



Historical Thinking: Perspective and Context

Interview Questions for Overlooked Historical Figures

Adapted from Caitlin Goodwin's "Excellent Adventures in Historical Thinking and Oratory: *Conducting Interviews for Sourcing and Contextualization*"

You have selected an overlooked historical figure to research and share with your classmates. Now, you will take on the persona of your historical figure. Who are you? Why should we learn about you in school? Why don't we? This activity will help you to answer that question and to share your knowledge and understandings with classmates.

Directions: You will be interviewed by a classroom that is not of your time period. These students will want to know as much about you and your time period as possible so that they can better understand your significance as a historical figure. Consider and prepare responses to the following questions for your interview.

Your childhood....

1. Where are you from?
2. Who was in your family? (siblings, parents, grandparents)
3. Are you from a big city or a small town?
4. What would you like to tell us about your childhood?
5. Any major notable events in your young life to share?

As an adult....

1. Where do you live?
2. What do you do for a living?
3. Are you a member of any groups- politically or socially?

4. What are you passionate about? Are there any issues that you feel very strongly about?
5. What can you tell us about your historical significance? Why should we learn about you in school? Why don't we learn about you?
6. What could be done so that your history and contributions are remembered?

The Historical Time Period: Tell us about the time you live in!

1. What do people do for fun?
2. What do people wear?
3. What type of government do you have?
4. Does everyone have equal rights?
5. Can everyone vote?
6. Are there any major social movements going on? Cultural movements?
7. Are there social or political groups that are mainstream?
8. Is America at war or peace?
9. How would you describe your time period compared to today?

Finally....

1. What else would you like us to know about you?