

The cover features a stylized American flag design. The top left has a white background with a red outline of a star. The bottom right is a blue field with white stars. The text is centered in the upper half.

AMERICAN HISTORY IDOL

Grade 4 Curriculum Unit

AMERICAN HISTORY IDOL Curriculum Unit

Grade 4 Using Worksheets

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Supported by the Office of Special Education Programs, U.S. Department of Education



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The American History Idol Curriculum Unit was developed as part of the federally funded research project, Technology in Class (TinC), housed at Education Development Center (EDC) in Newton, MA. The TinC research staff collaborated with teachers of grades 4 and 5 in the Massachusetts communities of Norfolk, Brockton, Foxborough, and the Central Berkshires Regional School District.

We extend our deep gratitude to the administrators, teachers, and students from Freeman-Centennial School, Norfolk, MA; Louis F. Angelo School, Joseph F. Plouffe School, and Downey Community School, Brockton, MA; John J. Ahern Middle School and Vincent M. Igo Elementary School, Foxborough, MA; Becket Washington Elementary School, Becket, MA; Craneville Elementary School, Dalton, MA; Kittredge Elementary School, Hinsdale, MA; and Berkshire Trail Elementary School, Cummington, MA. They provided invaluable insight, and we are grateful for their dedication to the project.

Finally, we respectfully thank Jane Hauser at the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, who served as the project officer for our work under Grant Award # H 327A030043. We appreciate her ongoing guidance and support.

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The development of this curriculum by Education Development Center, Inc. of Newton, Massachusetts was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Grant # H 327A030043. These contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.



PREFACE

Purpose

It is likely that as a teacher at the elementary level you have seen how challenging it can be for students to read and write about expository text. The reasons that students struggle vary; but for some, the difficulty is in distinguishing between main ideas and supporting details. Young readers and writers often need support as they learn to gather, sort, organize, and present information.

As you use the American History Idol (AHI) Curriculum Unit with your students, you'll find that it promotes the development of skills your students need to read and write successfully about expository text. The curriculum unit engages students in activities that allow them to think about the importance of information presented to them in short, interesting, biographical texts about historical figures.

Knowing the important role that motivation plays in student success, developers of the curriculum unit found inspiration in the popular TV show *American Idol*. In the unit, students read biographies to consider which historical figure had the greatest impact and they cast their votes to decide the newest "American History Idol."

The goal of the curriculum unit is to support development of the following skills:

- Gathering and sorting information from a text
- Identifying the importance of information based on main ideas and supporting details
- Presenting information in a persuasive paragraph

Overview of the AHI Curriculum Unit

You and your students will enjoy working through the following components of the AHI Curriculum Unit:

- A motivating introductory activity to launch the curriculum unit, which provides an overview of the unit and presents the three finalists for the American History Idol title

- Three mini-units in which students read a brief biography, gather and organize important information, and write a persuasive paragraph
- A culminating activity, which allows students to cast their votes and celebrate the new American History Idol

Assessment Materials

Before you begin working with the AHI Curriculum Unit, we encourage you to give your students a pre-test to determine how well they are able to categorize information, identify main ideas and supporting details, and provide support for a main idea. After completing the curriculum unit, a post-test will help you to measure your students' growth in these skills. See the [Assessment Materials \(http://www.literacymatters.org/content/biographies/assess.pdf\)](http://www.literacymatters.org/content/biographies/assess.pdf) to access the pre-and post-test materials.

Using the AHI Curriculum Unit

With all that teachers must fit into a busy year, it is often difficult to add anything new. The AHI Curriculum Unit can fit easily into the existing curriculum because the activities align with the NCTE/IRA National Standards for English language arts and will support state standards that call for an understanding of main idea and supporting details in expository text and the writing of a paragraph to present information.

You can decide how quickly you would like to complete the curriculum unit based on the needs of your classroom. While it is possible to complete the activities over the span of couple of weeks, you may wish to work on it over a longer period of time and incorporate other related curricula.

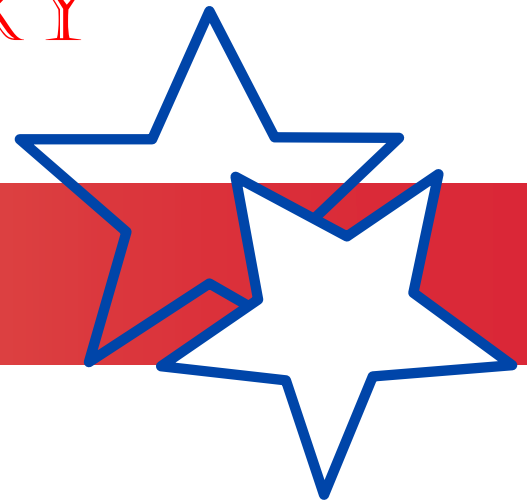
The following time estimates are provided to help you plan for working with the AHI Curriculum Unit:

