an initial bibliography of their search results and continue with guided research of their selected topics with an end to a publishable short local history writing assignment.
III. Getting Personal: Oral histories

Oral History Component Lesson Plans and Resources: Older living individuals as primary sources:

**Lesson Plan One:** Familiarizing students with Oral Histories

Objective: To introduce students to the concept and products and value of oral history project research.

EALR:

Activity: Students will spend a period in the computer lab studying two websites:

- Indivisible.org
- StoryCorps.org

At these sites, students will choose from oral histories cataloged there to gain personal insights into other important lives and see the power of one-on-one question and answer interviews to gain a more first-hand perspective on history.

Product: Students will write a brief synopsis of what they learned, will develop a list of questions geared toward an interview session of their own using the StoryCorps question generator.

**Resource:** StoryCorps.org, provides Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, share, and preserve the stories of our lives. Students will use the
Lesson Plan Two: Visiting Bishop Place Assisted-Living Facility

Objective: To interview an individual with a first-hand experience of history outside the range of the student’s lifetime. Allowing the student to make a connection with the past in the present day through the experience of other community members.

EALR:

Activity: Students will meet with residents of the assisted-living facility and/or family members and will ask questions they have developed. The students will work in teams, with one or two questioners and a recorder to tape or write out the interview answers.

Product: Once the interview is completed, individual teams will type and print out the interviews and write letters of thanks and provide copies of the interviews to the Bishop Place participants.

See Appendix D for sample interviews.
Lesson Three: Publishing student work in a partnership with the Moscow-Pullman Daily News.

Objective: To provide students with an outlet for their publishable-quality work to a local audience.

EALR:

Activity: Students will revise interviews and essays from their cemetery research into short biographical pieces focusing on local history people and events.

Product: In partnership with the local newspaper, students will get the unusual opportunity to see their research and writing showcased to their parents, peers, and community members.

Appendix E: Sample newspaper column written by the teacher.
IV. Bibliography

*An Illustrated History of Whitman County,* State of Washington. Weyerhauser, Publisher, 1901.

[A weird, beautiful history of major and passing events in synopsis of greater detail to show rich history of a sleepy place.]


[Headstone art an symbols with explanations]

Century of Change on the Palouse (VHS)

[Video footage, still photos of the Palouse]


[An excellent source of historic place names, schools, cemeteries (some now defunct) in an easy to use alphabetical format.]

[People, places, and events in early Washington State.]

Fleener, Dora Otter. Palouse County Yesteryears. Self Published. 1978.

[In-depth look at one Palouse native’s life from birth in 1844 to marriage in 1916].

Homes of the Pioneers in historic Whitman County; Seasonal Almanac and Daily Reminder. Whitman County Historical Society, 1978.

[A funky little calendar to show Pullman and environs in a past light pictorially.]


[The Bible of Cemetery in exes for finding cemeteries, places, and names]

Kenworthy, Steven (Editor) Whispers from Whitman County. Whitman County Library, 1995.
[Collected oral histories, stories, poems, and essays by residents of Whitman County]


[A compendium of population from dorm students at WSU to number of toilets in Farmington]


[Features pictures of people and places nearby as a resource for picturing local history.]


[A great local cemetery source is Chapter four—“Help me down Cemetery Road”.]
John died in Texas at the time of the 1927 floods, after moving from Montrose, Arkansas shortly before with his daughter Hattie, his son Jesse, and wife, Martha Sullivan Cone. John’s other sons managed to go from Arkansas to western Texas and back over difficult roads to see that his body was brought back to Mount Olive cemetery for burial.
John and the Second Generation of seven sons
The Land Where I’m From

I’m from poor proud folks
Dirt- but never piss-poor
Sprung from black Ozark loam
I’m from an old, white-bearded Patriarch
With seven brawny boys
Rangy beside him
With bacon and butter and
Cold milk and cornbread on their breath

I’m from streets that smell of rain on hot concrete and asphalt
Whose gutters run with water and
Crawdads and gangs of boys
Chasing in flat summer sun
Where locusts swing from the ends of strings
And June-bugs swarm the streetlights
In the sweaty, sleeve-stained darkness
Thunder and kicked cans rattling the night

I’m from fields full of cold morning and warm
Burnt-orange sunrises
From burrs in dun cotton canvas
And cold-stung fingers harvesting Kale
Where flocks of songbirds wheel in unison
Hashung like dominos all bending black and white
They all turn southward

I’m from sandpaper and the smell of sweat
From vinegar and honeysuckle
Juniper and Mint
And stubborn, tight-fisted ground
Where those born from the dust return home to it
With the green smell of tomato vines still on our hands.

