

Inquiry Bursts

Critical Thinking in the Social Studies Classroom

Plagiarism & How to Avoid It

Practice with different skills to help students avoid common mistakes that lead to plagiarism.

Case Studies

Working in groups with real world examples, students review a scenario, formulate opinions, and decide consequences. Class reconvenes for a discussion on all examples.

For acceleration, students could research the case studies to find newspaper or magazine articles about the events or find new examples and supporting evidence to use as future case studies.

Mock Twitter Feed

Using [Padlet](#), teacher creates a topic for discussion or sends students to a link. Students respond using brief notes. Brief format encourages students to write in clear, concise language. Could be modified to have students write single sentence responses, or create thesis statements on a given topic.

This could easily be done on [Twitter](#) with older students. Teacher could create a hashtag for the topic or class discussion.

Research Skills

Incorporate information literacy skills into everyday lessons.

Evaluate Sources

Teacher models evaluation with a web site and then gives students a site related to lesson content. Students work in pairs to evaluate the site, using a checklist (such as the [5Ws of Web Site Evaluation](#) checklist). Students write a statement explaining why they would or would not use that site. Continue to practice the skill as a warm-up or homework assignment. Other options:

- Valenza's documents are more extensive
 - [Handout](#) | [Checklist](#) | [Reminder](#)
- [21st Century Influence Fluency Evaluation Wizard](#) takes students through the process step-by-step.

Paraphrasing & Summarizing

Students are given a general topic and asked to narrow it down (EX: given a topic of climate, they could narrow it down to a specific country's climate). Students search in 3 different sources for info and select and copy one quotation from each source (including the citation). Students then paraphrase the quotes and use the three paraphrased passages to write a paragraph about what they learned.

- EX: [Important People from the 1920s](#)
- EX: [Constitutional Amendments](#)

Citation Races

Pairs of students compete to correctly complete a common citation. Using Google Docs projected on a screen allows everyone to see the citations as they are built. Citation Races can also be adapted for use with manipulatives or written out with traditional pen and paper.

Bias Lesson

Compare three different sources about the same topic. Determine what, if any, evidence there is of the sources' bias. Students write a statement explaining why they would or would not use the sources. Can be used for current or historical events.

- EX: Same-sex marriage
- EX: Exploring primary sources from different perspectives on the same event or time period (excerpt from Anne Frank's diary, an interview with a WWII American soldier, and newspaper archives from Germany)

Research Smackdown

Quick and easy research lessons to use as warm-ups, exit tickets, or homework assignments.

The Rule of Three

Teacher posts an image related to the current content area. As a warm up, students write down three questions the image evokes. Could also post a content-specific word and have students write three synonyms or antonyms. Given enough information, students can practice writing citations as well.

Top 5

Given a short set of resources (such as the top 5 results from a Google or database search), students determine which resources would be appropriate for answering a given question.

Thesis Rewrite

After an in-depth lesson on thesis writing, students practice revising poor thesis statements. Teacher posts bad thesis statement weekly. Brief discussions to help students see the rewrite process modeled.

Cite Your Current Event

If students are required to gather current events, make the initial part of their assignment include posting a citation of the selected article on the class's Blackboard site (or Moodle, class blog, etc.), providing experience citing a variety of types of resources. The teacher or librarian could offer initial feedback on the citations to guide students. Could be adapted to work on paper/index card/post-it or using a Google form.

A Google A Day

Using the web site [A Google A Day](#), students can practice answering increasingly complex research questions. Once they've answered a research question, they can also practice citing the source of their information

Daily Questions

As an exit ticket each day, students develop a thoughtful question about the content learned. Questions can be used for daily/weekly discussions or posted on a blog for online conversation.

Search Term Relays

Teams of students take turns – relay style – creating additional search terms for a basic topic. This is a fun way to end class that helps summarize the activities of the day in addition to practicing an important skill.

Notes

**For more information,
please visit our web site:**

www.inquirybursts.com/mscss-2014

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