

Unit 1, Lesson 8: Conclusions Require Evidence

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will generate definitions of evidence, identify evidence used to support conclusions, and consider why evidence is needed to support conclusions that historians and citizens draw. This supports expectations embedded in History Standard 2a.

Delaware Standard(s)

- **History Standard 2a, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will draw historical conclusions and construct historical accounts from primary and secondary source materials

Big Ideas

- Evidence

Essential Questions

- What is evidence and why is it needed?

Enduring Understandings

Students will understand that historians and citizens in a democracy draw conclusions that need to be supported by evidence.

Resources

- [Lesson 8 Google Slides](#)
- [Resource 1: Define Evidence](#)
- [Resource 2: Applying Understanding](#)
- [Resource 3: Identifying Evidence](#)
- [Resource 4: Check for Understanding](#)

Procedures

1. **Warm-Up:** Suggest to students that there is interest in identifying 4th graders' favorite snack. What do you think it would be and how would you be able to convince or prove to others that it is 4th graders' favorite snack?
2. **Introduce the Lesson:** Explain that...
 - a. one of the skills that they will be expected to master is the ability to draw conclusions just like they did in the Warm-up
 - b. to be believable, conclusions must be well-supported
 - c. they will develop their understanding of what evidence is, and be asked to identify evidence that can be used to back up conclusions in ways that make them believable or credible.
3. **Define Evidence in Context:** Distribute copies of [Resource 1: Define Evidence](#) (*note that there are two of the same resources on the page to save on paper*). This activity supports

development of determining meaning in context, specifically the definition of evidence. Ask students complete a ReaDiWrite:

- a. Read the paragraph in the gray shaded box,
 - b. Discuss what a good definition of evidence might be with a partner,
 - c. Write their definition on the lines at the bottom of the handout.
4. **Share and Repair:** Invite volunteers to offer their definitions of evidence then have them repair any in need by offering a definition below:

Evidence - facts or information that leads intelligent people to accept that something is true or worthy of believing.

5. **Application Exercise:** Ask each student to write down the following “conclusion” then provide evidence in writing on an index card or small piece of paper that supports the following conclusion (it may be best to have them do this silently):

“I (each student) am a really good person.”

Give them time to come up with answers then ask if anyone wishes to volunteer **or** collect the papers and share randomly chosen evidence that students described without saying who came up with it.

Reinforce the idea that all of your students are really good people.

6. **Identifying Evidence:** See [Resource 2: Applying Understanding](#). Tell students that they are now going to do an activity in which they will have to decide whose evidence supports conclusions and what the evidence is. Distribute copies of [Resource 2](#). Have students read through each scenario and answer the two questions for each.
7. **Determining Evidence Needed:** see [Resource 3: Identifying Evidence](#). Explain to students that they will now engage in an exercise in which they will be asked to think about what evidence might be needed to support six different conclusions. Distribute copies of [Resource 3](#). Have students work with a partner to determine what they could do to get the evidence that is needed to support the six different conclusions. You may want to offer guided practice with Conclusion 1 (e.g., they could get some measuring tape and measure how tall Hector and Juan actually are).

Check for Understanding

Identifying Sources that Support Conclusions: see [Resource 4: Check for Understanding](#). This activity will give students an idea of what a state assessment item might ask them to do. They will read a conclusion then decide which of three sources might be used to support the conclusion. Distribute copies of Resource 4, have students respond independently then offer feedback.

Debrief

remind students that historians must draw conclusions from credible evidence to support their conclusions about what happened in the past. Determining whether conclusions are supported by

evidence and what that evidence is an extremely important skill for students to have in school and in real life, particularly in an age when many are intentionally spreading disinformation and misinformation that divides the American people.