

A Bronzeville Story

Lesson 5: Oral History Project (Part 2)

Essential Questions

What is oral history? Why is it important for ordinary people to record their experiences? What is diversity? How does diversity enrich our city, our country, and our lives?

Desired Understandings

Students will understand that many different people and groups—including their own families—have relocated to Chicago and made valuable contributions to our history and culture. They will understand that new migrants found many opportunities as well as challenges upon their arrival in Chicago. They will understand that “witnesses to history” can help all people discover the past through the stories they tell and the artifacts they collect.

Knowledge

Students will know that our city, state, and country are made up of migrants who originally came here from diverse places around the world. They will know why the information gathered through oral-history interviews is valuable both personally and to future generations of Chicagoans.

Skills

Students will know how to present the information they have gathered in an oral-history interview both verbally and in writing. They will listen and speak effectively in class.

Illinois Learning Standards

English Language Arts

- Goal 1: Read with understanding and fluency.
- Goal 2: Read and understand literature representative of various societies, eras, and ideas.
- Goal 3: Write to communicate for a variety of purposes.
- Goal 4: Listen and speak effectively in a variety of situations.
- Goal 5: Use the language arts to acquire, assess, and communicate information.

Social Science

- Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals, and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States, and other nations.
- Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the United States.
- Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the United States.

In This Lesson

Students will summarize and present their family’s migration experiences, gathered through oral-history interviews (see Lesson 4). The story elements of character and obstacles/problems are addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Beatrice Quatroke.



Activity

This lesson uses the oral-history interviews students conducted for the Lesson 4 Home Connection.

Before class begins, post a large world map at the front of the room.

Have students come to the front of the class one by one, place a colored star sticker on the country or state where their relative came from, and then choose one question from their interview to read aloud. At this time the student can also share photos or other family “artifacts” they might have brought in (these can be added to the map if desired). If students do not have photographs, they can draw a picture of their relative and add it to the map.

Display the map in the classroom or hallway. Vote as a class to name your map. Some suggestions include “Diversity Is a Gift from Our Country to Us” or “Migration Stories of Classroom XYZ.”

Lesson 5 Home Connection

Write the following sentence on the board: “My (grandma, grandpa, mom, dad, other person) (name of person) came to Chicago from (place) in the year (0000).” Have students fill in the information in the parentheses and then continue to write an essay about the migration experience of their relative using the answers they collected in their interviews.

Materials & Resources

- World map
- Colored star stickers
- Drawing supplies (optional)

Instructional Notes

Stress how and why diversity makes our country and our city unique.

Extension Activities

Have students write an essay about why diversity is important to Chicago and America.