Creative Activities for Teaching Critical Thinking & Writing U.S. History: The 1920's



Stevens & Shea Publishers

Introduction

This unit emphasizes writing and critical thinking. There are basically three types of activities. The news stories, writing exercises and telegrams require students to evaluate, prioritize and write about historical events. They must **use** the information rather than just passively memorizing.

The chronology activity requires students to detect trends and draw conclusions.

The viewpoints and issues activities present different views of the same event rather than just the single view often presented by textbooks. The critical thinking exercises that accompany these units require the students to evaluate the information.

Many of the activities deal with popular news stories of the decade that are usually not covered in textbooks.

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A. Coolidge re-elected

Coolidge believed government should stay out of people's lives. People are happy with Coolidge's term in office since he became president after Harding's death.

B. Immigration reduced

After World War I many Americans are afraid of socialists and anarchists. After the Red Scare and the deportation of many radicals, Congress sets strict limits on immigration.

C. Radicals are deported

The communists took control of Russia in 1917. Many in the U.S. had a fear of radicals. Many radicals were foreign born and opposed the U.S. involvement in World War I. The communist victory in Russia increased the worry about radicals in America. Many were arrested and deported during the "Red Scare" immediately following World War I.

D. Washington Treaty to limit armaments

World War I is not far behind. The U.S. refused to sign the League of Nations agreement. The U.S. population feels secure. Radicals have been deported and immigration restricted. The Washington disarmament conference of 1921 limits the construction of battleships, bans the use of poison gas, restricts sub warfare and maintains open markets in China.

E. Albert Fall convicted

Shortly before the stockmarket collapses and the booming 20's comes to an end, Albert Fall, Harding's Secretary of the Interior is finally convicted of taking a \$100,000 bribe for selling government owned oil leases.

F. Warren Harding dies

Harding dies, some say, of a broken heart amidst charges of corruption by his friends. He has failed to complete his first term in office.

G. Stockmarket Crash

The booming 20's are brought to an end by a crash of the stockmarket. Prices fall drastically, eventually resulting in a slow-down of the economy that produces high unemployment.

H. Lindbergh flies Atlantic

Charles Lindbergh flies the Atlantic Ocean alone. He becomes a popular hero. America has a very positive feeling. Coolidge has been elected to second term. The stockmarket is booming and many new consumer conveniences are coming on the market.

I. Warren Harding elected

After a period of war and domestic turmoil, Warren Harding, a newspaper publisher from Ohio, is elected president to begin the decade of the 1920's. Immediately after taking office, immigration restrictions are passed by Congress.

Directions

Below are some of the major events of the 1920's. Read them carefully and using the clues offered, arrange them in chronological order beginning with the earliest.

Answers

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