

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

THE DOCUMENTED DETECTIVE

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The Documented Detective

Lesson 6 of Civic Engagement Program

Skill Level

Intermediate (6th-8th grades)

Educational Standards Supported

8.W.RBPK.7 and 8.W.RBPK.9
7.W.RBPK.7 and 7.W.RBPK.9
6.W.RBPK.7 and 6.W.RBPK.9

Learner Outcomes

The learner will be able to:

- Understand the difference between reliable and unreliable sources (including examples of each)
- Explore community, city, and/or county history to identify people and/or products that have created influence/impact
- Understand more about their community, city and/or county
- Understand the importance of setting goals and developing action plans
- Understand that anyone can be an influencer and create impact
- Learn APA Citation (optional)

Tag(s)

4-H Citizenship

Time Needed

Ideally one week or more to allow adequate time for research; It can, however, be broken up into smaller lessons

Materials Needed

- Copies of handouts
- Copies of “The Reliability Relay Race” cards on cardstock and cut; You will need one set per team
- Two (2) shoeboxes for each relay team; Labeled – see instructions for details

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Introduction to Content

The purpose of this lesson is to teach appropriate research methodologies for students to learn how to use appropriate sources in conducting historical research. Students will research – using reliable sources - someone local (a trailblazer) or a product, idea, movement, etc., native to their own community, city or county that has made a path and influenced change or culture in some form. Students will research, not only the impact on their community, city or county, but how it has also influenced their lives. Finally, students will explore ideas that they have for making a difference. They will develop action steps they need to take to make it happen in their own community and the potential outcomes.

Teacher Talk

1. You are encouraged to read about the history of the MoonPie® just in case the video link does not work. This way you can tell the story.
2. Make copies of “The Reliable Relay Race” cards in advance on cardstock for durability purposes.
3. Be sure that you read the game instructions ahead of time and have gathered all the materials needed.
4. Make copies of the three handouts in advance.
5. Consider – if you have older students – to work in APA citation as a potential learning objective.

Setting the Stage/Opening Question

Ask, "What do you get when you put marshmallow in between two, soft dipped graham crackers and cover it in chocolate?" (Pause for responses). "Yep! You guessed it -- a MoonPie®!"

Ask, "Did you know that MoonPies® were created right here in Tennessee? The story of how the MoonPie® came to be is an interesting one.

Say, "Let's learn more in this short video."

Show [youtube.com/watch?v=L1zC-fIt-Bo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1zC-fIt-Bo)

After the video has finished, say, "The MoonPie® is just

Tennessee. But there are many, many others. These products and people made our state what it is today from government to education to business. Can you think of others?" (Pause for responses).

Say, "Every county in Tennessee is famous for someone or something. What is your county, city or community known for? I'm hiring each one of you as a 'documented detective' to solve a mystery. Your job - as a detective -- is to research your community, city, or county to find products and people that influenced where you live."

Continue, "There are six (6) steps in conducting research."

1. Choosing & Narrowing a Topic
2. Searching for Reliable Sources
3. Taking Notes & Citing Sources
4. Creating an Outline
5. Planning, Thinking and Writing
6. Creating Alternative Products

Say, "Today, we are focusing on the second one - searching for reliable sources. Let's talk about this for a moment."

Ask - "What is a source?" (Pause for responses; Consider responses that include something to the effect of a place, person, or thing from which something comes or can be obtained; One that initiates or is the point of origin of the information.*)

Ask - "What does 'reliable' source mean?" (Pause for responses. Consider responses that include something to the effect of one where you can trust the information that the source provides; thorough, well-reasoned theory, argument, etc. based on strong evidence*.)

Strategies to Increase Student Engagement

Everyone likes to eat! Why not make MoonPie's cousin - the S'more to get your students excited to learn?

The history of the s'more is a delicious one, too. S'mores have been around since the 19th century, and they're everyone's favorite camping staple.

And even though they are technically older than the Mallomar (1913) and MoonPie (1917), the official recipe called "Some Mores" didn't appear until 1927 in a *Girl Scout Handbook*.

MoonPies and Mallomars both have the same ingredients as s'mores: chocolate, marshmallow, and graham cracker.

Ask, “Let’s say you found a source that was deemed ‘unreliable’ what does that mean?” (Pause for responses. Sources are unreliable when (i) the author doesn’t have authority to write on the topic, (ii) the source contains plagiarized or uncited information, or (iii) the source contains inaccurate or false information.)

Ask, “What is the difference between a reliable source and an unreliable source?” (Pause for responses: When you can rely on something, you can count on it, trust it and know that it is correct. On the other hand, you’d better not count on unreliability because it means that someone is dishonest, always late, bad at their job, or just inconsistent. Things can be unreliable because they’re broken or old.)

