

BUILDING CONTENT EXPERTISE: A MODELS
APPROACH TO ADDING COMPLEXITY IN
SOCIAL STUDIES FOR UPPER ELEMENTARY
THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL GIFTED AND
ADVANCED STUDENTS

Stephanie Clemson, M.Ed., Metro Nashville Public Schools



Agenda

- Defining Complexity
- Building Complexity Through Analysis
 - *Social Studies Analysis*
 - *Rhetorical Analysis*
 - *Visual Analysis*
- Incorporating Complexity into Lessons and Assessments
- Practice
- Share out & Reflection

Integrated Curriculum Model

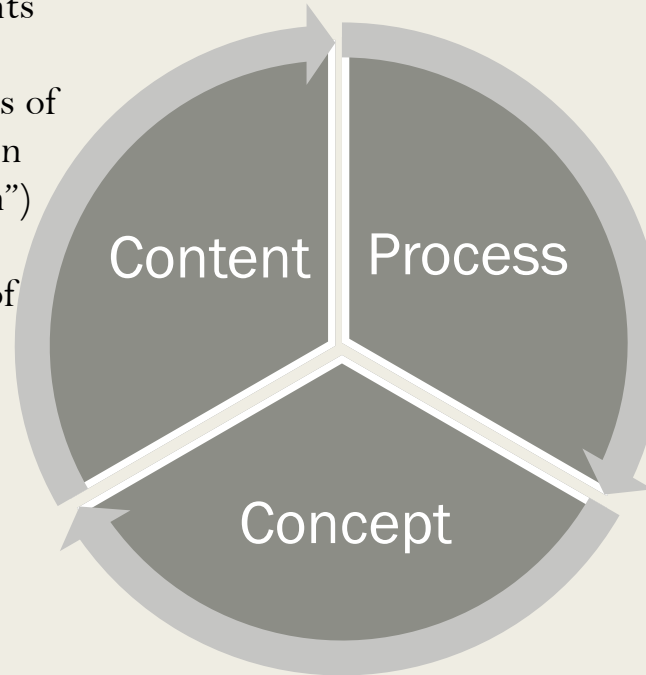
(Van-Tassel-Baska, 1986)

Advanced Texts

- Primary Source Documents
- Fiction (*The One and Only Ivan*)
- Abstract Poetry (“A Series of Unfortunate Deaths” & “In the Leafy Forest of Green”)
- Rich prints (A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte)

Accelerated Standards

CCSS ELA
NGSS



Thinking Models/ Strategies

(depth/complexity)

- Science, Literary, Visual Analysis Wheels
- Issues/ Should Questions
- “That” & “And”

Concepts (abstractness) : Power, Truth, Conformity, Freedom, Change, Cause-Effect, Systems, **Interactions**

Differentiation Feature: Complexity

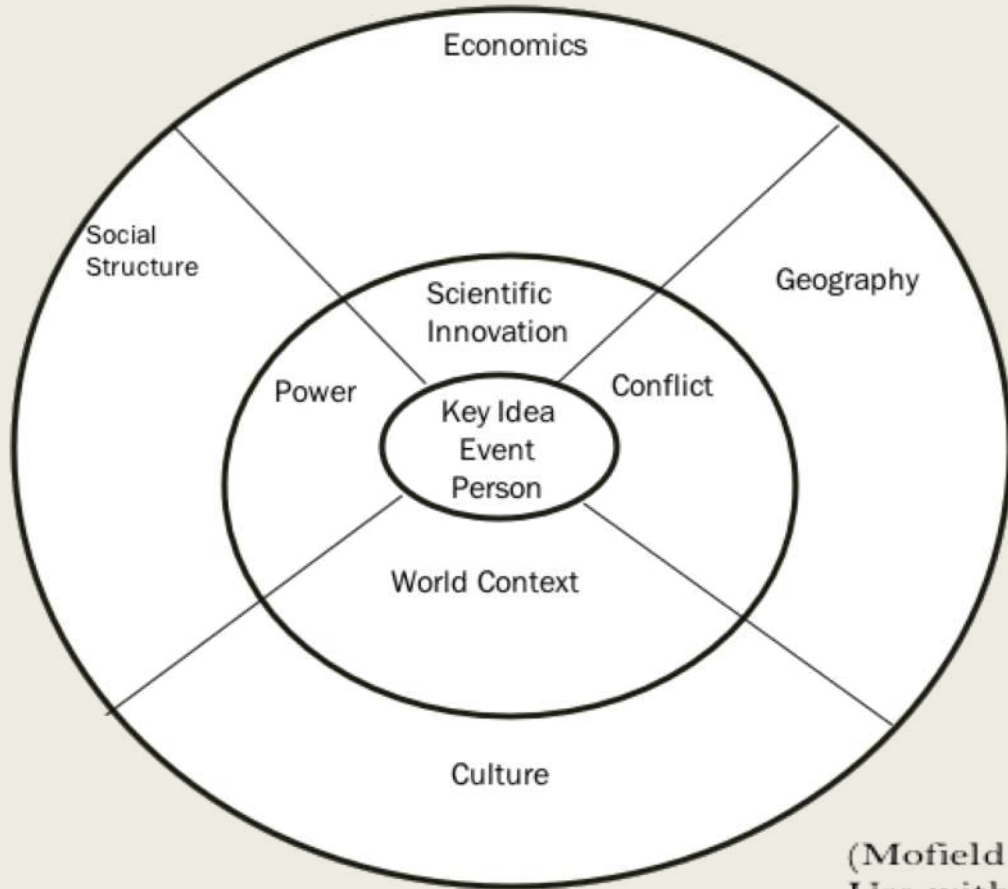
Add Something Meaningful:

