



THE GREAT SEATTLE FIRE TEACHER RESOURCES

**LESSON 4: Who’s Who of the Great Seattle Fire**

**Lesson Description:**

This lesson is designed to help your students learn about the events of the fire through the eyes of a historic character. Through a combination of research, discussion, small group work, and mock interviews, students will take on the persona of key stakeholders from this historic event, and will bring their voices to life.

**Objectives:**

- Students will learn to create an annotated bibliography
- Students will analyze primary documents and secondary sources and pull out relevant information
- Students will gain a greater understanding of the events of the great fire and the stakeholders involved
- Students will learn interview techniques by creating questions and performing a mock interview of a historic character

**Potential EALRs/GLEs Met:**

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4
<i>Reading</i>					X		X		X	X						
<i>Writing</i>				X		X	X			X						
<i>Communication</i>	X	X			X	X			X	X	X					
<i>Social Studies</i>														X	X	
	<b>5.1</b>	<b>5.2</b>	<b>5.3</b>	<b>5.4</b>												
<i>Social Studies</i>	X	X		X												

**Potential CBAs Met:**

Constitutional Issues	Causes of Conflict	People on the Move	Dig Deep	Why History?	Cultural Contributions
	X		X		

**Materials:**

- Library and/or internet access for research
- 1953 Audio Recordings of Witnesses to the Fire
- Additional primary/secondary fire resources (will vary depending on characters selected)
- Audio/visual equipment (optional)

**Suggested Teaching Procedure:**

1. As a class, discuss the various stakeholders involved in the Great Seattle Fire (Fire Chief Josiah Collins Jr., Mayor Robert Moran, John Back, Fire Marshal James Murphy, Seattle residents, business owners, etc.) Choose four people to focus on for this lesson.



2. Have each student come up with two questions they would like to ask each of the four characters from the Great Seattle Fire. Questions should focus on the person's thoughts or actions before, during, and/or after the fire.
3. Create a master list of student questions. Separate the questions by character and omit repeated questions.
4. Break the class into four groups and assign each group one of the four characters to research.
5. Have each group create an annotated bibliography of sources relating to the role their character played in the great Seattle fire. At least one of these should be a primary source (see lesson 2).
6. Give edited question lists to each of the corresponding character groups.
7. Discuss interview techniques and have students listen to the 1953 audio recording of witnesses of the Great Seattle Fire. What other interviews have students seen/heard before? What are some techniques for conducting a good interview? (For additional examples, check out online interview podcasts produced by MOHAI and other local museums).
8. Based on their research, have students in each group go through their list of questions and choose their top 15. In creating their interview question list, students should consider the following: Can the question be answered using resources you have? Does the question addresses an interesting or important fact about your character? Will this question provide a well-rounded understanding of your characters role in the great Seattle fire? (To achieve this, it may be necessary for some groups to create additional questions that are not already on their list).
9. Partner each student with someone outside their group. Have each two person team choose which of their characters they want to interview, then have them decide who will be the interviewer and who will be the interviewee (in the event of a dispute, have students draw straws).
10. Using their 15 question list as a base, have students prepare a 5- 10 question interview dialogue by selecting their best questions, rearranging them in a logical order, and rewording them as necessary.
11. Have student pairs present their interview to the class. You may wish to have students dress in character, and/or to use audio or visual equipment to record student performances