Ask, “Can you give me examples of a reliable source?” (Pause for responses: Consider responses that allude to the following: (1) Encyclopedias; (2) Textbooks; (3) Websites ending with .edu or .org domains; (4) News sources with first-hand reporting; (5) Research-based magazines like Popular Science or National Geographic; (6) People with first-hand knowledge or experience; (7) Scholarly, peer-reviewed articles and books; or (8) Trade or professional articles or books*)

Ask, “Can you give me examples of unreliable sources?” (Pause for responses: Consider responses that allude to the following: (1) social media blogs; (2) Facebook posts, or other self-authored sites; (3) research articles without citations; (4) materials published over 15 years ago or have theories that are out of date; or (5) individual or business websites)

Experience

This lesson is divided into three (3) activities.

ACTIVITY #1 – The Reliability Relay

Say: “Let’s brainstorm! You have been assigned to be a ‘Documented or Historical Detective’ and research your community, city or county to discover the people or products that brought about social change, improvements, etc. Your research will need to be reliable to successfully complete this task. We have already discussed the type of resources that you might find helpful in this assignment. Let’s name a few!” (Pause for responses).

Say: “A relay has been set up to test your knowledge! Here’s how the relay is played.” **Note:** Summarize the steps included in the “Teacher Notes” below.

(Teacher Notes:) The first activity is a relay. You will need to create two pathways. Be sure that you have clearly marked the beginning of the line and the ending of the line so that all can easily see and understand. Divide your students into two groups. They should stand in a line behind the beginning line. At the ending line, place the “Source” cards face down in a pile. There should be two piles of cards, one for each line. There should also be two shoeboxes, two for each line. Be sure that you have clearly marked one shoe box with the word “Reliable” and the other with the word “Unreliable.”

Depending on the number of students you have, it may be important to have more than one copy of the cards in each line. You also can make more than two lines (just make sure that you have enough supplies for each line). If your group number is small, you can have all the students work together in one line and set a time limit for completion.

When you say “GO!” the first students in both lines should run to the ending line and pick up a source card. They read the card and then decide if the source is reliable or unreliable. They place the card in the correlating shoe box. They then run back to the beginning of the line. Once they have crossed the beginning line, the next person may run. The process is completed when one team works through all the source cards in the pile.

You will then want to work through each box. Did they get the source cards placed in the correct box? If not, review with them why that source was considered reliable or not.

ACTIVITY #2: The Documented Detective and Product Spotlight

Say: “Now that we understand what a reliable source is, let’s practice using them. Earlier in this lesson we watched a video and learned about the history of the MoonPie®. I think we would all agree that MoonPie® has been influential for not only Chattanooga and Hamilton County but for the state of Tennessee. This is a huge product that has changed a lot of lives. Not all influences, people and/or products have resulted in such a big way, and yet they are still very impactful. Every county, every city, and every community in Tennessee has someone or something that has impacted their area. As “The Documented Detective,” it is now your turn to figure out who or what that is!”

1. Make and distribute copies of “The Documented Detective” and “Product Spotlight.” Please note: this document is an interactive PDF and may be used electronically or printed off. Have your students research impactful events, laws, policies, ideas products, activities, people, etc. that have come from their respective community, city and/or county using reliable sources such as the Chamber of Commerce website or local, public library.

NOTE: A product does not have to be a tangible object (like MoonPie®, for example). It can be an idea, a movement, a policy, a law, an office, an inspiration, etc. They may find one or the other, or both, in some instances. They should complete the forms and note their reliable sources. Please note: This project may take some time to work through. Consider using it as a long-term project.

2. Reach out beyond your own county. Consider assigning students to different counties in Tennessee. After the research, have them create a one-page document, poster, small display, etc. Set up a large display of the state with

an outline of the counties. Showcase what unique things/people, etc. come from each county.

3. Go a step further with older students: There are several APA citation sites that can be used to automatically generate formal APA citation. This can be used to help students learn that (1) different sources are cited in different ways; and (2) what information one needs to gather to effectively cite a source.

ACTIVITY #3: What Will Be Your Place in the Social Media Spotlight?

Say, "We have had the chance to learn about some of the people, events, ideas, policies, laws, activities, products, etc. that have made our city, county, and community what they are today. Do you have an idea, invention or inspiration that you hope to share with others? Maybe you have an idea for a "MoonPie" of your own! Have you thought about what the result might be to your city, community or county? Could it be bigger and impact the country or world? Let's pretend that it is 50 years down the road."

In 50 years, a student is doing this exact research project and your name comes up! Complete the "What Will Be Your Place in the Social Media Spotlight?" to predict your influence! Make and distribute copies of "What Will Be Your Place in the Social Media Spotlight?" Have each student answer the questions.

Please note - This document is an interactive PDF and may be used electronically or printed off.

Share/Process

1. Ask each student to share what has been learned either formally or informally from “The Documented Detective” and “Product Spotlight” research projects. You might consider setting up a bulletin board or display board to showcase the rich heritage of your community, city and/or county.