Variable/Factor/Concept/Perspective/Idea/Resource/Standard

Examine the Relationship:

Within and Across Disciplines/Variable

Social Studies Wheel



(Mofield & Stambaugh, 2015)
Use with permission

Basic Questions (Singular Element)

- Economics-What is the economic situation? What are the main goods and services? What resources are available?
- World Context- What else is happening in the world at this time? What other movements are taking place?
- Politics/Power- What type of government is in place? What laws are relevant to this idea? Who is in power?
- Social Structure- What issues of equity do you notice? What were the needs of families during this time? How does education relate?
- Culture-What religious values are relevant? What art, literature, or music relate to this topic?
- Geography-Where do people move? How does the environment affect the people?
- Innovation-What new technology has emerged? How has communication evolved? How has science related to this topic?
- Conflict-What problems are the people experiencing? What wars are relevant? What internal and political conflicts are happening?

Example: Early Civilizations, Ancient Egypt

[TN 6th grade curriculum](#)

Standards 6.15 & 6.19 (geography and achievement standards)

First wheel with students:

1. Introduce vocabulary
2. [Watch videos](#)
3. Fill out wheel
4. Draw interaction arrows and choose the most powerful one and explain why it's the most powerful.



Adding complexity (cause-effect)

- How did the geography of the South influence the development of power, trade, and culture? How did these factors influence slavery in the south?
- How the Temperance Movement (culture) and Pro-Abolitionism (world context) incite momentum for the Women's Suffrage Movement?
- How does geography influence innovation for transportation, energy, communication, and basic needs? (e.g., building of dams, irrigation systems, interstates, railroads)

Adding Complexity (Implications)

- What were the long-term implications of the Protestant Reformation on the economic structure of Europe and social class structure of America?
- What were the implications of Indian Removal on the geographic boundaries of states and social class for American Indians?
- What were the intended implications of this document? Refer to at least 2 Social Studies factors.

Adding complexity- Analyzing Problems

- How did two factors from the wheel interact to create conflict?
- How did economic and political factors interact to cause conflict between the colonies and Britain?
- What is the key problem and how does it relate to the current economic and geographic context? What is the key problem regarding Indian Removal, and how did multiple concepts interact to cause the problem? (e.g., students may discuss the interaction of economics, geography, social structure, culture, and politics).

Famous Person Study (using the wheel)

- Using the elements on the wheel to develop guiding questions for research, or to record research notes.
- Adding complexity by asking students to explore how elements impacted their person's life or how their person's life impacted elements on a broader scale



6th - Hammurabi



7th – Eleanore of Aquitaine



8th - Andrew Jackson

- Economics- What resources were available to your person? How did that compare to the rest of the country? The world?
- World Context- What else is happening in the world while your person was living?
- Politics/Power- Who is in power during your person's life? What laws were being passed during the time your person was living?
- Social Structure- Where does your person fit in terms of social status? Did they grow up wealthy or poor? How does their gender or ethnicity impact their life during this time? Did they have their rights recognized?
- Culture- What were the prevailing religious views during the time the person was living? What about education?
- Geography- Where was the person born? How often did they move? Which area impacted their life the most? What was that area like? (city, rural, mountain, desert...)
- Innovation- What were some of the recent discoveries going on at the time the person was alive? Think about their childhood, teenage years and adult life.
- Conflict- What conflicts were going on in the world when your person was alive? How did those conflicts impact them?

