



Exploring the Writing Process with Primary Source Materials

Lesson Topic: Collaboration/Correspondence

Lesson Plan Created By:

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Grade Levels:

6th - 8th, High School

Primary Source:

Guthrie, Woody, and Alan Lomax. *Letter from Woody Guthrie to Alan Lomax. 19-Sep-40, 1940.* Manuscript/Mixed Material.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/afcwwgbib000004/>.

Compelling Question:

Why do authors collaborate with other writers and how does collaboration improve their writing?

Supporting Question:

How can I collaborate with my peers to improve my own writing process?

Objective:

In this 50 minute lesson, students will explore a letter from Woody Guthrie to Alan Lomax to better understand how writers collaborate to assist in each other's writing process.

Standards - Common Core:

Lesson Standards 6th - 8th

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.5 : With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.

Lesson Standards 9th - 10th

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 [above](#).)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grades 9-10 [here](#).)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.

Lesson Standards 11th - 12th

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 [above](#).)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.5: Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1-3 up to and including grades 11-12 [here](#).)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.6: Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.

Lesson Activity Instructions

Whole Group Class Discussion Questions: (5 - 10 minutes)

Ask: Why do writers collaborate?

What are the benefits of working with another writer?

Class brainstorms ideas to answer this question. Summarize student responses.

Explore: (20 - 40 minutes)

Students in partners or groups of three will use the lesson worksheet to evaluate the suggestions made by Woody Guthrie to Alan Lomax. Next, students will find two more

suggestions and explain why the suggestions are important or why they disagree with the suggestion. Allow time for student exploration and work. As groups finish, pair groups together to share what they came up with. Provide the following link for students: <https://www.loc.gov/item/afcwqgbib000004/> to better understand how writers collaborate to assist in each other's writing process.

Closing Summary: (5 minutes)

Authors and songwriters collaborate to make writing a more public and communal act, develop a sense of readership, identify strengths and weaknesses, better understand that writing is a process, and to learn how to improve their own writing.

See accompanying activity handouts for students.

Credits

The creation of this lesson plan was funded by a grant from the Library of Congress *Teaching with Primary Sources* program.

Name: _____ Date: _____

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Directions: Use the primary source above to complete the activities on the following pages.

Activity One

Directions: Consider the following advice from Woody Guthrie to Alan Lomax. Answer in the spaces below as to whether or not you agree with each piece of advice. You may look back to the source for further details.

1. Quote from Image 1: "Don't try to cover too much territory, or make it too much of a sermon. Just tell the facts." Do you agree with this suggestion? Why or why not?

2. Quote from Image 2: "Don't try to be too funny. Just tell the truth." Do you agree with this suggestion? Why or why not?

Activity Two

Directions: Now, try and find two more examples of advice that you feel are important or that you disagree with. Complete the chart below.

Example of advice	Why do you feel this is an important piece of advice? Or, why do you disagree?