Pre-test	60 minutes
Introductory Activity	30-45 minutes
Mini-Unit #1 (total for 3 sessions)	120-150 minutes
Mini-Unit #2 (total for 3 sessions)	120-150 minutes
Mini-Unit #3 (total for 3 sessions)	120-150 minutes
Culminating Activity	varies greatly
Post-test	60 minutes

Getting Started

You have come to this curriculum unit looking for activities that will strengthen your students' skills in gathering, sorting, organizing, and writing about the information of expository text. We hope that you and your students find the activities of the American History Idol Curriculum Unit to be motivating and successful. Welcome.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY



Overview

The introductory activity launches the curriculum unit by providing an overview of the unit and presenting the three finalists for the American History Idol (AHI) title. The activity can be completed in one session. Estimated time: 30-45 minutes.

Goals

1. Introduce theme of AHI
2. Introduce the following skills and explain how they relate to selecting an AHI:
 - Identifying main ideas and supporting details via two steps:
 - Gathering and sorting information
 - Deciding level of importance: main ideas and supporting details
 - Drafting a paragraph to explain selection as an AHI finalist based on information in the text (related to standards for writing main ideas and details)

Materials

- Materials for a bulletin board—pictures of the AHI finalists (Use the following or search for pictures using Google Images <http://images.google.com/>)

Sequoyah

http://www.wpclipart.com/US_History/Sequoyah.png

Johnny Appleseed

<http://content.answers.com/main/content/wp/en/e/eb/JohnnyAppleseedHowe.gif>

Jane Addams

<http://www.historyconference.org/images/Jane%20Addams.jpg>

- Biography and picture of Martin Luther King, Jr. to use as an example of an AHI.
Martin Luther King, Jr.
http://www.writespirit.net/authors/martin_luther_king/ml-king

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Elicit students' prior knowledge about the *American Idol* television show (see <http://www.americanidol.com/> for more information):
Ask students:
 - What happens in the TV show?
 - Who are the contestants and why are they selected?
 - What are the results?
2. Discuss the concept of American History Idol *vs.* American Idol. Use the information in the box below, as needed.
 - Ask students what makes someone deserve to be an AHI *vs.* an AI?

Optional background information:

What's history? It is studying people who lived and events that happened in the past to understand why things are the way they are now or how to make things better now.

History includes everything from what happened yesterday to what happened hundreds and thousands of years ago.

[Elicit a few events/people in history.] An AHI is someone who lived in the past and who did something that made an important contribution to the country.

What's the difference between an idol and a hero? A *hero* is someone who puts himself or herself in danger to do something brave. *Idol* can mean lots of different things, but in AHI, the idol is the person whom most Americans look up to because he or she did something important to influence American history.

- Tell students that last year's AHI contest winner was Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK). Show MLK's picture. Distribute a biographical sketch if desired. Describe why he would have been chosen as an AHI.

Optional background information:

Martin Luther King, Jr., was considered to be an American History Idol because he devoted himself to making life better for African-Americans and other minorities. He fought against laws in this country that kept black people separate from white people, made it harder for them to vote, go to good schools, have good jobs, and other similar things. Because of his work, African-Americans gained new opportunities and many Americans learned about the problems faced by minorities in this country.

3. Explain how the AHI contest will work. Tell students there will be three AHI finalists to choose from this year. These finalists have already been selected in the first round of auditions by the "AHI judges."
4. Introduce the three finalists for the 4th grade: Sequoyah, Johnny Appleseed, and Jane Addams—and show the pictures on the bulletin board or chalk board. Remind students that these people all did things that made a big difference in American history, but they may not be as well known as someone like George Washington.

5. Tell students what they will do as AHI “voters.” They will find out *why* three individuals should be AHI finalists (based on main ideas drawn from the text). To do this, they will:

- learn about each finalist by reading a short biography of each person
- find and organize information about the person in each biography
- write a few sentences about each person

6. Tell students that the class will select one AHI contest winner later in the year (during the final AHI activity).

Additional Resources

Eliciting Prior Knowledge

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr100.htm>

<http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9219/prior.htm>

http://www.tki.org.nz/r/esol/esonline/classroom/teach_strats/prior_e.php

Information on Martin Luther King, Jr.