Complex Questions for Famous Person Study

■ Geography + Conflict:

- *How did the geography of where your person grew up and the major conflicts going on during their time impact their success?*

■ World Context + Economics:

- *How do the world events going on at the time and the availability of resources impact your person over time?*

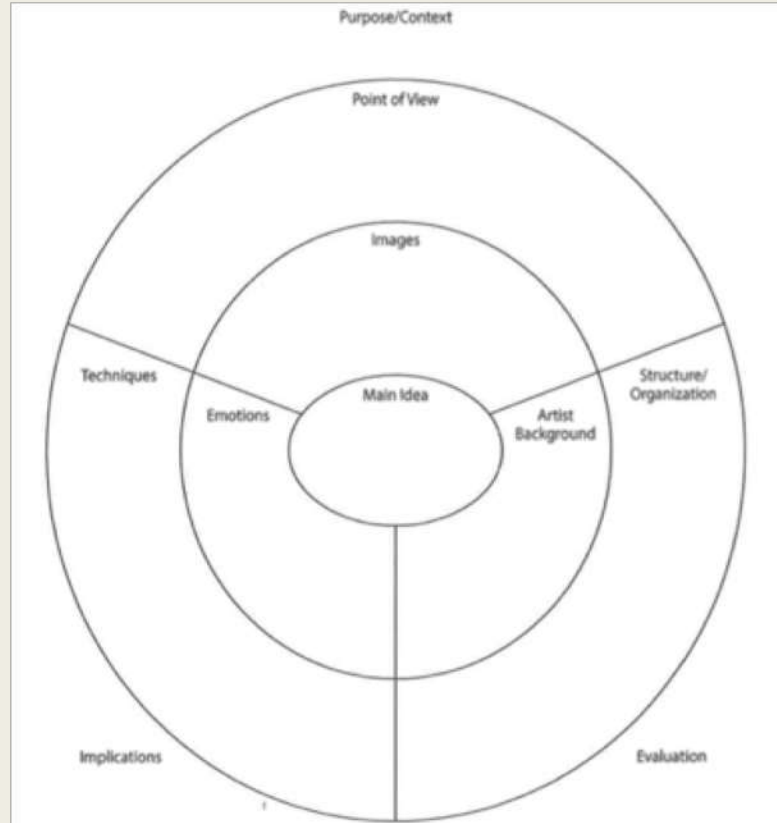
■ Political Power + Innovation

- *How does the presidential emphases and recent discoveries of the day impact the person you chose and their career?*

■ Social Structure + Political Power

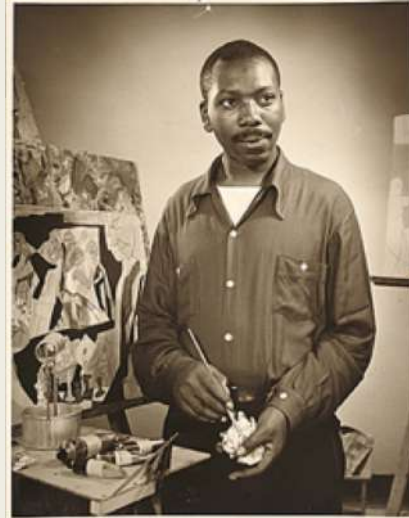
- *How does the ethnicity or gender of your person and the current laws at the time impact your person's life and access?*

Visual Analysis



Jacob Lawrence

- Read through the text on Jacob Lawrence (independently or in partners?)
- Consider his influences as an artist and the messages that he was attempting to promote through his work.

