My America

Subject: English

Grade level: 11th

Rationale or Purpose: To introduce students to Americans in the 1920s and have the students explore their America in photographs.

Materials: Computers with internet access
          Digital cameras
          PowerPoint or other slide show software (Photo Story)

Websites:
HRC -
Digital Story-telling –
http://www.storycenter.org/memvoice/
http://www.coe.uh.edu/digital-storytelling/examples.htm
Photo Story Download -
http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.mspx

Lesson Duration: One 90 minute lessons or two 45 minute lessons. (or more depending on interest and timing)

Objectives:
- 110.44 (1A-C) - the student writes in a variety of forms for various audiences and purposes.
- 110.44 (2A-E) - use prewriting strategies to generate ideas, develop voice, and plan; develop drafts both alone and collaboratively by organizing and reorganizing content and by refining style to suit occasion, audience, and purpose; proofread writing for appropriateness of organization, content, style, and conventions; frequently refine selected pieces to publish for general and specific audiences; and use technology for aspects of creating, revising, editing, and publishing texts.
- 110.44 (3A-C) - the student relies increasingly on the conventions and mechanics of written English, including the rules of usage and grammar, to write clearly and effectively.
- English 110.44 (9A) - recognize distinctive and shared characteristics of cultures through reading
• English 110.44 (14A) - demonstrate proficiency in each aspect of the listening process such as focusing attention, interpreting, and responding
• English 110.44 (14B) - use effective strategies for listening such as prepares for listening, identifies the types of listening, and adopts appropriate strategies
• 110.44 - (15A -F) - Listening/speaking/purposes. The student speaks clearly and effectively for a variety of purposes. The student is expected to use the conventions of oral language effectively; use informal, standard, and technical language effectively to meet the needs of purpose, audience, occasion, and task; communicate effectively in conversations and group discussions while problem solving, and planning; use effective verbal and nonverbal strategies in presenting oral messages; ask clear questions for a variety of purposes and respond appropriately to the questions of others; and make relevant contributions in conversations and discussions
• 110.44 – (17 A, B, D - F) - Listening/speaking/presentations. The student prepares, organizes, and presents informative messages. The student is expected to present and advance a clear thesis and logical points to support messages; use language and rhetorical strategies skillfully in informative and persuasive messages; make effective nonverbal strategies such as pitch and tone of voice, posture, and eye contact; and make informed, accurate, truthful, and ethical presentations.
• 110.44 – (19 A, B & C) - Viewing/representing/interpretation. The student understands and interprets visual representations. The student is expected to describe how meanings are communicated through elements of design, including shape, line, color, and texture; analyze relationships, ideas, and cultures as represented in various media; and distinguish the purposes of various media forms such as informative texts, entertaining texts, and advertisements.

Activities:

Step 1: Introduce students to and have them read the sections in the Americans Study Americans Collection at the HRC website and have the students look carefully at the images associated with the section. Additionally – DIGITAL Story Telling sites are noted above to foster ideas for both teachers and students.

Step 2: Have a class discussion about the selections, focusing on what can be learned about the make-up of Americans and the society in which they lived in the 1920s.

Step 3: Using digital cameras, have students photograph their America and the people and things which make up our society in the 21st century. Decide in advance on the appropriate or manageable number of photographs to require. Tell students to include people, places and things that make up our America – their America. **Students can be placed in teams of two or three to complete the project, instead of individually – allowing for collaboration and frankly less grading.

Step 4: Students will then create a PowerPoint presentation (or Photo Story*) – slide show – presenting a photographic study of what makes up their America. Text should be included, but minimal. Music should also be an integral part of the presentations.
Step 5: Since students will present their slide shows to class they should prepare a script to explain why they chose each of their pictures. (Written text required here as part of the student’s overall grade).

Modification: Team students with special needs and second language learners and the project can be created in these teams instead of individually. Teachers could require NARRATION (microphones would be needed).
*Instead of PowerPoint – teachers could opt to use Photo Story, a free and easy downloadable program from Microsoft for creating digital stories.

Student Product: Final PowerPoint shows, written (typed) script and oral presentations.

Closure: Sharing presentations.

Assessment or evaluation: Teachers should use RUBRICS to score show and presentation – include number of slides, quality and variety of photographs chosen, the conciseness of text in presentation, choice and appropriateness of music, etc. With oral presentations the rubric could include speaker’s eye contact, volume, clarity, posture, use of visual aids, etc. Written work should be scored as per teacher expectations.

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