<http://www.thekingcenter.org>

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/index.htm>

Martin Luther King, Jr.
American History Idol Winner



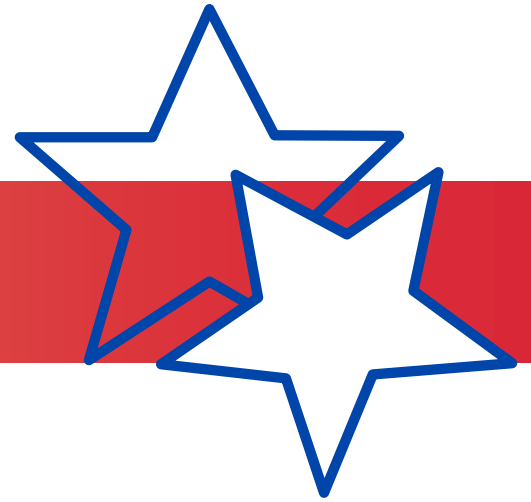
When Martin Luther King, Jr. was a boy, many laws would not allow black people to go to the same places as whites. Some people thought blacks were not as good as whites. Black children could not attend some schools, and certain restaurants had signs that said “whites only.” Blacks could not sit in the front of a bus and, if a bus got crowded, they had to give up their seat to a white person. King did not agree with laws like these, for he believed that all people are equal. He did not think that skin color should keep people apart. Laws separating blacks and whites were unjust, and King decided to protest such laws.

Many people organized to help him. King said that they must protest in a peaceful way. King told his followers to “meet hate with love.” In Montgomery, Alabama, Rosa Parks, a black woman, was arrested and fined for not giving up her seat to a white man on a bus. King led the movement to protest this action. Thousands of people refused to ride the buses. The bus companies began to lose money. In time the law was changed. King traveled to many cities. He talked to the people and led them in peaceful marches.

More and more people heard about King’s peaceful protests and joined him. King led a march to our center of government, Washington, D.C., to ask that the unjust laws be changed. Finally, the United States Supreme Court agreed with King. The laws separating blacks and whites were changed. King was given the Nobel Peace Prize for his work. Today people still admire King because he fought for justice in a peaceful way. January 15 was named as a national holiday in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

MINI-UNIT 1

Should Sequoyah be the AHI?



Overview

In this mini-unit, consisting of three instructional sessions, students read a brief biography of Sequoyah, gather and organize important information from the text, and write a persuasive paragraph. Sessions may be completed on separate days or on the same day. Estimated time to complete all three sessions: 120-150 minutes.

SESSION 1: GATHERING AND SORTING INFORMATION

Goals

Learn and apply the following:

- Gathering information
- Sorting information into categories
- Re-sorting, as needed

Materials

- One AHI contest folder for each student
- Photocopies of Sequoyah biography for all students
- Picture of Sequoyah
- Sticky notes (at least four for each student)
- Worksheet #1

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Introduce the first “finalist” (or nominee), Sequoyah:
 - Remind students about the overall goal—to explain, based on the text, why a finalist should be the AHI.
 - Show the picture of Sequoyah. Put the picture on chalk board or bulletin board.
 - Elicit prior knowledge (if any) about Sequoyah (write on board).
2. Read text:
 - Distribute a copy of the Sequoyah text to each student.
 - Read text aloud as students follow.
 - Have students reread text silently.
3. Help students to gather, sort and re-sort information:
 - Discuss with students how they can sort or organize the information and why this is helpful. Introduce useful categories, related to the AHI theme:
 - a. **Who** is Sequoyah? (background information)
 - b. **Why** did he do what he did? (his goals)
 - c. **How** did he do it? (how did he accomplish his goal?)
 - d. **What** were the **results**? (what did he accomplish?)
 - Write the four categories (who, why, how, what) on the chalkboard as headings for four boxes. Ask students to pick one of the categories (who, why, how, what) and write one fact about that category from the

Sequoyah text on a sticky note. Encourage students to paraphrase and abbreviate as much as possible (e.g., if the sentence is “Sequoyah was a Cherokee...” they could write “Cherokee” or “S was Cherokee” or similar).

- Ask students to come forward and place their sticky notes into the appropriate box/category on the board.
- Review the sticky notes under each category and discuss aloud with the class. Model the process of thinking about what fits and what doesn’t, by thinking aloud. Ask students to explain some choices and consider changes, if necessary. Move sticky notes to different categories, as needed.

Individual Student Work

4. Distribute Worksheet #1 to all students. Students use four sticky notes to write one answer to each question—who? why? how? what?—and place each note on the appropriate box on the worksheet.
5. Distribute AHI contest folders to students. Students write their name on the label and then place the Sequoyah biography and Worksheet #1 in their folder. Collect folders.

Additional Resources

Using Graphic Organizers

http://www.readinga-z.com/more/graphic_org.html
<http://www.graphic.org/aero.html>
<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/students/learning/lr1grorg.htm>
<http://www.enchantedlylearning.com/graphicorganizers/mainsupportingideas/>

Thinking Aloud

<http://wilearns.state.wi.us/apps/default.asp?cid=320>
<http://www.allamericareads.org/lessonplan/strategies/during/thinkaloud1.htm>
<http://web.grps.k12.mi.us/academics/5e/thinkaloud.html>

Sequoyah

American History Idol Finalist



Sequoyah was a Cherokee Indian who lived in Tennessee in the 1800s. One day he met some Americans who were not Indians. He noticed that they looked at something he had never seen before. It was large white leaves with black marks on them. It seemed to Sequoyah as if the marks were talking to the people.

