

National History Day

is a yearlong program engaging over 500,000 students in research, writing, interpretation, and the presentation of history based projects at a district, state, and national level. Each year thousands of Oklahoma students actively become young historians through the program. Here is one example of how you can participate!

Activity: Finding the Facts

Suggested Grades

6-12

Overview

Historians use primary and secondary sources to interpret the past. Primary sources are items from the time of an event. This can be a letter, diary, newspaper article, photograph, piece of music, and more. Historians use as many sources as possible to create the best interpretation. Sometimes sources do not always see an event from the same perspective.

Objectives

Through sources, historians have the chance to see what the past looked like using the words of people who witnessed events. This activity will help students compare different perspectives.

Time Needed

Time to read the short reports. Time for the student to write a short description of the event.

Materials Needed

Access to library/internet resources for research

Instructions

- 1 Have your students visit: <http://moa.library.cornell.edu/>. We will use this website to access *The Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*.
- 2 Have students click browse. Once they do, students will have access to journals, monographs, and Civil War documents.
- 3 Have students select Browse Civil War Documents. Once they have done so have them Search the Civil War Documents for a specific battle such as the Battle of Honey Springs, July 17, 1863 in the Indian Territory.
- 4 *The Official Records* contains the reports of both Union and Confederate officers. Have students read several entries from each side of the engagement.
- 5 Have students answer the following questions: How did each individual describe the event? Did all of the writers tell the same story? How were the descriptions different? How were they the same?
- 6 Have students use the written accounts of the soldiers to write their own short history of the battle citing the reports of individual officers.

Additional Information

If you would like to find out more about National History Day in Oklahoma you can contact us at 405-522-3602 or visit www.okhistory.org/historyday.