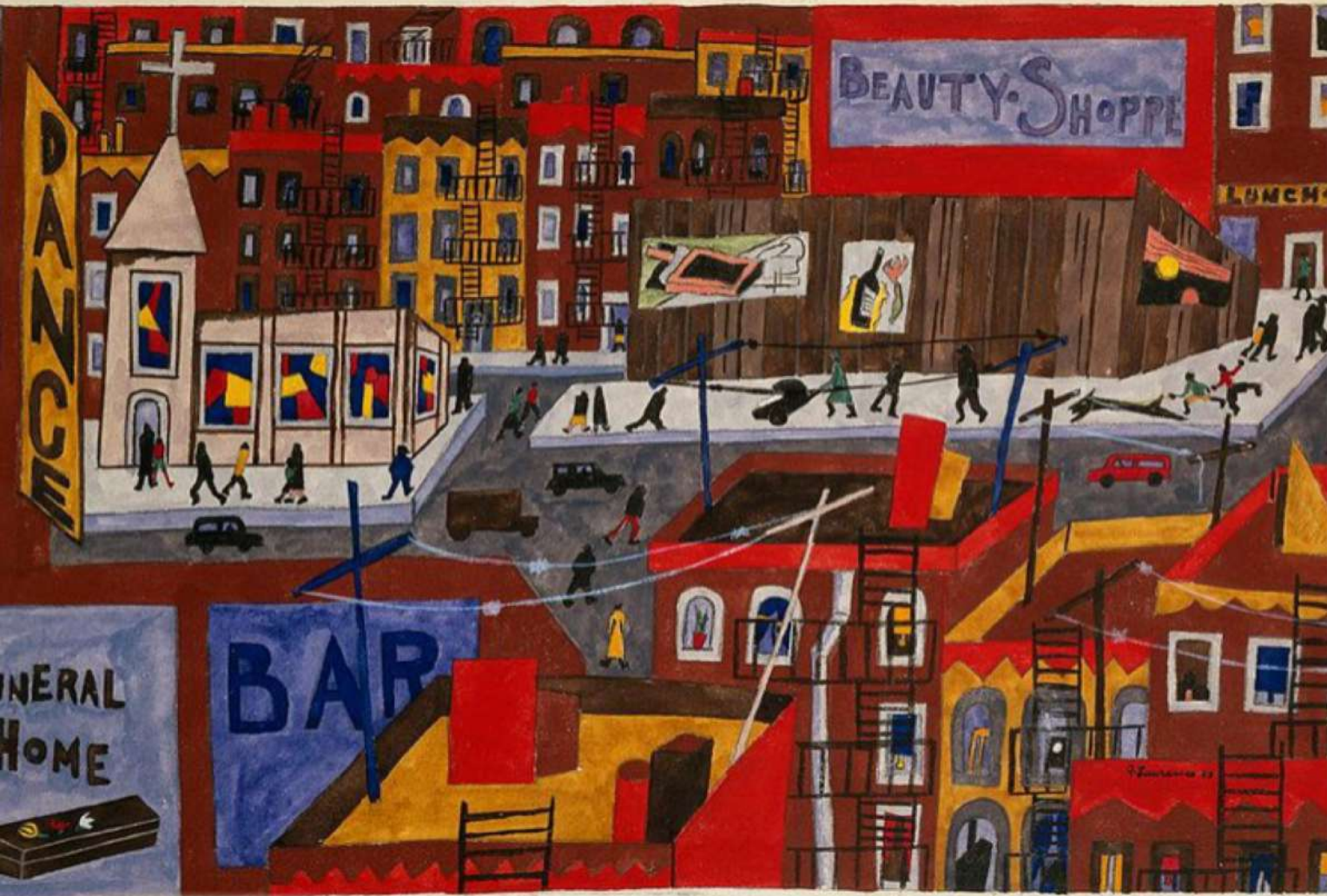


The Library
(1960)





The Builders
(1947)



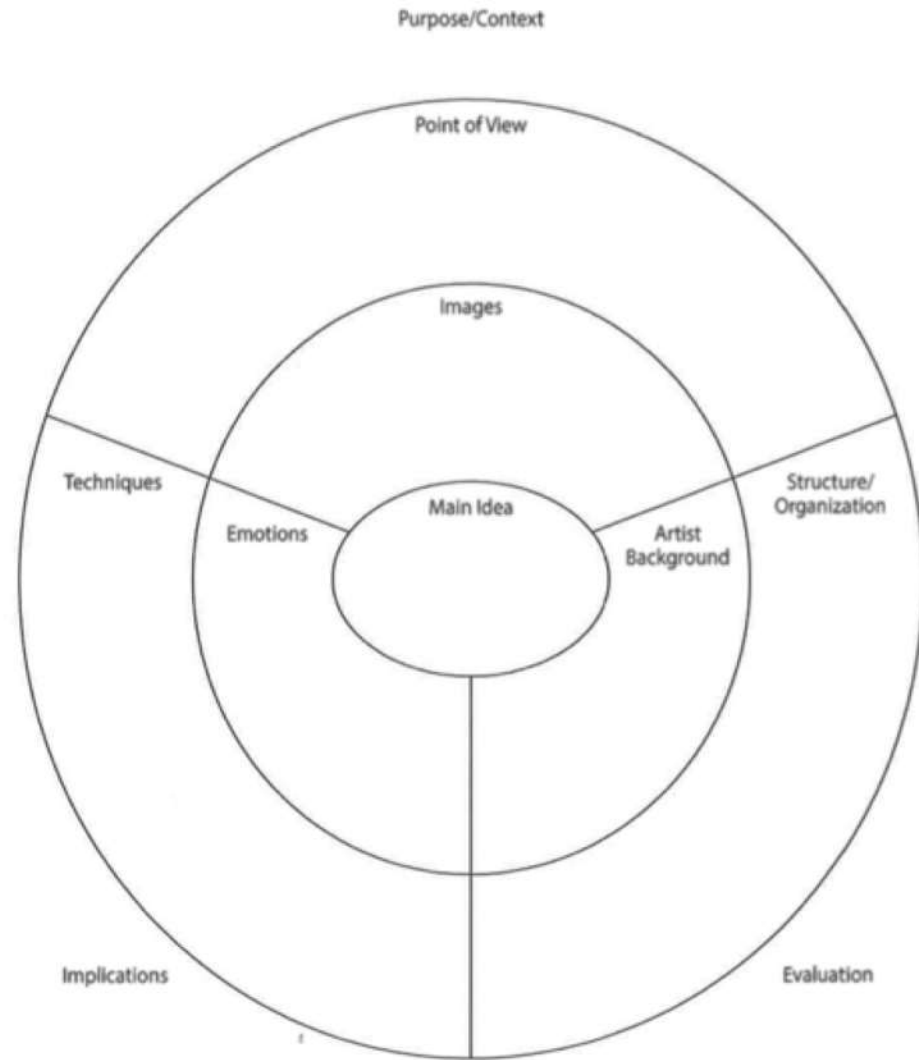
I spy with my
little eye...