Sequoyah decided he would try to create talking leaves for the Cherokee people. He spent all of his time working. He drew his signs and pictures on tree bark. He thought the people would be excited about what he was trying to do, but they were not. Once, when he was away from home, his wife burned the talking leaves. She did not realize they were important, and others in the village agreed.

But Sequoyah continued to work on his signs. When he finished, he had eighty-six signs. Now the time had come to test the signs. Sequoyah and his daughter attended a meeting with Cherokee leaders from many villages. Sequoyah was sent out of the lodge. The chiefs gave messages to his daughter. She wrote down whatever they said. Sequoyah was called back into the lodge. He took the paper and read aloud what was written. It was exactly what the chiefs had said. It worked! Now the Cherokee could have a written language all their own.

Within months, hundreds of Cherokee knew the new language. Soon the Cherokee nation had a newspaper and many books. Cherokees from different regions could now communicate with one another. Sequoyah became a great hero. He had given the Cherokee a wonderful gift, the written word.

1

Who?

Facts that tell *who* a person is
(background information)

2

Why?

Facts that tell *why* a person did something
(the goal)

3

How?

Facts that tell *how* a person worked toward a goal (the steps)

4

What?

Facts that tell *what* the person accomplished
(the results)

SESSION 2: DECIDING LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE (Main Ideas and Supporting Details)

Goals

Learn and apply the following:

- Deciding levels of importance

Materials

- AHI contest folders (with Sequoyah biography and Session 1 materials inside)
- Worksheet #2

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Distribute AHI contest folders. Have students look at Worksheet #1. Review the categories (who? why? how? what?) and students' answers from Session 1.
2. Distribute Worksheet #2 to students.
3. Explain that Worksheet #2 covers what the class discussed in Session 1 about the who, why, how, and what categories from the Sequoyah text. Tell students that the "AHI judges" thought these were the main ideas. Point out to students that some of the judges' answers would be the same information they put on their sticky notes.

4. Explain that the most important ideas answering the four questions (who? why? how? and what?) are called "main ideas" and less important information that adds to or describes the main idea is called "supporting details."

Individual Student Work

5. Have students begin to sort supporting details for the "How?" category. Call students' attention to the one example that is done to help students get started with details, then ask students to continue on their own.
 - Enter details under the "How?" main idea on Worksheet #2.
6. Have students put their worksheets in their AHI contest folders. Collect folders.

Additional Resources

Finding the Main Idea and Supporting Details

<http://academic.cuesta.edu/acasupp/as/308.HTM>
<http://vclass.mtsac.edu:920/readroom/Mainidea.htm>
<http://www.landmarkoutreach.org/FindingtheMainIdea.htm>
<http://english.glendale.cc.ca.us/topic.html>

Sequoyah

Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Directions: Below is the beginning of an outline for main ideas and supporting details from the Sequoyah biography. For this outline, focus on the ideas related to *how* Sequoyah accomplished his goal. The main idea and the first supporting detail have been given. Write **two** more supporting details from the text. Keep phrases short and abbreviate if possible. For example, Sequoyah could be written as S.

Who?

- Sequoyah was a Cherokee

Why?

- S. wanted talking leaves

How?

- S. made written signs

1st
supporting
detail

→ ○ Drew signs on tree bark

Write 2nd
supporting
detail

→ ○ _____

Write 3rd
supporting
detail

→ ○ _____

What?

- Cherokees had written language

SESSION 3: WRITING A SHORT, FOUR-SENTENCE RESPONSE

Goals

- Reiterate main ideas (or most important ideas) about why Sequoyah should be an AHI finalist.
- Write a short three-sentence response (using prescribed format and topic sentence) with main ideas from the Sequoyah biography.

Materials

- AHI contest folders
- Worksheet #3

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Individual Student Work

1. Distribute AHI contest folders. Remind students that Sequoyah is the first of three AHI finalists and that they will vote for their favorite finalist later during the Culminating Activity. Discuss the theme of the entire text with the class, i.e., what Sequoyah accomplished.
2. Review/discuss Worksheet #2 with students.
3. Have students write a three-sentence response (based on the text) using Worksheet #3.

The format:

Sequoyah should be an AHI finalist. The first reason is _____. The second reason is _____.

4. Invite students to share their responses.
5. Have students put worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect folders.

Additional Resources

Writing a Paragraph

<http://www.english-zone.com/index.php?ID=71>
http://www2.actden.com/Writ_Den/tips/paragrap/index.htm

Information on Sequoyah

<http://ngeorgia.com/people/sequoyah.html>
<http://www.powersource.com/gallery/people/sequoyah.html>
<http://www.manataka.org/page81.html>

Writing an Explanation

AHI Finalist—Sequoyah

Directions: Please explain why Sequoyah should be an American History Idol finalist. The topic sentence (main idea) has been written for you. From the information you have learned about Sequoyah in the biography, give **two** important reasons (supporting details) that explain why he should be a finalist. Write these in the boxes below.

