

Expressions of the Past

[A Joy2Learn Professional Development Mini-workshop](#)

Alignment to the C3 Framework and Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies

The Joy2Learn professional development, *Expressions of the Past: Using the Arts as Historical Evidence in Middle School Social Studies*, aligns with the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards and the Common Core State Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Grades 6-8. It strengthens inquiry, source analysis, corroboration, evidence use, and historical argumentation through cultural and traditional historical sources. The session centers on the inquiry routine OBSERVE → QUESTION → INVESTIGATE → EXPLAIN. Participants analyze Gregory Hines as a cultural source, generate historical questions, add a LaVaughn Robinson oral-history source, contextualize and corroborate across sources, and construct an evidence-based explanation. The routine is designed to transfer to other middle school units and source sets.

C3 Framework Alignment

The strongest connections are to the C3 Inquiry Arc: Developing questions, applying historical disciplinary concepts, evaluating and using evidence, and communicating conclusions. The session particularly supports these Grades 6-8 indicators:

C3 Indicator	Focus	Connection to Expressions PD
D1.1.6-8	Compelling questions	QUESTION moves students from observations to historically meaningful questions that can guide investigation.
D2.His.10.6-8	Limits of the historical record	Students identify what a cultural source can establish, what it cannot establish, and what additional evidence is needed.
D2.His.11.6-8	Multiple factors and perspectives	INVESTIGATE asks students to place sources in context and consider community, experience, and perspective.
D2.His.12.6-8	Evidence and source distinctions	Students distinguish what a source directly shows or says from the

		inferences and interpretations they construct.
D2.His.13.6-8	Evaluate evidence	Students compare evidence across sources and consider how additional evidence strengthens, complicates, or revises an explanation.
D2.His.16.6-8	Historical argumentation	EXPLAIN requires students to organize relevant evidence into a coherent claim about the past.
D3.1.6-8	Gather and evaluate sources	INVESTIGATE adds contextual and corroborating sources and considers their origin, context, and corroborative value.
D3.3.6-8	Identify evidence	Students identify evidence that supports claims while noting gaps and uncertainty.
D4.1.6-8	Construct arguments	Students communicate evidence-based historical explanations using claims, evidence, and reasoning.

Common Core Literacy Alignment

The session also supports the Common Core literacy standards for history/social studies by asking students to analyze sources, integrate information across media, compare accounts, conduct short inquiry, and support claims with evidence.

CCSS Standard	Focus	Connection to Expressions PD
RH.6-8.1	Evidence from sources	Students cite specific evidence from cultural, oral-history, primary, and secondary sources to support analysis.
RH.6-8.2	Central ideas and accurate summary	OBSERVE helps students attend to what a source communicates before adding prior knowledge or interpretation.
RH.6-8.6	Point of view and purpose	Students consider perspective, context, and the limits of what an individual source can reveal.

RH.6-8.7	Integrate visual and multimedia information	Students analyze dance and video as historical evidence and integrate that evidence with oral-history and other print or digital sources.
RH.6-8.8	Fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment	The routine explicitly distinguishes observation and source evidence from inference and interpretation.
RH.6-8.9	Relationships among sources	INVESTIGATE asks students to corroborate sources, identify what one source adds to another, and note where accounts complicate understanding.
WHST.6-8.1	Argument writing	EXPLAIN supports discipline-specific claims grounded in logical reasoning and relevant evidence.
WHST.6-8.7	Short research projects	Students pursue questions by gathering and examining multiple sources and generating additional questions.
WHST.6-8.8	Gather relevant information	Students use multiple sources and consider credibility, context, and relevance as part of historical investigation.
WHST.6-8.9	Evidence for analysis and research	Students draw evidence from informational and historical sources to support analysis, reflection, and explanation.

Classroom Transfer

The tap-dance example models a process for historical inquiry rather than prescribing specific historical content. Teachers can transfer the routine to the eras, cultures, events, and issues in their own middle school scope and sequence. A teacher might pair a song, artwork, performance, photograph, artifact, or other cultural source with one or more written, visual, or oral-history sources and ask students to move through:

OBSERVE → QUESTION → INVESTIGATE → EXPLAIN

Assessment Evidence

Standards-aligned evidence of learning may include students' ability to:

- Observe relevant source details accurately;
- Generate historically meaningful questions;
- Distinguish evidence from inference or interpretation;
- Use context and multiple sources to deepen or revise understanding;
- Corroborate and compare sources;
- Construct an explanation supported by relevant evidence and reasoning; and
- Identify what remains uncertain or what additional evidence is needed.

Reference Frameworks

- National Council for the Social Studies. College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards: Guidance for Enhancing the Rigor of K-12 Civics, Economics, Geography, and History.
- Common Core State Standards Initiative. Literacy in History/Social Studies, Grades 6-8 (RH.6-8) and Writing in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects, Grades 6-8 (WHST.6-8).
- Joy2Learn. Expressions of the Past: Using the Arts as Historical Evidence in Middle School Social Studies.