

Backward Design Template

Laura LaFrenier – 8th Grade U.S. History

Identify Problem and Desired Transformation

What content based problem do you see in your students that you would like to address?	What is the transformation in understanding that you would like to see in your students?
My students do not understand the relevance of studying American history because they cannot see its application to their daily lives.	I would like my students to understand how knowledge of the basic principles upon which the USA is based will help them be better citizens and people. I also want my students to understand that studying the past makes us wiser human beings.
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What skills or understandings do you want your students to have as a result of the technology integration you propose?	What questions will be used to frame this area of content (unit questions or big ideas)?
That history IS relevant to my students' daily lives. That history is all around us. That learning from our past makes us better human beings. That understanding the principles upon which America is built will help them be better citizens and voters.	What is the importance of studying history? American history in particular? How does studying history make us wiser and better human beings? How does history relate to us who are living in the twenty-first century?

Determine Acceptable Evidence

What technology seems best suited for your problem? What this is the best as opposed to other options?

Web-based research tools (articles, primary documents, online archives, etc.). Laptops (one-to-one starting second semester) for research and social networking. Using Twitter for microblogging – bringing history alive by connecting it to a technology that my students are aware of and some are using.

What pedagogies do you think will work best given your choice of content and technologies? Why this choice over others?

Teaching my students research skills – how to find good sources, how to question sources, comparing and contrasting opinions. Posing questions for students to find answers to, rather than just giving them the facts. Personalizing the material by making the people come alive and focussing on the human aspect of history. Analogies that are relatable – relating history to today, scenarios. Looking at history from a story perspective (using the four “C”s to create interesting lessons and units). Connecting to current events (for example, Obamacare). This day in history or current events in warm-up. Power in the emotions of the things that happen. Videos arguing for something.

How will you measure the impact of your technology integration on student learning (Surveys, interviews, observations, assessments, etc.)

End-of-the-year survey? Student enthusiasm/learning observations. “Connections” responses.