

INTEGRATE HISTORYLINK.ORG INTO YOUR CLASSROOM:

AUDIO ENHANCED ESSAYS

Oral histories are important and unique primary sources. They reveal intimate stories, relevant comments, and meaningful answers -- related by important historical figures as well as everyday people who are often overlooked in our history books. Hearing the actual voice of someone who has lived through a significant event or era can bring history to life. It can also greatly enrich insight into the personality and character traits of the person who is being researched. Exploring and analyzing oral history interviews and other audio files, such as news reports, speeches, or music, are also a great means by which to enhance a written report, article, or essay and can also lead to further research possibilities.

Many local museums, historical societies, and government, school, or neighborhood organizations serve as repositories for these one-of-a kind and irreplaceable resources. Many have been saved in a digital format to make them more easily usable. Some are available online and can be downloaded by anyone who has a computer and access to the internet. Others are still available for public use only in a written transcript format. A list of oral history collections is included in the Heritage Education Resources section of the Education Resource on HistoryLink.org.

Beginning in 2009, HistoryLink.org received funding from Heritage 4Culture (for three consecutive years) to enhance the dimension of the website's content by adding sound files. This project provided funding to identify and promote the valuable and underutilized collection of oral histories (both in King County and statewide) that have been recorded, cataloged, and preserved over the years.

Lesson plans designed to integrate the audio-enhanced essays on HistoryLink.org ask students to listen to selected HistoryLink.org files and interpret the value of hearing real voices describe their personal experiences with historical events or persons. Students will be provided with an appropriate model for enhancing their own projects with audio files by using the format established by HistoryLink.org. This model displays simple guidelines for selecting meaningful and appropriate excerpts from existing interviews -- or to prepare and ask questions in an interview that will provide insight, clarity, or enhancement to the essay, paper, or project.

CURRICULUM-AT-A-GLANCE

Primary Objectives: To introduce students to oral histories and other audio files as important primary source material and to provide a model for enhancing classroom or History Day projects using audio files. To provide students with an analysis method by which to develop further insight into a research subject by analyzing actual voices in selected audio-enhanced HistoryLink.org essays.

Student Activities: Students will review and analyze relevant HistoryLink.org audio-enhanced files in order to gain further insight into the featured subjects. Students will use this method to explore ways to identify and include excerpts of audio files in classroom or History Day projects.

Materials (Included): 1) links to appropriate HistoryLink.org essays, 2) list of oral history repositories, 3) Student Worksheet. **Materials (Needed):** 1) copies of Student Worksheet, 2) copies HistoryLink.org essays, 3) computer/equipment to listen to HistoryLink.org audio-file(s).

Time Management: 2 classes: Class 1: Review primary and secondary sources and how to cite sources. Discuss what you can learn from hearing a person tell a story or answer a question in their own voice (audio-enhanced files.) Class 2: Listen to samples of HistoryLink.org files and complete Student Worksheet. Discuss the value of adding oral history sound files or excerpts to classroom or History Day projects.

Grade/Subject Recommended: Grades 3-12

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS



What can you tell about an individual by listening to him/her share personal stories, describe an event, or answer a question in their own voice?



How is this different from just reading the transcripts of an oral history or an interview? How can you effectively use excerpts from oral histories or other audio files in class or History Day projects?

Images: Row 1: Vi Hilbert (Courtesy Janet Yoder) Row 2 Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, (Courtesy UW Special Collections), Jim Whittaker (Courtesy Associated Press) Hazel Wolf (Courtesy Hazel Wolf) Gordon Hirabayashi (Courtesy Gordon Hirabayashi), and Frances Farmer (Courtesy Luxe Studio)

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Content Objectives:

Student will learn...

- the importance of oral history interviews as primary sources.
- that listening to a real voice can provide deeper insight into personality or character traits of interview subject.
- that there are hundreds of oral history interviews available for research or use in projects.

Performance Objectives:

Student will...

- learn to select appropriate interview transcript excerpts.
- learn to cite audio files, photographs, etc. in project.
- listen to HistoryLink.org audio-enhanced essays and analyze personality and character traits of individual subjects using Student Worksheet
- identify appropriate oral history or audio file repositories.
- use the audio enhanced files format on HistoryLink.org as a model for using excerpts in classroom or History Day projects.

WASHINGTON STATE EALRS (Essential Academic Learning Requirements)

The activities in this project have been designed to complement the following Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRs) for Washington state Social Studies.

