

Becoming a Historian

Course Overview\Course Teaching Methods

Becoming a Historian helps teachers identify strategies for interpreting, contextualizing, and sourcing, which they can then use with their students. This is a practical course: what you learn here applies directly to your teaching. The content is based on actual student activities, so whatever participants learn they can easily turn around and assign the same documents and scaffolding questions to their students.

Delivered over six weeks, each week features a different aspect of interpretive skill building:

- **Week 1:** Interpreting Meanings in Primary Sources
- **Week 2:** Contextualizing: Setting Sources in Historical Context
- **Week 3:** Source Reliability: Judging How Dependable a Source Is as Evidence
- **Week 4:** Corroboration: Interpreting Multiple Sources
- **Week 5:** Determining a Source's Point of View
- **Week 6:** The Special Challenges of Using Visual Sources

Each week includes a written introduction and narrated PowerPoint slideshow, a warm-up activity, a theoretical reading, discussion questions for the online forum, and a practical activity which asks participants to follow the procedures of a lesson as if they were one of their students going through the process of analyzing a primary source.

Teaching Resources



Teaching Methods

This course meets online for six weeks. There is not a designated meeting time and work may be done at participants' convenience; however there are specific deadlines that must be met. Students will be evaluated primarily based on their participation in the discussion forum. Those students requesting graduate credit will also need to

complete a 2-3 page paper with strategies for how they plan to integrate primary sources into their curriculum.

Prerequisites for Graduate Credit

To be eligible for graduate credit, participants must have earned a minimum of a B.A. or a B.S. degree from an accredited college or university. All participants must have a computer with Internet access for the duration of the course. It is the responsibility of the participant to contact the instructor as soon as possible about technical difficulties that may arise during the course and to make reasonable accommodations.