Michael Rutledge Riley
Appendix C
Samples of Different Headstones for William Shakespeare
First is an example of his original headstone
The Current William Shakespeare Headstone
Famous Shakespeare Image from the ‘First Folio’
Appendix D—Sample Interviews

WORDS from mom

I never really thought I would learn much from an interview. I have, however, always been interested in history. I usually think up random questions about my mom, dad, family or just history in general. I never really choose to ask these questions, we have a lot on our schedule most of the time so I was actually really excited for this assignment.

I have more than three favorites. But I picked the most important ones to me.

When I heard that we had to do this interview I told to myself “I really don’t want to do this.”

But it was actually nice to learn many things about my father’s childhood life. I did not learn that much but at least I learned a few.

It was interesting when I asked him the last question, he sang me this song that he never sang to us before because when he was little his mom sang this sad song and when he remembered he got really sad, I understood and I almost started to cry.

I learned that life is tough and nice at the same time and it really must be tough to lose your parents at a very young age.

This is a great write up. You share his stories powerfully and with lots of emotion. Wise.

This is all the stuff we really know about our family. As you can see we are not, what most people would say, a very ‘traditional’ family. Maybe ‘traditional’ assignments like this may not be the best fit for me, but I tried. I guess one thing that I did learn was that no matter how bad your childhood may have been, you do not have to turn out the same as your family. Both my mom and my dad are not ashamed about their childhoods and we talk about it whenever I want. Maybe admitting something makes you a stronger person, because both my parents are the strongest, coolest people I know.
To learn more about my family I interviewed my Grandma Joan. She is 80 years old and was born in Ashtabula, OH in 1928. I learned some really interesting things from her that even my parents didn't know. I am glad that I interviewed her because she told me some things that she might not have told anyone before she died so I keep those stories living.

One thing I found interesting was the story about how my grandparents met. My grandpa moved to North Kingsville, OH in the spring of 1945 when they were in high school. It was a very small town so they didn't get many new students so all of the girls liked him. One day in chemistry class my grandma and her friend were sitting behind my grandpa and they were talking to him trying to get him to talk to them and they started a conversation. After a while of this the teacher said "take your girlfriends and go to study hall" so my grandpa and grandma and her friend all had to go to study hall for a consequence.

Another thing I learned from talking to my grandma was about the first ancestor we know who

i only met Nathan, my Great Great Grandfather, once when I was about 7 years old. He died in 2007, and is now buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington D.C. He was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on March 11, 1911. His parents (my Great x3 Grandparents) immigrated from Russia more than 100 years ago, and owned a kosher butcher shop.

After my Great Great Grandpa finished school in 1939 he got drafted into the Army. He was then required to stay and serve until the end of World War II when it started in 1941. He volunteered to join the Army Air Force and flew 53 missions in a B-25 Mitchell Bomber looking for submarines off the coast of New England. He was originally a sergeant, but he came back from a mission, and his commander called him into his office and said he was so good at his job, that they wanted him to be an officer. So he went to Officer's Training School and graduated as a Lieutenant. He was assigned to the 384th Bomb Group that had B-17 heavy bombers. The entire group was sent to England where they flew over Germany on bombing missions. He flew over Germany 18 times on different missions during the war including D-Day. Since he was the Armaments Officer (the person that makes sure all the planes have the bombs they need for their mission), he was not allowed to fly; so he stowed away on everyone of those flights, which is pretty incredible because most of those flyers didn't survive even a couple missions and he made 18 trips sneaking on board different B-17's. The group was so impressed that they named a plane after him "The Fighting Hebe" (pronounced Heeb) which is short for Hebrew because he was Jewish. Because he was Jewish, they also changed his identity in case he got shot down. His name was changed to Mike O' and his religion and heritage; Irish, and Roman Catholic, so the Germans wouldn't know he was Jewish because that was the people they were killing off during the war.

I really enjoyed the story about was his three girls spilled honey all over the floor and tried to clean it up but ended up making it worse he said, "We had let the oldest, Anna, babysit for a short time, while Oma and I went out for a little while somewhere, came back home and there they all were with eyes as big as saucers, not saying a word, waiting for us in the kitchen by the back door. As we walked in, our shoes made this funny sound like they had adhesive on them as we pulled each shoe up off the floor for the next step. Well, they had spilled the honey jar, and had attempted to clean up, but the more they tried the further the honey seemed to spread all over the kitchen, counters, floors, sink.......anyway they had thought they were in for some terrible punishment and were scared spitless, but we both agreed they had suffered enough just from the worrying, so we all just had a big laugh about it and proceeded to finish the cleanup".