Elementary School (based on 3rd grade)

Civics				Economics				Geography			History				Social Studies Skills			
1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4
											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Middle School (based on 7-8th grades)

Civics				Economics				Geography			History				Social Studies Skills			
1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4
											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

High School (Based on 11th grade)

Civics				Economics				Geography			History				Social Studies Skills			
1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4
											X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WASHINGTON STATE CBAs (Classroom-Based Assessments) ALIGNMENT

The activities in these lesson plans have been designed to provide the resources and to build the skills needed to implement the following Classroom Based Assessments (CBAs):

Elementary School

- **Dig Deep (4th grade):** To be an effective citizen, students need to know how to use evidence from different sources. Using artifacts and primary sources as evidence, they will learn to draw conclusions about a historical question that they have been studying in their classroom pertaining to Century 21. Students can share their finding in a paper, presentation, or timeline. (See Student Worksheet: Interpreting Audio-Enhanced Essays and Oral History Interviews)

Middle School

- **Dig Deep: Analyzing Sources (7th grade):** To be an effective citizen, one needs to know the difference between an account based on evidence and an outrageous story. After selecting and exploring a historical question from multiple perspectives, students will take and support a position on this question using primary sources as their evidence. (See Student Worksheet: Interpreting Audio-Enhanced Essays and Oral History Interviews)

High School

- **Dig Deep/Analyzing Sources (11th grade):** A responsible citizen can use historical thinking to develop thoughtful participation in a democratic society. To develop thinking skills, students will develop and support a thesis (and share in a paper or presentation)on an historical question based on analysis of primary sources and historical narratives. Students will provide evidence for their position using two or more of the following social science perspectives (geographic, cultural, political, economic, sociological, and psychological) and will select and evaluate how three or more sources (including primary and secondary sources) support the position on the historical question, (See Student Worksheet: Interpreting Audio-Enhanced Essays and Oral History Interviews)

KEY WORDS

ABSTRACT: a summary of a text, scientific article, document, speech, etc.

AUDIO-ENHANCED: to raise to a higher degree with the use of sound

EMOTION: any of the feelings of joy, sorrow, fear, hate, love, etc.

EXCERPT: a passage or quotation taken or selected from a book, document, film, or the like

FOLLOW-UP: an action or thing that serves to increase the effectiveness of a previous one

GENDER: sex

INTERVIEW: a meeting or conversation in which a writer or reporter asks questions of one or more persons from whom material is sought for a newspaper story, television broadcast, etc.

TRANSCRIPT: a written, typewritten, or printed copy

UNIQUE: having no like or equal; unparalleled; incomparable

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Elementary: (Discussion) Discuss primary sources and the definition of an oral history. Read a selected audio-enhanced HistoryLink.org essay and listen to the audio-file. Discuss the questions in the Student Worksheet as a class.

Middle School: (Discussion and Worksheet Activity) Review primary and secondary sources and the definition of an oral history. Select one of the HistoryLink.org audio-enhanced essays in the collection found in the audio-enhanced collection (<http://historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=results.cfm&keyword=audioessay>), read, and listen to the audio-file. Complete worksheet pp 12-14.

High School: (Discussion and Worksheet Activity) Discuss primary sources and the definition of an oral history. Select one of the HistoryLink.org audio-enhanced essays in the collection found in the audio-enhanced collection (<http://historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=results.cfm&keyword=audioessay>), read, and listen to the audio-file. Complete worksheet pp . In a four paragraph essay, describe what you were able to learn about this person by listening to their actual voice. (see p.15)

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PRIMARY and SECONDARY SOURCES

What are they and why are they important?

A primary source is a source of information that was created at or near the time being studied, by an authoritative source, usually one with direct personal knowledge of the event being described.

Examples of primary sources

- ✓ Letters
- ✓ Manuscripts
- ✓ Diaries
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ Newspapers
- ✓ Speeches
- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Reports
- ✓ Memoirs
- ✓ Documents produced by government agencies such as Congress or the Office of the President
- ✓ Photographs
- ✓ Audio Recordings
- ✓ Moving pictures or video recordings
- ✓ Research data
- ✓ Objects or artifacts such as works of art, fashion, tools, weapons
- ✓ Souvenirs

Suggestions for working with students and primary sources

1. Initial Analysis: Ask students to consider the following questions.

- Is this a primary source?
- What type of primary source is this?
- What is the date of the source?
- Who created it?
- Why might it have been created; for whom?
- Any distinguishing marks or features on the source (date stamps, notes in the margin, etc.)?

