

Lesson Plan

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Blacksburg, Virginia

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Life, Liberty, and Opportunity: The Struggle for Freedom in Tidewater Maryland 1634-1865

Grade levels: 2nd –6th

Improving Reading Comprehension and Interest in History by Supplementing Prior Knowledge with Slides and Narrative

Objective:

Through the use of power point presentations using pictures from my week at the NEH workshop at St. Mary's City and interesting facts that I learned there, I will help to improve the reading comprehension of second through sixth graders by increasing their prior knowledge and interest in three areas of history. Comprehension is built upon prior knowledge and increases with student interest and motivation about a topic. Research has shown that students retain more knowledge of history when taught using narratives rather than just dry facts from a textbook.

Procedure:

The three topics which I developed into power point presentations are: The Use of Archeology to Learn about Colonial Life and Discovering my own History along the Way, Woodland Indian Life, and Slave Life, including the impact of tobacco on slavery. These are three different presentations, which should be shown just prior to beginning each of these topics of study. In some classes, my presentations will also be used as a review of topics they learned the previous year and need to know for state mandated testing.

I have already presented one to a Virginia Tech Graduate level History Education class, to inspire them to bring enthusiasm into their future classrooms. I showed them how to use photographs from an NEH Landmarks workshop to build prior knowledge and interest in their students to increase comprehension. I encouraged them to pursue any opportunities they may have to attend NEH workshops in the future, telling them what an extraordinary experience I had at St. Mary's College of Maryland.