Topic sentence (main idea)

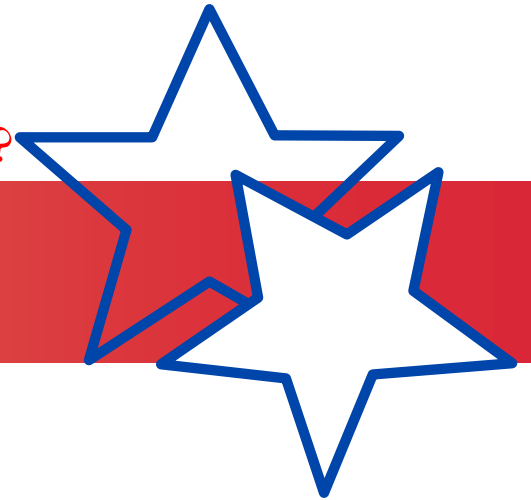
Sequoyah should be an American History Idol finalist.

Reason #1 (supporting detail)

Reason #2 (supporting detail)

MINI-UNIT 2

Should Johnny Appleseed be the AHI?



Overview

In this mini-unit, consisting of three instructional sessions, students read a brief biography of Johnny Appleseed, gather and organize important information from the text, and write a persuasive paragraph. Sessions may be completed on separate days or on the same day. Estimated time to complete all three sessions: 120-150 minutes.

SESSION 1: GATHERING AND SORTING INFORMATION

Goals

Learn and apply the following:

- Gathering information
- Sorting information into categories
- Re-sorting, as needed

Materials

- AHI contest folders
- Sticky notes (four for each student)
- Copies of Johnny Appleseed biography for all students
- Picture of Johnny Appleseed
- Worksheet #1 (new copies) for all students

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Introduce the second “finalist” (or nominee), Johnny Appleseed:
 - Remind students about the overall goal—to explain, based on the text, why a finalist should be the AHI.
 - Show the picture of Johnny Appleseed. Put picture on chalk board or bulletin board.
 - Elicit prior knowledge (if any) about Johnny Appleseed (write on board).
2. Distribute AHI contest folders and copies of Worksheet #1 to all students.

Paired Student Work

3. Divide class into pairs.
4. Read text:
 - Distribute a copy of the Johnny Appleseed text to each student.
 - Read text aloud as students follow.
 - Have students reread text silently.

5. Have students work in pairs, but use their own worksheets. Students reread the Johnny Appleseed biography to jointly find, then sort, information into the four categories (who? why? how? what?). Encourage students to paraphrase and abbreviate on the sticky notes as much as possible. Also, encourage student pairs to take turns finding a detail. After working together, students write their own sticky notes and put on their own worksheets.
6. Review answers with students. Model thinking that went into your organization and elicit their responses and rationales. Encourage rethinking or replacement if students want to.
7. Ask students to put worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect folders.

Additional Resources

Student Pairing/Collaborative Learning

<http://www.cte.uiuc.edu/Did/Resources/Illini%20Instructor/collaborative.htm>
<http://edtech.kennesaw.edu/intech/cooperativelearning.htm>
<http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/archive/CL1/CL/doingcl/thinkps.htm>

Johnny Appleseed
American History Idol Finalist



John Chapman was born in 1774 and grew up in Massachusetts. He became a farmer and learned how to grow different kinds of crops and trees. John especially liked to grow and eat apples. Many people were moving west at that time. They were heading for Ohio and Pennsylvania. John knew that apples were a good food for settlers to have. Apple trees were strong and easy to grow. Apples could be eaten raw and they could be cooked in many ways. They could also be dried for later use. So in 1797, John decided to go west. He wanted to plant apple trees for people who would build their new homes there.

John first gathered bags of apple seeds. He got many of his seeds from farmers who squeezed apples to make a drink called cider. Then, in the spring, he left for the western frontier. He planted seeds as he went along. Also, he gave them to people who knew how valuable apple trees were.

John walked many miles in all kinds of weather. He had to cross dangerous rivers and find his way through strange forests. Often he was hungry, cold, and wet. Sometimes he had to hide from unfriendly Indians. His clothes became ragged and torn. He used a sack for a shirt, and he cut out holes for the arms. He wore no shoes. But he never gave up. He guarded his precious seeds and carefully planted them where they had the best chance of growing into strong trees.

John's fame spread. He was nicknamed Johnny Appleseed. New settlers welcomed him and gratefully accepted a gift of apple seeds. Many legends grew up about Johnny Appleseed that were not always true. However, one thing is true. Thanks to Johnny Appleseed, apple trees now grow in parts of America where they once never did.

1

Who?

Facts that tell *who* a person is
(background information)

2

Why?