2. Further Analysis: Ask students to Dig Deeper...

- What does this source tell you about the person who created it?
- What does this tell about the event or time, and do you think it is an accurate representation? Why or why not?
- Do you think that outside events could influence what a person might write or record about an event?
- Do you think that outside events could influence how YOU are interpreting the document?
- What questions are left unanswered by the document? If you could ask the author of the document a question, what would you ask?

HOW TO IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE ORAL HISTORIES/EXCERPTS

Many oral history interviews have been transcribed in order to be more usable by all levels of researchers – from professionals to students. The transcriptions often have key-words by which to identify specific themes, events, or persons. Using the key words will help students identify whether or not the oral history interview will be of interest or of use in their classroom or History Day project.

Some oral history interviews and transcripts are quite long. It is a good idea to encourage students to scan through the interview transcript to look for sections or statements in the transcript that they might be interested in listening to and/or using in their project

If student wishes to use an audio excerpt of oral history for their project, care should be taken to select clips that are of good quality, with limited background noise, interruptions, and free of “uh’s” and/or pauses. Best excerpts will be directly related to the theme of the project that is being researched or enhanced. Start with a transcript, whether you’re using an oral history repository or recording an interview yourself.

Notice that HL excerpts are short (60-90 seconds maximum, or roughly 150 -200 words of transcript, depending on how fast the speaker speaks). The excerpts are very carefully selected for length, clarity, and appropriateness to the prominent theme. If an interview with this information did not exist, and if the subject was still alive, able, and amenable to participating in an interview, a short interview was conducted to obtain specific information that would complement the essay.

Oral Histories in the Classroom, a comprehensive curriculum model that guides students in conducting classroom or individual interviews can be located in the Curriculum section of the Education Resource (http://historylink.org/_content/education/downloads/Oral%20History%20Curriculum.pdf), Another helpful resource for oral history interview techniques is the *Densho Student Guide to Oral Histories*. (http://historylink.org/_content/education/downloads/Densho_Student_Guide_to_Oral_Histories.pdf)

HOW TO CITE ORAL HISTORY EXCERPTS

It is necessary to always correctly cite the source of the research that you plan to include in your paper, report, exhibit, or presentation. This includes oral history audio files or excerpts from written transcriptions.

Below is an example of how HistoryLink.org cites the oral history interview transcripts that are included in the audio-enhanced essay collection:

Hazel Wolf on her involvement with the Audubon Society, interviewed by Susan Starbuck, Seattle, 1982
Courtesy Washington Women's Heritage Project, UW Special Collections

ORAL HISTORY RESOURCES

There are many valuable collections of oral history interviews that are specific to Washington state history. The following are annotated examples of some of the oral history repositories, websites, or resources that were identified as part of the 4Culture project. A more complete inventory can be found on the HistoryLink.org Education Resource in the Heritage Education Resources section – and it will be updated regularly.

- **Archives of American Art, Northwest Oral History Project**
(<http://www.lib.washington.edu/specialcoll/findaids/docs/papersrecords/ArchivesofAmericanArtNorthwestOralHistoryProject3620.xml>) There are 30 oral histories from major figures in Northwest art in this collection; all have been transcribed but none have signed release forms. The interviews were conducted in the 1980s.
- **BlackPast.org** is an online encyclopedia developed exclusively to share the history of people of African American ancestry. There are many audio oral histories posted on this site.
(<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=digital-archives>)
- **Densho Project** -- This website (<http://www.densho.org/archive/default.asp>) documents the history of Japanese Americans, with a focus on those who were incarcerated during World War II. It includes several hundred video interviews. All the interviews have been transcribed and digitized. (<http://www.densho.org>)
- **Legacy Project (Washington State Heritage Center)** includes oral histories and biographies of former Supreme Court justices. The interviews are available in digital format from the Legacy Project website. All have been transcribed and released to the public. The Legacy Project also includes legislative oral histories originally done for the Secretary of State's office. The tapes have been transcribed and the transcripts posted on the Secretary of State's website. The original tapes (analog cassettes) are stored at the State Archives in Olympia.

- **Pacific Northwest Labor and Civil Rights Projects** at the University of Washington bring together nearly one hundred video oral history interviews and several thousand photographs, documents, and digitized newspaper articles on the Pacific Northwest's rich history of labor and civil rights. Included are films, slide shows, and lesson plans for teachers. The projects also feature more than 100 articles, many written by undergraduate and graduate students at the University of Washington.
<http://depts.washington.edu/labhist/>
- **University of Washington Libraries/Special Collections, Manuscripts, and University Archives** -- Most of the oral histories held by the UW were recorded on analog cassettes. "Potential users may be required to arrange for transfer to digital format before the material can be accessed." The fee is about \$35 per half hour; turnaround time is two to three weeks.
- **Washington Women's Heritage Project** -- There are 85 oral histories in this collection. They were all recorded on analog cassettes in 1982 by Susan Starbuck and Sue Ellen Jacobs. All have been transcribed and release forms signed.
- **Washington State Jewish Historical Society, University of Washington Jewish Archives Project** -There are 380 oral history interviews in this collection. All the interviews are recorded on analog cassettes; have been transcribed, and release forms signed.