“This is Harlem”

- What emotions does this evoke within you? What emotions are portrayed?
- How does the artist’s background influence his techniques and structure?
- What are the implications/consequences of viewing this art?
- Do you like this art? Does it make you think? Was the artist successful in presenting his ideas? Justify your answers with evidence.

Visual Analysis

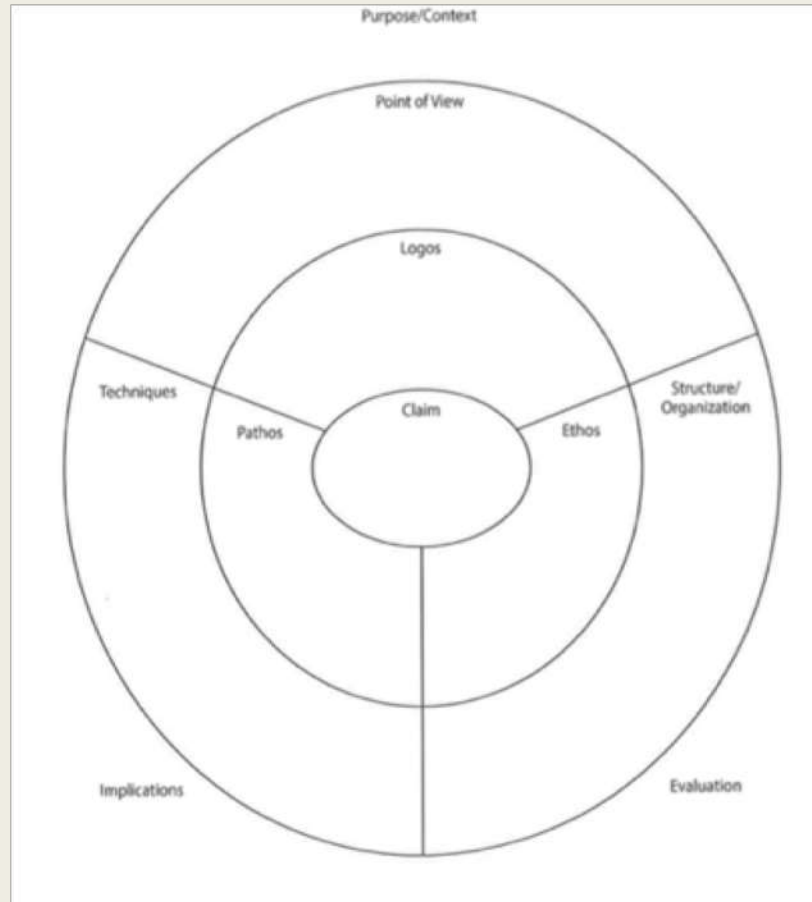
- What is the context? What is the purpose?
- What is the main idea?
- What assumptions does the artist have regarding his work?
- What important images or symbols do you see? Are any of them repeated? What do you think these could symbolize.
- What techniques does the artist use to enhance visual effects? What makes this an interesting painting?
- What is interesting about the placement of objects and people within the painting?