Facts that tell *why* a person did something
(the goal)

3

How?

Facts that tell *how* a person worked toward a goal (the steps)

4

What?

Facts that tell *what* the person accomplished
(the results)

SESSION 2: DECIDING LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE (Main Ideas and Supporting Details)

Goals

Learn and apply the following:

- Deciding levels of importance

Materials

- AHI contest folders (with Johnny Appleseed biography and Worksheet #1 inside)
- Worksheet #4

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Distribute AHI contest folders and materials.
2. Review categories and answers on Worksheet #1 from Session 1. Remind students that Worksheet #1 covers what the class discussed in Session 1 about the “who, why, how, and what” categories from the Johnny Appleseed text.
3. Explain that the most important ideas answering the who, why, how, and what questions are called “main ideas” and less important information that adds to or describes the main idea is called “supporting details.”

4. Distribute Worksheet #4.
5. Tell students that the information filled in on Worksheet #4 is what “AHI judges” thought were the main ideas for the four categories. Remind them that many of them had put the same information on their own worksheets in Session 1.

Individual Student Work

6. Ask students to complete Worksheet #4.
7. Have students put worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect folders.

Johnny Appleseed Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Directions:

- 1) Read the four boxes below that contain four main ideas from the biography.
- 2) Write each main idea where it belongs on the outline.
- 3) Go back to the text and find two supporting details for each main idea.
- 4) Add them to the outline.

Apple trees grow across U.S. now

Johnny was a farmer who grew apples

Walked across country to plant trees

Decided to plant apple trees in the West

- **Who?** (tells who a person is)

Main idea → _____

Supporting detail ○ _____

Supporting detail ○ _____

- **Why?** (tells why a person did something)

Main idea → _____

Supporting detail → ○ _____

Supporting detail → ○ _____

- **How?** (tells how a person worked toward a goal)

Main idea → _____

Supporting detail → ○ _____

Supporting detail → ○ _____

- **What?** (tells what the person accomplished)

Main idea → _____

Supporting detail → ○ _____

Supporting detail → ○ _____

SESSION 3: WRITING A SHORT, FOUR SENTENCE RESPONSE

Goals

- Reiterate main ideas (or most important ideas) about why Johnny Appleseed should be an AHI finalist.
- Write a short four-sentence response with main ideas from the Johnny Appleseed biography.

Materials

- AHI contest folders
- Worksheet #5

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Set the context by reminding students about the AHI contest. Discuss the theme of the entire text with the class, i.e., what Johnny Appleseed accomplished.

Individual Student Work

2. Have students independently write a four-sentence response (drawn on information from the text) following the format on Worksheet #5. Johnny Appleseed should be an AHI finalist. The first reason is _____. The second reason is _____. The third reason is _____.
3. Ask students to put their printed worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect the folders.

Additional Resources

Information on Johnny Appleseed

<http://www.appleseed.org/johnny.html>

http://www.millville.org/workshops_f/Dich_FOLKLORE/WACKED/story.html

Writing an Explanation

AHI Finalist—Johnny Appleseed

Directions: Please explain why Johnny Appleseed should be an American History Idol finalist. The topic sentence (main idea) has been written for you. From the information you have learned about Johnny Appleseed in the biography, give **three** important reasons (supporting details) that explain why he should be a finalist. Write these in the boxes below.

Topic sentence (main idea)

Johnny Appleseed should be an American History Idol finalist.

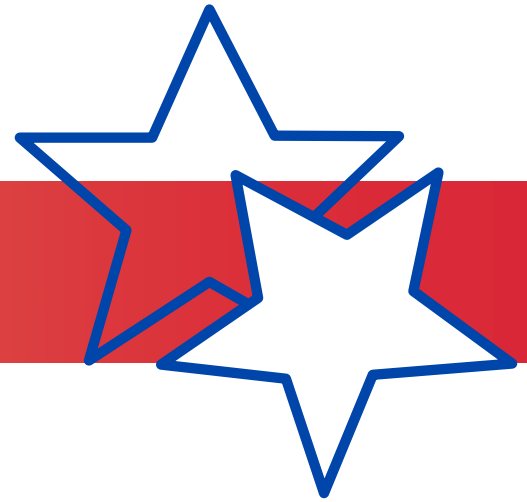
Reason #1 (supporting detail)

Reason #2 (supporting detail)

Reason #3 (supporting detail)

MINI-UNIT 3

Should Jane Addams be the AHI?



Overview

In this mini-unit, consisting of three instructional sessions, students read a brief biography of Jane Addams, gather and organize important information from the text, and write a persuasive paragraph. Sessions may be completed on separate days or on the same day. Estimated time to complete all three sessions: 120-150 minutes.