Notes

2. Let’s engage in discussion using the following prompts:

- a. Which person or product did you find to be the most influential? Why?
- b. Describe how you think our lives might be today without that person or product?

Generalize

Ask the following questions:

1. How has this person or product inspired you?
2. How has this person or product inspired others? In other words, what has resulted because of this work?
3. How important is the size/impact of the result? In other words, if it just makes a difference in the lives of just a few people, is it really important?
4. In referencing works cited, is a Wikipedia article a reliable resource? **NO.**

Apply

Let’s engage in discussion using the following prompts:

1. Encourage students to share their “What Will Be Your Place in the Social Media Spotlight?” information.
2. What kind of change/influence do they see their actions having on their community, city or county as a result of these efforts.
3. Could it potentially be a larger influence?
4. The students have identified actions steps that they will need to take to make these efforts a reality. Do they have action steps for their other goals in life? Why or why not? In what other areas of their life do they need action steps to help achieve goals?

How could a 4-H member add this activity to their e-portfolio? Where would it best fit on the portfolio forms? Was there a true impact that the 4-H'er can add to their portfolio?

Section C: Citizenship

1. This research project can be written as a goal.
2. It may be included in the Project Citizenship section, if it relates to the main project (i.e. MoonPies® - Food Science or Nutrition/Health and Fitness 4-H projects).
3. Government - if the person researched or the product researched resulted in a change or influence to Tennessee or U.S. history, governmental policies, etc.
4. World - if the person researched or the product researched resulted in a change or influence to history, governmental policies, etc.
5. Family and Friends - if a personal interview was conducted
6. Community - if, as a result of this activity, a community effort resulted (i.e. set up display for public to see, etc.)

TIPPS
Life Skills

Head - Thinking

Heart - Relating, Caring

Hands - Working

Health - Being

Supplemental Information - *Educational Standards Met*

Writing

8W.RBPK.7 Conduct research to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on multiple sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

8.W.RBPK.9 Support interpretations, analyses, reflections, or research with evidence found in literature or informational texts, applying grade 8 standards for reading; assess whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims and recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

7W.RBPK.7 Conduct research to answer a question, drawing on multiple sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

7.W.RBPK.9 Support interpretations, analyses, reflections, or research with evidence found in literature or informational texts, applying grade 7 standards for reading; assess whether the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

6W.RBPK.7 Conduct research to answer a question, drawing on multiple sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate.

6.W.RBPK.9 Support interpretations, analyses, reflections, or research with evidence found in literature or informational texts, applying grade 6 standards for reading.

References

- Kentucky Virtual Library: kyvl.org/howtoresearch
- Merriam-Webster Dictionary:
merriamwebster.com
- Stevenson University: [.stevenson.edu/online/about-us/news/how-to-identify-reliable-information/](http://stevenson.edu/online/about-us/news/how-to-identify-reliable-information/)
- Grand Valley State University:
help.library.gvsu.edu/knowledgemarket/faq/270397
- Henry Buhl Libraries: hbl.gcc.libguides.com/research/credible
- WBIR News

The Documented Detective

Date of birth:

Date of death:

Place of birth:

Place of death:

List one interesting fact you learned:

Please write a short description of this historical figure's life:

What was this person's contribution to society? Community?

List one thing that you learned that inspired you:

What source(s) did you use?

PRODUCT Spotlight



Date of invention\development, start of production, etc...

Name of the producer, inventor, etc...

Please write a short description about the history:

Is this something that is still manufactured? Used? How has it evolved over time?

List one thing that you learned that inspired you:

What source(s) did you use?

What Will Be Your Place in the SOCIAL MEDIA Spotlight?



From your research, you have learned that some members of your community have played a very important role. Some have created important products. Others have achieved success in the world of politics, education, entertainment, social humanities and other philanthropies and services. What will be your shining moment?

Let's fast-forward 50 years!
What do you hope to achieve?
What do you hope people will write about you someday?

What do you hope people will write about your life:

What do you hope is your contribution to society? Community?

How do you plan to achieve this?

**Library of
Congress**

**PBS Newshour
Classroom**

**Diaries and
Journals**

**Handwritten
Letters**

**Local Archivist
or Historian**

**Historical
Artifacts**

**Chamber of
Commerce**

**Local Historical
Society**

**Personal
Interview with
an Expert**

**Smithsonian
Institute**

**National
Archives**

Google Scholar

Instagram

**Reality
Television**

**Websites
Ending in .org**

**The National
Enquirer
Magazine**

**Soap Opera
Digest Magazine**

**Current
Academic
Journal Articles
with Citations**

Wikipedia

**Materials
Published More
than 15 Years
Ago**

**Websites
Ending in .edu**

**Websites
Ending in .gov**

Blogs

Social Media

Local Library

**Historical
Newspapers**

**Personal
Interview with
a Relative or
Long-Time
Resident**

**Court House or
Court Records**

Maps

Property Deeds



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