

# 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Pre-AP US History Video Rationales

---

## **Colonial House: A New World/Harsh Reality (Episode One) PBS (2004)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *Colonial House: A New World/Harsh Reality* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

*Colonial House* is a documentary series of eight episodes that tracks modern day people as they try to live as the American colonists did in the 1600s. In documentary style they explain what life was like for the first settlers in America, and then the viewers watch as modern day people try to recreate life in the 1600s. It allows students to see firsthand what settlement was like since there was no way to document the time period through film.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

As we watch this short episode, we will discuss the truths and struggles of settlements in the new world, along with the historical skills that are being employed to deduce fact from fiction. Students will compare what they watch to the notes they've taken in class and firsthand accounts we've read.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.SP1.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- 8.SP1.2 Classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- 8.SP1.3 Evaluate the significance of past events and their effect on students' lives and society.
- 8.SP1.4 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are historically significant.
- 8.SP2.1 Analyze multiple factors that influence the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- 8.SP2.2 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- 8.SP2.3 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- 8.SP3.1 Create and answer compelling and supporting questions that reflect enduring issues in the field of history and social science.
- 8.G2.2 Evaluate how political, social, and economic decisions throughout time have influenced cultural and environmental characteristics of various places and regions.
- 8.H3.3 Compare how individual rights, freedoms, and responsibilities have evolved over time around the world.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: Death, reference to cannibalism, starvation, slavery, some mild language.

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than

compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns. Students will be advised before scenes that might be upsetting to them.

## **The Crossing, A&E (2000)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *The Crossing* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

*The Crossing* chronicles the most famous turning point in the American Revolution, the Battle of Trenton and the risky crossing of the Delaware River in December. The film begins with the sorry state of the American soldiers before the battle and the all or nothing attitude of George Washington when planning this attack. The film ends after the battle and the repercussions and lasting effects of the battle on the American cause are revealed.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

Students will take notes during the film on the significance of the Battle of Trenton and compare it to lecture notes and primary documents read in class.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.SP1.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- 8.SP1.2 Classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- 8.SP1.3 Evaluate the significance of past events and their effect on students' lives and society.
- 8.SP1.4 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are historically significant.
- 8.SP2.1 Analyze multiple factors that influence the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- 8.SP2.2 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- 8.SP2.3 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- 8.SP3.1 Create and answer compelling and supporting questions that reflect enduring issues in the field of history and social science.
- 8.H2.1 Explain how different beliefs about the government's role in social and economic life have affected political debates and policies in the United States.
- 8.H2.2 Investigate how conflict can be both unifying and divisive both domestically and internationally.
- 8.H3.3 Compare how individual rights, freedoms, and responsibilities have evolved over time around the world.
- 8.C4.1 Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies to promote the common good.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: War violence, death, some language

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns. Students will be advised

before scenes that might be upsetting to them and allowed to leave the room or look away. Battle scenes are somewhat violent and students will be warned before those scenes, but it is important to the class material for students to understand the reality of war.

## **Fort Knox: Secrets Revealed, The History Channel (2007)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *Fort Knox: Secrets Revealed* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

*Fort Knox: Secrets Revealed* is a documentary that focuses on the secrecy of the Fort Knox military base gold depository. It goes over the history of having it built and moving the nation's gold to the depository. It also speculates on the security measures that might be in place to protect the side.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

As we watch this episode, students will take notes. The film connects both the history standards of the time period as well as the economic standards of the national bank and the gold standard for our currency. Students will then speculate as to which security measures they believe might actually be in place.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.SP1.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- 8.SP1.2 Classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- 8.SP1.3 Evaluate the significance of past events and their effect on students' lives and society.
- 8.SP1.4 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are historically significant.
- 8.SP2.1 Analyze multiple factors that influence the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- 8.SP2.2 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- 8.SP2.3 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- 8.SP3.1 Create and answer compelling and supporting questions that reflect enduring issues in the field of history and social science.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: none

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns.

## **April 1865: The Month That Saved America, The History Channel (2003)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *April 1865: The Month That Saved America* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

*April 1865: The Month That Saved America* is a documentary that focuses on the final month of the Civil War. Many decisive battles were fought and Lincoln was assassinated during that final month of the war. The decisions and events that took place during that month would determine the eventual outcome of the war and the aftermath.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

As we watch this episode, students will take notes on the major decisions and events that took place during this final month of the war. They will then compare it to notes taken in class and primary and secondary documents examined in class.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.SP1.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- 8.SP1.2 Classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- 8.SP1.3 Evaluate the significance of past events and their effect on students' lives and society.
- 8.SP1.4 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are historically significant.
- 8.SP2.1 Analyze multiple factors that influence the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- 8.SP2.2 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- 8.SP2.3 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- 8.SP3.1 Create and answer compelling and supporting questions that reflect enduring issues in the field of history and social science.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: death, war violence

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns. Students will be advised before scenes that might be upsetting to them. War scenes can be somewhat violent and students will be warned before scenes that might upset them, but it is essential material to learning about the Civil War.