I asked him about his future and he said, "Well my future is way shorter than yours, and I'm now in the winter of my life, but hope to work less on managing our investments, do some work on the house (roof & kitchen floor need replacing), volunteer more, plus travel a little more, with retirement benefits starting this December."

I really enjoyed getting to know how my grandpa's childhood was.
England and later came to Canada in the mid 1800s and then filtered down to the U.S. around the area of North Dakota. Before my Dad's Grandma (the one on his Dad's side) got married to Stanley, her maiden name was Lillian. Lillian was a first generation American from Germany. Another 1st generation American in my family on my Dad's Mom's side was Rose Wachauer. Wachauer comes from the Wachau Valley which lies outside of Vienna, Austria. Clark was the maiden name of my Dad's Mom, also the last name of her great Grandfather William Clark, as in Lewis and Clark. Originally this branch of the family was Scottish and had a different last name but it got changed when William's Grandpa was a clerk for a General in the Civil War. I never expected to find that I was Austrian, Native American and Scottish all in one day; however having Mr. Riley give an assignment to find who we are really made me self conscious in a good way about my family's background.

Everyone has traditions in their family, right? With an ethnic background like mine you can probably assume that I would have quite a few. In all reality, before I interviewed my family I couldn't think of one for some reason cooking takes a theme in both sides and every different ethnic background. Holidays such as Easter and Christmas also play a role. While interviewing my Uncle I asked him about never would have thought of my grandma wanting to get a degree in psychology. This was a ton of information to learn over thirty minutes; I'm surprised I could take it all in.

In the end I really learned a lot from doing this interview. I learned stuff about my grandma that I never thought would apply to her. All in all, I really enjoyed it at the same time. I actually know my grandma.

After the interview, I thought that it would be interesting to interview older or another part of my family. Unfortunately I did not get to do that. But, if I do ever get the chance to, I was thinking I might interview my dad's brothers and sisters. Of which he has many, seven to be exact. Some have passed away, so if I don't get to ever talk to them, that part of my family history will be lost. I think that everyone should get the chance to interview more of their family, especially older and more experienced parts of the tree. Losing family history and not being able to ever trace it back, especially those fun stories, isn't fair. So I do plan on interviewing more of my family and even switching over to my mother's side to get some information about that side of my tree also.

Learning about some of my family history has inspired me to search back farther. I learned good questions, and how to ask them. I think that everybody should go back to learn about their family history, because it brings up good conversations with family, helps you understand them more, and might even bring you closer to them. Overall this was a very good assignment, and I'm glad I got the chance to learn more about my family tree.
Appendix E
Sample Column by the Teacher

PUBLIC SCHOOL (OPEN this week)

I am a teacher at an urban middle-school English, for the past 12 years. I have been fortunate to teach my students well, and the importance of the subject is not a minor one. The students are my colleagues, and their success is just as important.

I have shared my students' success, and in my teaching, I have always been passionate about the importance of understanding the content of the course. My students have been motivated to learn, and I have been able to help them succeed. I am proud of my students, and I am proud to be a teacher.

THEIR VIEW

Michael R. Riley

Michael R. Riley is a teacher at a middle-school in the inner-city. He has been teaching for 12 years, and he is proud of his students. He has been able to help them succeed, and he is proud to be a teacher.

In his column, he talks about the importance of understanding the content of the course. He shares his students' success, and he is proud of his students. He is proud to be a teacher.

Michael R. Riley

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Local Voices: Past and Present
Eighth Grade
Michael R. Riley, Lincoln Middle School, Pullman, WA

Overview
- Local history of Pullman and the Palouse area.
- Visit cemeteries to look at historical trends of population, illness, and so on.
- Conduct oral histories of family to help bring to life underlying themes.

Freeze Cemetery, Potlatch, ID

Bring History to Life: Cemeteries as a Primary Source

Who lived here?
- Investigate the history through local cemeteries.
- Who is buried in what cemetery and why? Race, religion, socioeconomic factors, influenza epidemic and so on.
- What are social customs?
Getting Personal: Oral Histories on the Palouse

- Students study historical time periods.
- Students find an individual with first-hand knowledge of that topic.
- Students can access Indivisible.org and StoryCorps projects.

My son and his great-grandpa

Classroom Based Assessment

- Write brief biographies of local people of interest.
- Share these biographies and images with the local newspaper.

My wife, just kidding! / From http://themobilehomewoman.com/