



ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE ARCHIVES

Spanish Civil War– Abraham Lincoln Brigade Building Background Knowledge Workshop for Social Studies and Art Classes

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Mystery Document: "[What are you doing to prevent this?](#)" Poster.

Common Read: [1 Page Overview of SCW](#) – [SCW Timeline](#).

Expert Texts in Folders – Each student should examine at least two of the following, at least one text (T) and one visual (V):

1. [Hyman Katz - letter to mother. T](#)
2. [Evelyn Hutchins – excerpts from interview T](#)
3. [James Lardner – Letter to mother T](#)
4. [Crawford Morgan - Congressional Testimony T](#)
5. [Canute Frankson – Letter to Friend T](#)
6. [Guernica – article from newspaper T](#)
7. [Photo – Destruction of Guernica V](#)
8. [Guernica Painting V](#)
9. [Political Cartoon – Guernica V](#)
10. [Shoe/Swastica Poster V](#)
11. [Volunteers w/different hats –photo V](#) (see photo titled "**A musical interlude for International volunteers after the battle of Teruel (1938).**")

Materials

- Pieces of chart paper – 1 per group
- Sets of 3 different colors of marker
- 1 transparency or digital projection and copies of a “mystery text” : Poster, What are you doing to prevent this?
- Individual copies of a common article: “Introduction to the Spanish Civil War.”
- Sets of expert texts, in widely divergent reading and information levels.
- One highlighter for each student

Procedure:

1. Divide students into groups of 5-6 students. (Heterogeneous, random grouping is ideal)
2. Give each student a copy of the mystery text, and have them read/analyze it silently
3. Have students write for 5 minutes on what they thought about the poster/mystery text. As: What do you see? How is it organized? What does the artist want you to think? What materials are used? Where and when might this be? How does the image make you feel?
4. Briefly, ask students what they thought. Reveal the subject /time/place of the poster.
5. In small groups, students make a web of what they already know about the topic. Instruct them to write “Spanish Civil War/Abraham Lincoln Brigade” in the center of the web.
6. Have students read their information out loud and have another student write it (or better yet, discuss it as a group) and have students take turns writing. The point is for everyone to interact with everyone’s new information.
7. Give each student a copy of the common text, and have them read it individually and code the text for new information by underlining every time they come across something they didn’t know about the subject and marking “N” in the margin. Allow students to work as long as it takes the fastest students in each group to

read the whole thing, and then move one—be sure to tell students that it's okay if they don't make it through the whole article.

8. Back in the small groups, have students add the new information from the common text to their web, using a new marker color.
9. Give each group a set of articles and allow students to choose one to text-code for new information as above. Students with higher skills should work with more than one article, especially if they choose the easier ones. Guide lower skill students to the easier ones. Allow enough time for the slowest students to finish text coding their whole piece, within reason.
10. Students add new learning the charts, in a third color marker.
11. Have students look at their original journal thoughts and have them add to or revise their original thinking.
12. As a class, lead a discussion on the direct relationship between background knowledge and the topic. Sample questions: What did you think the mystery text was about before you knew anything about it? Why? What do you know now? How did the new information you learn affect what you got out of the mystery text?
13. As a class, create a chart of questions the students still have, or list things they want to explore more deeply. While listing, code how you might find the answers; E=expert, T=text, F=fieldwork, etc.
14. Debrief the process. What went well? What was easy? What was difficult? What could be done to improve the process?
15. Before students leave, have them tell you (or write down and turn in) one thing they learned about the subject.

Extension: During work time play music from the SCW, for example from the CD, [Spain in My Heart: Songs of the Spanish Civil War](#). Let students know it is an additional expert text that they should feel free to comment on.

Credit for BBK procedure and format/directions: Sarah Ferrenc, Pacific High School