Quick Debate

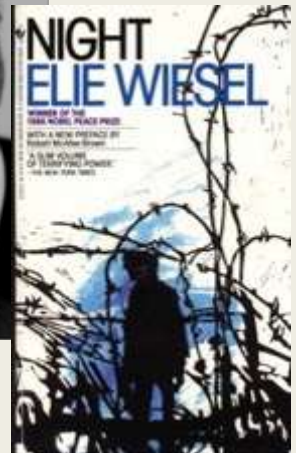
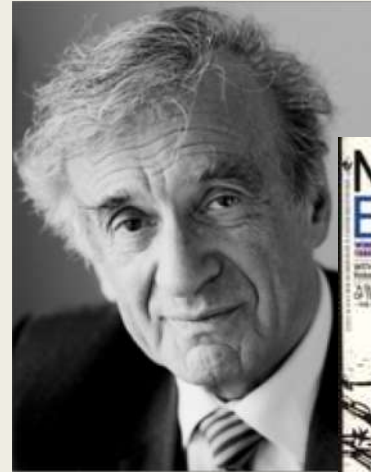
- Do you think Lawrence intended his audience to think more about the past or the present when viewing his painting? Why or why not?
- Do you think Lawrence's work has more positive or negative effects on its viewers? Explain.
- Does the art tell more about those within the neighborhood or those looking in?

Rhetorical Analysis



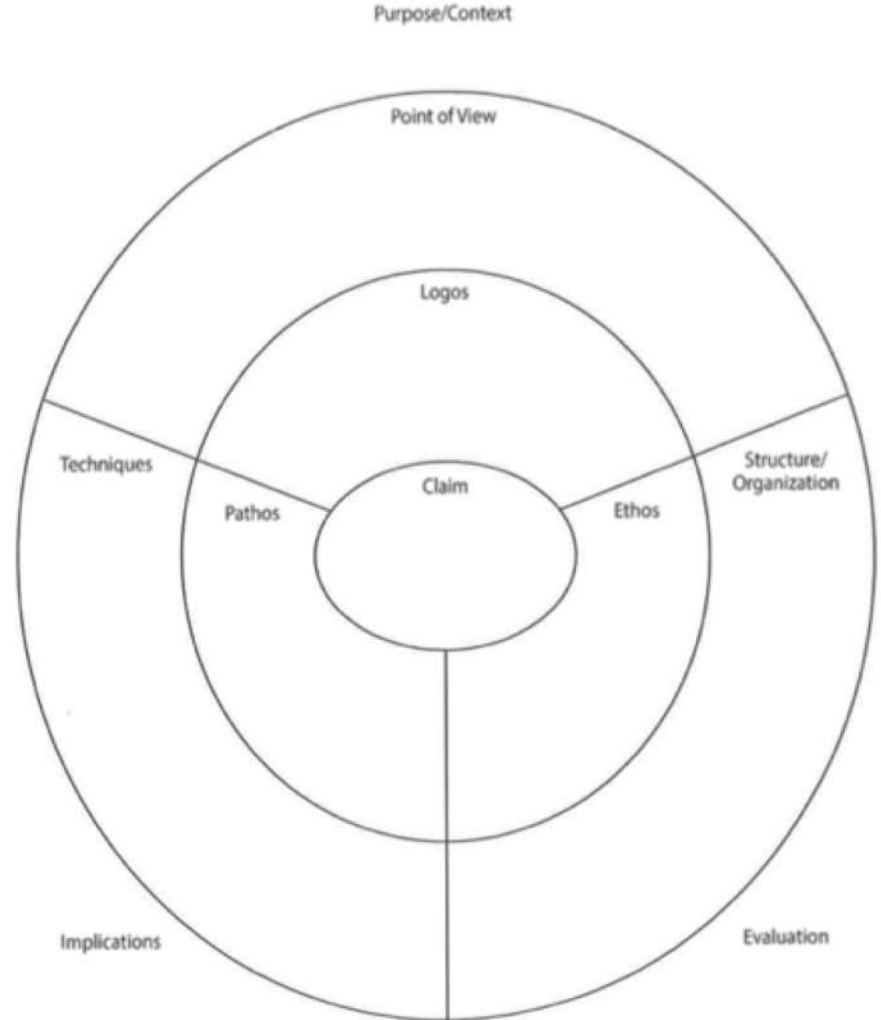
Elie Wiesel “The Perils of Indifference”

- A survivor of the holocaust, Wiesel (1928-2016) was held in the Auschwitz, Buna, and Buchenwald concentration camp.
- Wiesel is most notable for his memoir, *Night*.
- Nobel Peace Prize recipient (1986)



Rhetorical Analysis

- What is the historical context?
- What is Wiesel's purpose?
- What is his main claim?
- What are Wiesel's assumptions?
- What are his main points (*logos*)?
- How does Wiesel develop emotional appeals (*pathos*)?
- Is Wiesel credible and trustworthy (*ethos*)?
- What are the implications/consequences of this document?
- How effective is he in supporting his claim?
- [Example](#)



