

Unit 1, Lesson 4: How and Why Should I Organize Things Chronologically?

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students learn why historians put people and events in chronological order, and begin creating their own timelines.

Delaware Standard(s)

- **History Standard 1, 4-5 [Chronology]:** Students will study historical events and persons within a given time frame in order to create a chronology and identify related cause-effect factors.
- **History Standard 2b, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; chronologically arrange them; and analyze change over time.

Big Ideas

- Chronology

Essential Questions

- How do I arrange things chronologically and why should I do it?

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that organizing things chronologically involves arranging them in the order in which the events occurred, from first to last. This can help us to identify causes and effects, and explain what has changed and what has remained the same.

Resources

- [Lesson 4 Google Presentation](#)
- [Resource 1: Define Chronology](#)
- [Resource 2: Compare/Contrast How Events are Presented](#)
- [Resource 3: Timeline of Events in My Life](#)

Procedures

1. **Introduce the focus of this lesson.** Tell students that you are now going to help them understand some of the things that historians do.
2. **Academic Vocabulary:** display the word “Chronology” where it is visible for all to see. Tell students that one of the most important things that those who “do” and study history (historians) do involves chronology.
3. **Uncover Meaning in Context:** Cut copies of [Resource 1](#) in half and distribute one copy to each student. Share the following sentences with students and have them work with a partner to see if they can define the word “Chronology” based on how it is used in the sentence. Allow sufficient time to pass then ask volunteers to share their conclusions.

- a. Then, reveal the actual definition i.e. **the arrangement of events or dates in the order that they occurred.**
4. **Compare and Contrast.** Tell students that you are now going to try to help them understand why arranging things in order can be helpful. Project or distribute copies of [Resource 2](#) below. It shows two ways that information about the past can be presented. Have students work with a partner to discuss – which way of presenting the information would be more helpful to people – the way the information is presented in Presentation A or Presentation B? Why?
 - a. Invite volunteers to share answers then offer the following. The information in Presentation A is much less helpful and useful than the information in Presentation
 - i. Presenting A just offers 5 important events in the life of Rosa Parks but there is no order or logic to them. In contrast, the way the events are presented in Presentation B helps us see the important events as well as when the events occurred. By putting events in chronological order, those who “do history” can **draw inferences** about what may have caused other events and what the effects of each event might be.
5. **Video Support:** Visit YouTube and enter something like “How to teach students about timelines” and select the one that you think might be best for your students. One example can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ld7EnSVA-5w> . Show the video, stopping at strategic points to highlight things that are particularly important or that students might not understand.
6. **Homework** – have students go home and discuss the following with parent(s) or guardian(s). What are 5 important, positive events from the students’ past? Have them write down those events and bring their lists into school. They can use their events and [Resource 3](#) to build a timeline after they learn how to create one (see next lesson - Lesson 5). Save student timelines for lesson 5.