Local Historical Societies: Many local historical organizations have collections of oral histories –most are specific to that neighborhood, county, region, or organization. Here are a sampling from King County groups:

- **Museum of History and Industry**
http://www.seattlehistory.org/research_and_collections/oral_history_project.php
- **Southwest Seattle Historical Society** <http://www.loghousemuseum.info/>
- **Wing Luke Museum** <http://wingluke.org/collections/oralhistory.html>

The **Internet Archive** is a non-profit website that maintains and preserves a library of electronic media in the public domain. ["The Internet Archive, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, is building a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form. Like a paper library, we provide free access to researchers, historians, scholars, and the general public."]

Also, check the inventory of **Primary Sources** listed on the **Education Resource** (<http://historylink.org/Index.cfm?DisplayPage=education/Edu-Sources.cfm>) By visiting the links provided for each resource, students can search the websites for oral history collections.

HOW to USE AUDIO-ENHANCED ESSAYS and ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS as a RESOURCE for HISTORY DAY PROJECTS

“National History Day is a nationally acclaimed history education program that challenges students to become historians, explorers, investigators and leaders. Students choose a topic that relates to an annual theme, then conduct extensive research using primary sources, articles and books, interviews with experts and eyewitnesses, and many other resources. They analyze and interpret their findings, draw conclusions about their topic’s historical significance, and present their work in project form as an exhibit, documentary, performance, paper or website. They can choose to enter local competitions, where their projects are evaluated by teams of experts, in hopes of advancing to the state and national contests. History Day has proven to be an invaluable way to introduce students to the techniques of historical inquiry and the importance of history in everyday life.” From History Day website Home Page
(<http://www.wshs.org/historyday/program.aspx>)

There are five categories of projects that students may choose from to complete a History Day project.

PERFORMANCE: If a student is preparing a performance for History Day, listening to audio tapes of the real voice of their research subject will provide opportunities to capture unique vocal qualities, such as accents, intonations, phrasing, and rhythm. It is not necessary to worry about imitating the subject exactly, but borrowing some of the research subject’s characteristics will lend credibility and realism to the performance. Identifying and selecting relevant excerpts to include in the performance narrative is also critical. Students do not need to worry about word count in the performance category – only time limit. Video files can also be used to extract phrasing for scripts and to identify costume ideas.

DOCUMENTARY: This History Day category can actually use original audio files as part of the project. History Day guidelines require the use of primary sources in producing the documentary. It is important to select audio files that are of good quality, with limited background noise, interruptions, and free of “uh’s” and/or pauses. Best excerpts will be directly related to the theme of the project that is being researched or enhanced. Many oral history interviews have been digitized so they can be more easily integrated into student documentaries.

EXHIBIT: If a student is working on an exhibit, he or she may want to use an excerpt from an oral history interview within the exhibit narrative only to enhance the message, a specific point, or as a caption. With only a 500 word limit on all text in the exhibit, this excerpt would need to be necessary, brief, and to the point, Citations crediting the source does not count towards number of words.

PAPER: Using an excerpt from an oral history interview can be a valuable way to include additional and unique information to a research paper. But because there is a limit to the number of words (2500) that can be included in the paper, this might not be a good choice for a paper project – unless it is very important to the presentation of the research. If a student does wish to use an excerpt from an audio file, he or she needs to choose wisely and keep it short.

WEBSITE: The guidelines for this website category suggest that this interactive project should include primary sources, interactive multimedia, and historical analysis. Using the inventory of oral histories found in the Education Resource will provide links to additional resources.