SESSION 1: GATHERING AND SORTING INFORMATION

Goals

Learn and apply the following:

- Gathering information
- Sorting information into categories
- Re-sorting, as needed

Materials

- AHI contest folders, with label for student's name
- Sticky notes (four for each student)
- Copies of Jane Addams biography for all students
- Picture of Jane Addams
- Worksheet #1 (new copies) for all students

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Introduce the third “finalist” (or nominee), Jane Addams:
 - Remind students about the overall goal—to explain, based on the text, why a finalist should be the AHI.
 - Show the picture of Jane Addams. Put picture on chalk board or bulletin board.
 - Elicit prior knowledge (if any) about Jane Addams (write on board).
2. Distribute AHI contest folders and copies of Worksheet #1 to all students.

Individual Student Work

3. Read text:
 - Distribute a copy of the Jane Addams text to each student.
 - Read text aloud as students follow.
 - Have students reread silently.
4. Have students reread the Jane Addams biography to find, then sort, information into the four categories (who? why? how? what?). Encourage students to paraphrase and abbreviate on the sticky notes as much as possible. Students write their own sticky notes and put them on their own worksheets.
5. Discuss answers with students. Model the thinking that went into your organization and elicit their responses and rationales. Encourage rethinking or replacement if students want to.
6. Ask students to put worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect folders.

Jane Addams

American History Idol Finalist



Jane Addams was born in 1860 in the farmland of Illinois. Her family was very wealthy. At age seven, Jane went on a trip to the city with her father. She was upset when she saw an area with rundown houses, overcrowding, and no places for children to play. Her father explained that this was a slum. Jane decided that when she grew up she would like to help poor people living in those conditions.

Jane visited London, England as a young woman. Again, she saw poor people living in slums like those she had seen as a girl. However, in London she also saw something she had never seen before called a “settlement house.” This was a place that helped people living in slum conditions. Jane decided that she would create a settlement house to help poor immigrants who came to the United States from other countries.

In 1889 Jane returned to the United States. She began her own settlement house called Hull House. It was in a poor immigrant community in Chicago. She not only worked in Hull House but also lived there to understand the people's real needs. At first, she focused on the many basic needs of the women and children. She started such things as a community kitchen, a day care center, a kindergarten, and English classes. Later on, she started dance and music classes and organized book readings.

Addams saw that her own work could only do so much to help. She began teaching immigrants how to improve their own neighborhoods. She encouraged them to insist on basic services like garbage collection and paved streets. She worked to pass laws to make their homes and work safer. She wrote and spoke all over the country about ways to help the poor.

Jane Addams dedicated her life to those who were less fortunate. She is sometimes called the “Mother of Social Work.” Her work changed the lives of many people. It also changed the way Americans today think about the living and working conditions of poor people.

1

Who?

Facts that tell *who* a person is
(background information)

2

Why?

Facts that tell *why* a person did something
(the goal)

3

How?

Facts that tell *how* a person worked toward a goal (the steps)

4

What?

Facts that tell *what* the person accomplished
(the results)

SESSION 2: DECIDING LEVELS OF IMPORTANCE: Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Goals

Learn and apply the following:

- Deciding levels of importance

Materials

- AHI contest folders (with Jane Addams biography and Worksheet #1 inside)
- Worksheet #6

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Distribute AHI contest folders and materials.
2. Review categories and answers on Worksheet #1 from Session 1. Remind students that Worksheet #1 covers what the class discussed in Session 1 about the “who, why, how, and what” categories from the Jane Addams text.
3. Remind students that the most important ideas answering the who, why, how, and what questions are called “main ideas” and less important information that adds to or describes the main idea is called “supporting details.”

4. Distribute Worksheet #6.
5. Tell students that the information filled in on Worksheet #6 is what “AHI judges” thought were the main ideas for the four categories about Jane Addams. Remind them that many of them had put the same information on their own worksheets in Session 1.

Individual Student Work

6. Ask students to complete Worksheet #6.
7. Review main ideas and supporting details from the Jane Addams text as listed on Worksheet #6.
8. Have students put worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect folders.

Jane Addams

Main Ideas and Supporting Details

Directions:

- 1) Read the four boxes below that contain four main ideas from the biography.
- 2) Write each main idea where it belongs on the outline.
- 3) Go back to the text and find two supporting details for each main idea.
- 4) Add them to the outline.

Wanted to help the poor

Born into a wealthy family

Started Hull House

Changed conditions for the poor

- Who? (tells who a person is)

Main idea

→ _____

Supporting detail

○ _____
→ _____

Supporting detail

○ _____
→ _____

- Why? (tells why a person did something)

Main
idea



Supporting
detail



Supporting
detail



- How? (tells how a person worked toward a goal)

Main
idea



Supporting
detail



Supporting
detail



- What? (tells what the person accomplished)

Main
idea



Supporting
detail



Supporting
detail



SESSION 3: TEACHING STUDENTS HOW TO DRAFT A PARAGRAPH

Goals

- (Re)Learn the basic format of the paragraph (related to state standards)
- Extend and apply steps independently to write a paragraph, following a rubric
- Three sentences each stating an important supporting detail from the Jane Addams biography
- Concluding sentence that clearly and specifically re-states the main idea.

