

Zoom Into the Past: Illustrating History in Middle School

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This is an adaptable, digital, interdisciplinary, culminating activity to the study of an historical period, in which students create a short, multimedia production that appears to zoom into an architectural structure of that era to a close-up of an object inside.

Sample Lesson Plan

Create A Colonial Architecture HyperCard Stack

Suggested grade level: 8

Objectives:

National Art Education Standards of Art: Students understand and apply media techniques and processes. Students understand the visual arts as a basic aspect of history.

Maryland Art Education Goal: Students develop an ability to organize knowledge and ideas for expression in the production of art. Students reveal an awareness of structures and decor made of regional material, customs, and inventions in colonial America.

MCPS Social Studies Objective: Students trace the evolution of the colonies up to 1763.

Materials: HyperCard 1.0, 29 Mac LCIII's, a VCR, TV monitor, cables, LTVPro video out card, a Laserwriter Pro printer, HD floppy disks, video tape, and teacher-created worksheets for storyboards, sharing records, and self evaluations.

Pre-assessment: Students had learned Hypercard technology and participated in field trips to colonial Annapolis and St. Mary's, Maryland.

Opening Set: [Day 1]

Students analyzed and discussed commercial slides of Colonial Williamsburg's exterior and interior architecture, tools, and decor of: the candle makers; gunsmith shop, musical instrument shop, cabinetmakers; printing and post office, bookbinder, basket weaver, windmill, apothecary, millinery, wheelwright, cooper shop, music teacher's shop, spinning and weaving, peruke maker, and Raleigh Tavern Bakery.

Project Design: [Day 2]

The instructor modeled creation of a sample, zoom in HyperCard stack and displayed the storyboard for it. Students sketched storyboards for their own colonial stacks.

Production: [Days 3-5]

Students created: on card 1, a name or title; on card 2, the exterior of a colonial public building; on card 3, an interior room of this public building; and on card 4, an extreme close-up of one object visible in card 3. Students created and placed navigational buttons that move "to next card" with a chosen visual effect on appropriate cards. Optional: students created more cards and directional buttons as motivated. Students printed storyboards. Students recorded stacks on VHS tape. Other options that require more time, which we did not do: Students record and place audio buttons on cards 2-4. Students record colonial music on a cassette tape and edit the music tape to the video tape. Students compose original music characteristic of the colonial period on a keyboard and record on a cassette tape to edit to the video tape.

Synthesis and Conclusion: [Day 6]

Students viewed and shared completed stacks in pairs or teams. During sharing, viewers related and recorded what they liked best about each stack.

Assessment and Evaluation: [Day 7]

Student recorded self-evaluations of their own projects, including: a description of the stack, the process of creating the stack, an expression of feelings about the finished stack, speculation as to what other things could have been included or improved, given more time. Storyboard sketches, stacks, and records made during sharing and self-evaluations may be used to determine the success of the lesson and plan future lessons relating to this one.

Alternatives to students creating Hypercard stacks include creating HyperStudio stacks; slide presentations in Kid Pix, Claris Impact, Microsoft Power Point, or Astound; or interactive Web pages in HTML, Claris Home Page, Adobe Page Mill, or Microsoft Front Page. Alternative images to students creating original drawings: import digital photos, scanned still prints, or digitized video taken of exteriors, interiors, and objects while on the field trip; import copied Web images, scanned text images, or copied electronic images from CD's with appropriate footnote and bibliographic citations.

Sample illustration by eighth grade student Erin Hallen.