How I've incorporate these:

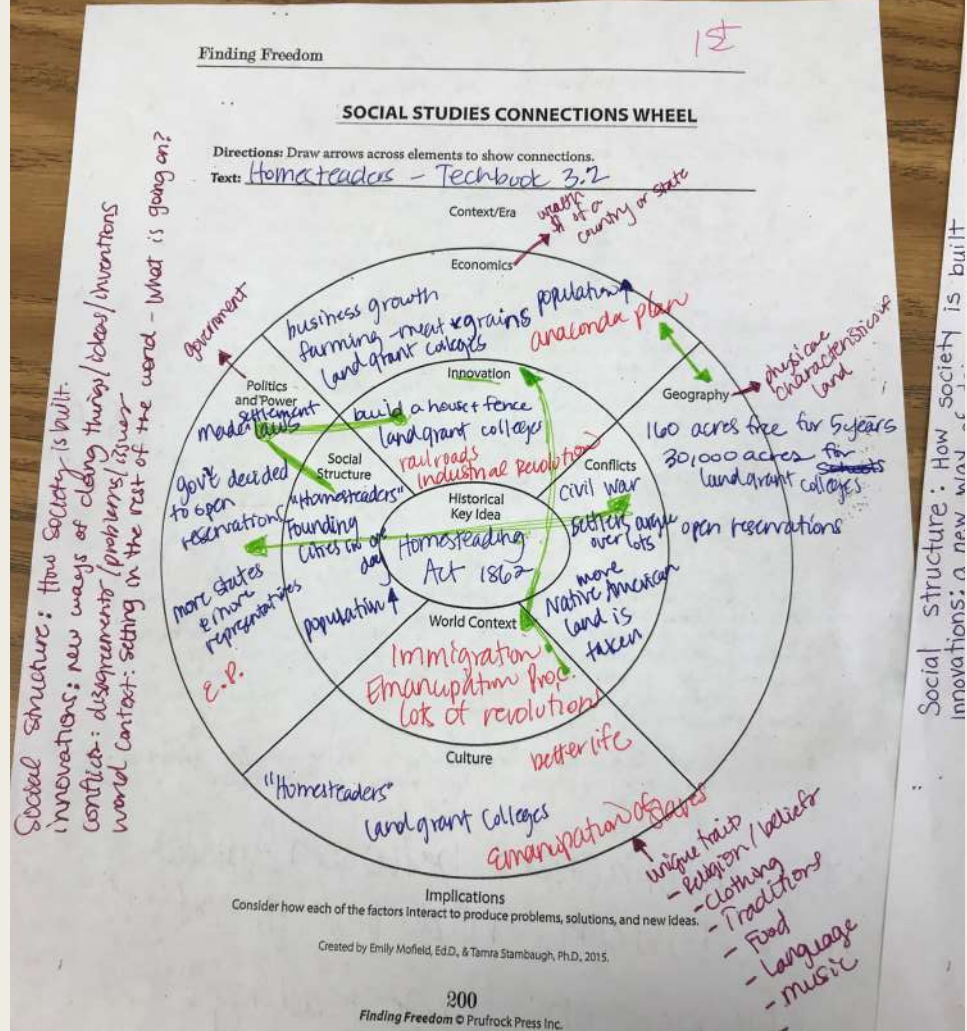
Add to an existing reading



- Topic: US History, Westward Expansion (1877-1920s)
- Read the [document from the Techbook](#)
 - *The interaction(s) between which two elements had the greatest influence on the success/failure of homesteading?*
 - *The interaction(s) between which two elements had the most far reaching implications after the act was implemented?*

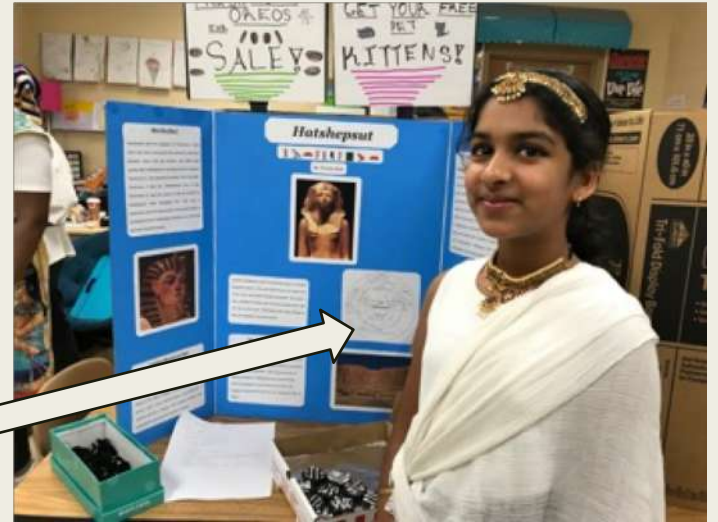
With an already scheduled reading

- 1st: vocabulary review
- 2nd: read silently & annotate, read together and fill in wheel.
- 3rd: change color and add other background knowledge that applies
- 4th: ask a big question and talk about the interactions and their significance
- 5th: pick one arrow that is “most significant” and write about why.