Materials

- AHI contest folders with previous materials, including Worksheet #6
- Copies of Jane Addams biographies for all students
- Worksheet #7
- Worksheet #8 (rubric for writing a paragraph)

(Note: Reproducible materials and additional resources can be found at the end of this section.)

Whole Class Instruction

1. Remind students about the AHI contest, as above. Distribute AHI contest folders. Discuss the theme of the entire text with the class, i.e., what Jane Addams accomplished.
2. Remind students about the short responses they wrote previously for the first two AHI finalists—i.e., “Sequoyah (or Johnny Appleseed) should be an AHI finalist. One reason is _____, etc. ...”.
3. Introduce the final form of the paragraph:
 - Introductory sentence clearly and specifically stating the main idea that Jane Addams should be an AHI finalist

Individual Student Work

4. Ask students to write their own paragraphs, giving reasons based on the Jane Addams biography and their work on Worksheet #6.
5. Distribute Worksheet #7.
6. Distribute and go over the rubric in Worksheet #8 as a writing guide for all students.
7. Collect the written/typed paragraph from each student.
8. Ask students to put their worksheets in AHI contest folders. Collect the folders.

Additional Resources

Using a Rubric

<http://members.tripod.com/~ozpk/01rubric>
<http://learnweb.harvard.edu/ALPS/thinking/docs/rubricar.htm>
http://writing.umn.edu/tww/responding_grading/creating_rubrics.htm

Information on Jane Addams

http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/ja_bio.html
http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1931/addams-bio.html
<http://www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi/aa/addams>

Writing an Explanation

AHI Finalist—Jane Addams

Directions: Please explain why Jane Addams should be an American History Idol finalist.

- 1) Read the topic sentence (main idea) that has been written for you.
- 2) From the information you have learned about Jane Addams in the biography, write **three** important reasons (supporting details) that explain why she should be a finalist.
- 3) Write a concluding sentence in the last box that sums up the paragraph.

Topic Sentence
(main idea)

Jane Addams should be an American History Idol finalist.

Reason #1
(supporting detail)

Reason #2
(supporting detail)

Reason #3
(supporting detail)

Conclusion

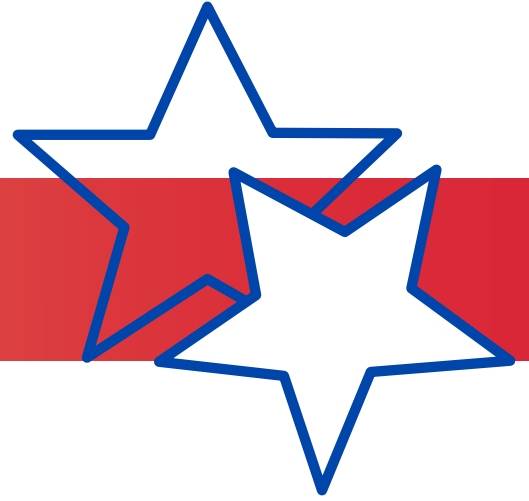
Worksheet #8

Rubric for Writing a Paragraph

	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
Introduction	Introduces paragraph with a clear and specific statement	Introduces paragraph with an adequate statement	Introduces paragraph with a weak statement	Does not include an introductory sentence
Supporting details	Clearly states 3 important reasons to support topic	States at least 2 important reasons to support topic	States at least 1 important reason to support topic	Includes weak reasons to support topic
Conclusion	Concludes paragraph with a clear and specific statement that sums up topic	Concludes paragraph with an adequate statement that sums up topic	Concludes paragraph with a weak statement	Does not include a concluding sentence

CULMINATING ACTIVITY

Who will be the new American History Idol?



Overview

This final activity allows students to cast their votes and celebrate the new American History Idol. Extension activities may be planned as desired.

Goal

- Conclude the AHI Curriculum Unit by inviting students to vote for their favorite AHI.

Materials

- AHI contest folders (if needed)
- AHI bulletin board

Process

1. Ask your students to vote for their favorite AHI finalist. Distribute AHI contest folders if students need reminders about the finalists.
2. Determine the finalist with the greatest number of votes and announce him/her as the new American History Idol.
3. Engage students in extension activities.
 - Students can debate/discuss the results.
 - A celebration can be planned.
 - Results can be posted on bulletin board.
 - Students can role play that they are the top AHI winner. “What does it feel like to be an AHI? What would you say? Why do you think you should be the AHI?”
 - Students can write a newspaper article or an announcement for the school newsletter.
 - Students can do additional research on the AHI winner or other finalists.
 - Students can do research and nominate new finalists for the next round of AHI.

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Supported by the Office of Special Education Programs, U. S. Department of Education