

The Great War and the impact on youth

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Overview:

Primary source documents provide unique opportunities from the past to be explored. The diary entries from three young people who lived during the Great War in this activity will provide a richer and descriptive view of the past that can not be reproduced in any history textbooks.

Students will begin to see history as daily life as seen from the pen of the authors of these diaries.

This assignment allows the student to examine documents (diaries) of three young people during the Great War and how their lives were impacted and changed during this time in history.

As the student reads the excerpts from the different diaries they will observe the social, emotional and physical changes these young people go through. Some of the entries show a traumatic setting while other entries are light.

The students will view and read these primary documents to extract factual information about the lives of the writers. Plus, they will visit a web site where they will encounter an American girl living during the same time period and how her life is just the opposite of the two European young people.

Work on this project will be done in small groups, the students can analyze and discuss the diary excerpts and see how the young writers express their feelings and the impact to their personal situation during this time frame. Later in the activity they will visit the web site for the American girl and observe how carefree her life is except for an entry about a past boyfriend involved in the war.

The diary entries come from *Intimate Voices, From The First World War* (Chapter 3) edited by Svetlana Palmer and Sarah Wallis. The web site used is

<http://escrapbooking.com/louise/connections.htm#6>

Activities:

The students will respond to these writing prompts after they read the excerpts from the (European young people) diaries. On a worksheet these questions will appear for the three subjects the student will encounter.

- 1) What do you see as the most difficult times in these young people's lives?
- 2) Think about the difficult times these young people (European) are going through, what their feelings are like. Also look at the American girl and see her concerns.

- 3) How do you think they coped with the memories (personal)? To put into perspective think about your own life and recall a particular time that was difficult for you, how did you handle these feels and relate them to the situation.
- 4) Reflecting back how do you believe these young writers coped with these events (political).
- 5) Do you believe these young writers had a normal life after the Great War again? Explain why or why not for each of the three subjects

Assessment:

Students will be evaluated, based upon their interpretation of the source diary documents, their extraction of information written on these diary entries and express response in their own words.

Students should have a historical understanding of these events and analyze the influences these events had on the young writers' lives. Students should be able to understand these events and see these past events affected the young writers' private lives and society in general.

Directions:

Read the following diary entries and answer questions about the documents (see questions 1-5 above) plus consider the following questions as the student reads the excerpts.

- 1) What does the existence of this diary say about the author who created it?
- 2) What does the document say about the Frenchmen and German lives in this era?

Procedures:

Provide each group with a set of the diary excerpts and have the student read

- 1) Piete Kuhr's diary entries and answer the questions above from her perspective.(page 44-53, 60-64)
- 2) write a diary from Piete's perspective
- 3) Analyze the family photo on the National archives photo worksheet

- 4) Yves Congar is a young Frenchman also living during this time read the diary entries and answer the questions above from her perspective.(page 53-61)
- 5) go to this web site

<http://escrapbooking.com/louise/connections.htm#6>

Scroll down and read World War I section of this site, also read Louise's diary entries. As you scroll this website observe her comments and lifestyle as compared to Piete and Yves.

- 1) While reading the diary entries of Louise B. Hancock an American girl. Does she have the same concerns as Piete and Yves. What are her concerns how is her life affected by the Great War?
- 2) Define the impact you notice in these 3 peoples lives
- 3) Interpret their writings and be emphatic about each situation encountered
- 4) Translate it into your own words how their lives story have impacted your understanding of this era in world history. Make it memorable.
- 5) Apply what if you have just experienced and relate the principle of the stories to your own life