HISTORYLINK.ORG AUDIO-ENHANCED ESSAYS

Currently (July 2011) there are over 30 audio-enhanced essays posted on HistoryLink.org. (<http://historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=results.cfm&keyword=audioessay>) The majority of these audio-files are interview excerpts that have been identified, selected or conducted, and then paired with biographies. Funding from Heritage 4Culture has allowed HistoryLink.org to proceed with adding these audio files. This sample list shows the diversity of the audio files featured in this growing collection:

Evans, Daniel J. -- former Governor of Washington state (HistoryLink.org essay 7167)

Farmer, Frances -- Seattle-born actress (HistoryLink.org essays 5058 and 5059)

Gossett, Larry --King County Councilman (HistoryLink.org 7393)

Hansen, Cecile -- Tribal Chairwoman of the Duwamish Tribe (HistoryLink.org 8963)

Hayner, Jeannette -- Washington state legislator (HistoryLink.org essay 9643)

Hilbert, Vi – Skagit elder who gives correct pronunciation of Chief Seattle’s name in Lushootseed (HistoryLink.org 8156)

Hirabayashi, Gordon K., Japanese American who defied internment orders during WWII (Historylink.org essay 2070)

Kingdome implodes – (HistoryLink.org 2252)

Kurose, Aki -- Seattle teacher and peace activist (HistoryLink.org 9339)

Lassen, Leo H. – Seattle sportswriter and baseball radio broadcaster (HistoryLink.org essay 9760)

Maestas, Roberto Felipe – Latino civil rights revolutionary and leader (HistoryLink.org 9186)

Weaver, Timothy – lawyer who specialized in Indian fishing rights. (HistoryLink.org 9316)

Whittaker, Jim -- first American to climb to the top of Mount Everest (HistoryLink.org 9361)

Wolf, Hazel -- environmental and social activist whose causes ranged from the rights of workers, women, and minorities HistoryLink.org essay 8794)

STUDENT WORKSHEET

INTERPRETING AUDIO INTERVIEWS

Student Name

Class

Date

Title (and Number) of HistoryLink.org audio-enhanced essay:

Who wrote this HistoryLink.org essay and why?

When was the interview or audio-file recorded?

Why was this interview or audio file recorded? (as part of an oral history project? news interview? etc.)

Who conducted the interview and what was their role in the project or audio-file?

List 3 important **details** about this person after reading this essay:

1)

2)

3)

NOW, LISTEN TO THIS AUDIO-ENHANCED FILE AND USE THIS FORM TO SEE IF YOU CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT THE RESEARCH SUBJECT:

GENDER: (Sometimes you cannot determine if subject is man or woman based on name – if not familiar with name or if gender was not identified.)

AGE: (Can you determine approximate age based on voice qualities?)

Could the age of interview subject be affecting their memory? Do you think they might be forgetful or remembering things incorrectly?

Could the age of the interview subject make their interpretations or comments less significant? If they are older? Younger?

NATIONALITY/ WHERE FROM: (Can you determine if subject is from a different country, different part of the United States, or from a different culture based on their accent or language?) Where do you think they are from? Why?

LANGUAGE: Does a language challenge make it difficult for subject to understand and /or answer effectively? Does their accent make it difficult for you to understand? How could this have been better planned?

PERSONALITY/EMOTIONS: Based on the person's voice or their answers, can you interpret if they are quiet, sad, happy, fearful, angry, combative, lecturing, helpful, etc. Identify and record three personality traits that you can determine from their voice.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

INTERVIEW HABITS: (How does the interview subject respond during the audio clip?)

Is interview subject talking about this willingly? hesitant? answers incompletely? needs to be prompted?

Is interview subject distracted, is subject interrupted or corrected by others? Is the subject a leader in the group? Did the subject initiate statements, thoughts, or ideas?

OTHER INTERVIEW INFORMATION:

Is this oral history part of a group of oral histories describing about a single or shared experience? If so, describe:

Is interview subject answering questions or telling a story? Telling life story or single event?

What else would you like to learn about this person as a result of hearing their story/voice? What follow-up questions would you ask ?

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY: Read a selected audio-enhanced HistoryLink.org essay and listen to the audio-file. Discuss the questions in the Student Worksheet as a class.

ESSAY ACTIVITY: Select one of the HistoryLink.org audio-enhanced essays in the collection found in the audio-enhanced collection

(<http://historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=results.cfm&keyword=audioessay>), read, and listen to the audio-file.

In a four paragraph essay, describe what you were able to learn about this person by listening to their actual voice..

- 1) The first paragraph will briefly describe the subject and why they were significant to Washington state history.
- 2) The second paragraph will describe the circumstances of the recording of the audio file and a summary of what was disclosed by the subject.
- 3) The third paragraph will describe the qualities and characteristics of the voice of the person and what it tells you about them that you would not have learned from written words.
- 4) The final paragraph will describe how you would follow up with this audio-file activity if you could. What would you ask them and why?

High School Students must properly cite two other research sources that were used to write this personal essay assignment.

Audio-File Number

Name of Research Subject