Add to an existing project



To frame a presentation and/or focus research

TEACHER EXAMPLE Topic Assignment Sheet

American Revolution

What changes are most important to (define) this piece of Tennessee History? How did the Battle of Kings Mountain affect Tennessee's creation?

Revolution?
1775-1783

Who were they fighting over?
British soldiers + Tories vs. American Patriots
American freedom from English rule.

Why was the Battle of Kings Mountain important?
Overmountain men joined up from British + Tories from proceeding North

September of 1780 (middle of war)

- Who was fighting? What were they fighting over?
Same as above - To keep Britain + Tories South of the mountains.
- How were Tennesseans involved?
The overmountain men + longhunters joined up w/ the militia to win the battle.
- Who were the Overmountain Men? Where did they come from?
John Sevier, William Campbell + volunteer soldiers from TN, KY
- Why was the Battle of King's Mountain important to the American Revolution?
The Patriot victory at Kings Mountain marked a turning point in the war.
- Why does any or all of this matter to Tennessee History?
Our Overmountain men made the difference in the battle, and it was fought on what is now part of Tennessee's land.

Big Research Question: What changes are most important to this piece of Tennessee History? How did these changes effect Tennessee's creation?

Resources:

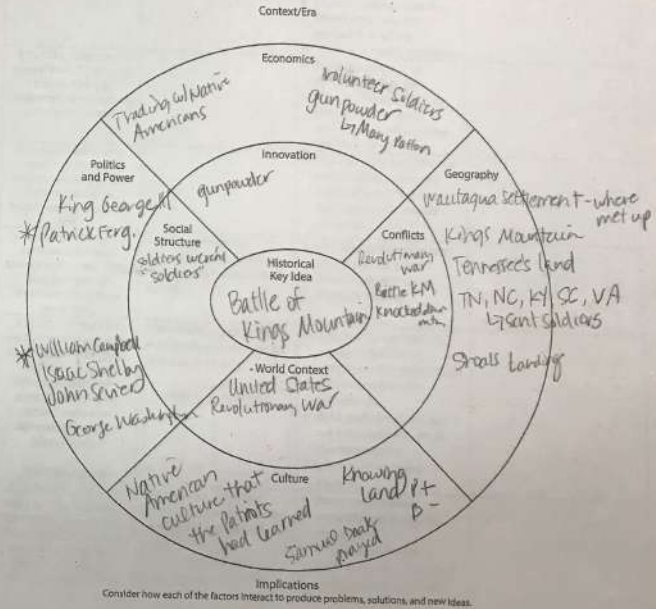
- Whole Nations Melt Away
- Textbook
- History.com
- "The Battle of Kings Mountain and the Overmountain Men" by Dennis Discus
- "The Overmountain Men Battle for the Carolines" by Thomas B. Allen



Finding Freedom

BLANK SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTIONS WHEEL

Directions: Draw arrows across elements to show connections.
Text: VARIOUS



What I've learned when **planning** with teachers:

What I've learned when planning with teachers:

- Start with what they love (what, how, traditions, etc.) about teaching the specific content. **Honor that.**
- Ask about time frame for teaching—how long, when, etc. Stay ahead!
- Offer a variety of ways/areas to differentiate: Add to an existing reading, Add to an existing project, Offer to model, Offer to come in and co-teach
- Create some planning templates to hold yourself and them accountable in a kind way.
- Administrator relationship & impact

Practice: Adding Complexity to an existing project

1. Construct a timeline of 10 significant events from 1914-1945.
2. A brown paper bag report: Students read a work where the setting is the Great Depression. Carefully select five items that represent your book tying to the great depression.
3. Supplementing a teacher who is helping students prepare for National History Day competitions.
4. A research paper (biography) about an influential person in history from World War II.
5. A teach the class assignment on ancient Egypt.

Questions, Share out, Reflection, Feedback



VANDERBILT PROGRAMS FOR TALENTED YOUTH

Developing talent in gifted students and those who work with them

Stephanie Clemson, M.Ed.

Stephanie.Clemson@mnps.org

Eric L. Fecht, Ed.D.

Eric.l.fecht@vanderbilt.edu