## **Unsolved History Season 2 - Episode 10: JFK Conspiracy, Discovery Channel (2008)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *Unsolved History Season 2 - Episode 10: JFK Conspiracy* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

*Unsolved History Season 2 - Episode 10: JFK Conspiracy* is a documentary that focuses on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. There are many theories as to how and why he was killed in 1963. This episode reenacts the assassination and tries out different conspiracy theories to see if they are viable or not. It also goes through the history of the entire day of the assassination.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

As we watch this episode, students will take notes and compare it to lecture notes given in class and primary and secondary documents read. They will then make their own conclusions as to what they think happened to President Kennedy.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.SP1.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- 8.SP1.2 Classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- 8.SP1.3 Evaluate the significance of past events and their effect on students' lives and society.
- 8.SP1.4 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are historically significant.
- 8.SP2.1 Analyze multiple factors that influence the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- 8.SP2.2 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- 8.SP2.3 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- 8.SP3.1 Create and answer compelling and supporting questions that reflect enduring issues in the field of history and social science.
- 8.SP4.1 Explain the multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.
- 8.SP4.2 Evaluate the influence of various causes of events and developments in the past.
- 8.SP4.3 Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the multiple causes and effects of events and issues.
- 8.SP4.4 Compare the credibility, and authenticity of central arguments in secondary works of history on related topics in multiple media.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: assassination, death, violence associated with the president's death

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable

at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns. Students will be advised before scenes that might be upsetting to them. There are scenes of reenactment of the president's assassination that might be disturbing to some students, they may choose to look away or leave the room during those scenes.



## **30 Days: Minimum Wage Episode (2005)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *30 Days: Minimum Wage* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

Documentary filmmaker Morgan Spurlock spends 30 days trying to live off of minimum wage to prove how difficult it is to survive on a small amount of money. This episode of the documentary series will be a part of the personal finance unit during 4<sup>th</sup> quarter and will visualize for students the difficulty of surviving on a small amount of money and trying to pay their bills. It will hopefully be an inspiration to them in their future.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

As we watch this episode, students will take notes. They will then write a reflection on what they thought was the most difficult part of living on minimum wage and how they hope to avoid this lifestyle as an adult.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.E1.1 Analyze the relationship between education, income, and job opportunities.
- 8.E1.2 Analyze the relationship between interest rates, saving, and use of credit.
- 8.E1.3 Analyze the relationship between investment and return.
- 8.E1.4 Examine the factors that influence spending decisions.
- 8.E1.5 Create a budget and examine the benefits of budgeting
- 8.E1.6 Analyze the impact of debt on individuals.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: Some language, poverty, reference to drugs

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. This program is rated TV-MA. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns. Students will be advised before scenes that might be upsetting to them.

## **George W. Bush: The 9/11 Interview, National Geographic (2011)**

The History Department has carefully evaluated *George W. Bush: The 9/11 Interview* as a whole and deemed it worthy for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade history curriculum.

### **I. Plot Summary**

This documentary follows President George W. Bush during the terrorist attacks on 9/11/2001. It shows what it's like to be the Commander-in-Chief when the country is attacked. It also shows footage of the attacks and what the American people did and didn't know at the time.

### **II. Learning Objectives Based on Standards**

Students will take notes during the film on the significance of the 9/11 attacks and how it began the War on Terror and compare it to lecture notes and primary documents read in class.

### **III. Standards**

- 8.SP1.1 Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- 8.SP1.2 Classify a series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- 8.SP1.3 Evaluate the significance of past events and their effect on students' lives and society.
- 8.SP1.4 Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are historically significant.
- 8.SP2.1 Analyze multiple factors that influence the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- 8.SP2.2 Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.
- 8.SP2.3 Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
- 8.SP3.1 Create and answer compelling and supporting questions that reflect enduring issues in the field of history and social science.

### **III. Sensitive subjects in the text and how possible objections will be handled**

Possibly sensitive topics: Violence, war, death, terrorism

In the classroom, sensitive topics will be dealt with in a mature fashion, toward an understanding of why this material is included in the film. The History department feels that the educational merit of this film more than compensates for the inclusion of this sensitive subject matter. The student is encouraged to feel comfortable expressing his/her beliefs and views openly within the classroom environment. If the student is uncomfortable at any time, the student should meet with the teacher to discuss his/her concerns. Students will be advised before scenes that might be upsetting to them. This film shows actual footage from the terrorist attack and students will be warned before the images appear and given a choice to leave the room or to look away from the screen. This footage is incredibly vital to understanding the attack and the subsequent war with Afghanistan.