

1925 – 1949

NEBRASKA AND WORLD WAR II

ACTIVITIES

*Created by Michael Young,
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Activity 1: Nebraskans Contributing to Victory

Activity Grade Level:
4th Grade

Activity: Activities List and Discussion

List five activities people in Nebraska did to contribute to victory in World War II. You'll find information about this in the *Nebraskans and World War II* section, *The Front Lines and Home Front* story, page 2 of 3, http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0801_0101.html

What activities could students your age do to help win the war?

Nebraska State Social Studies Standards

Standard 4.11 Students will identify significant individuals and historical events in their community and in Nebraska and explain their importance.

*Time, Continuity, and Change
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions*

Standard 4.12 Students will develop historical analytical skills by:

- Identifying, analyzing, and making generalizations about how people in Nebraska lived, using primary sources, such as artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, art, documents, and newspapers.
- Comparing documentary sources on historical figures and events with fictionalized characters and events to distinguish fact from fiction.

*Time, Continuity, and Change
Culture*

Activity 2: Interview Someone Who Contributed to the War Effort

Activity Grade Level:
8th Grade

Activity: Interview

Interview a person in your community who lived during World War II and ask him/her how he/she contributed to the war effort. Make a list of questions you intend to ask the person being interviewed. Write a summary of the notes you have taken during the interview.

Nebraska State Reading/Writing Standards

Standard 8.2.5 By the end of the eighth grade, students will use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Student demonstrations:

- Generate questions, take notes, and summarize information gleaned from reference works and experts.
- Use and document references appropriately.

Nebraska State Social Studies/History Standards

Standard 8.2.7 Students will develop skills for historical analysis, such as the ability to:

- Identify, analyze, and interpret primary sources, such as artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, art, documents, newspapers, contemporary media, and computer information systems, making generalizations about events and life in United States history since 1877.
- Recognize and explain nationalism, race, religion, and ethnicity have influenced different points of view.
- Distinguish fact from fiction by examining documentary sources.
- Construct various time lines of United States history since 1877, such as landmark dates, technological and economic changes, social movements, military conflicts, and presidential elections.
- Locate on a United States map all 50 states, the original 13 states, the states that formed the Confederacy, and states which entered the Union after 1877.

*Time, Continuity, and Change
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions*

Activity 3: War Memory Interview

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Interview

Interview a person who was living during World War II. Follow the guidelines suggested in the *How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interviews* in the Resources section of this document. After the students conduct the interviews, have them read each other's work. Then use the following questions as a basis for classroom discussion:

- Should an oral history interview be considered a primary source document? Why or why not?
- Would you describe your interviews as factual or emotional? If they are emotional, does that diminish their value for interpreting history?

Nebraska State Social Studies/History Standards

Standard 12.1.11 Students will demonstrate historical research and geographical skills by:

- Identifying, analyzing, and interpreting primary and secondary sources and artifacts.
- Validating sources as to their authenticity, authority, credibility, and possible bias.
- Comparing trends in global population distribution since the 10th century.
- Constructing various time lines of key events, periods, and personalities since the 10th century.
- Identifying and analyzing major shifts in national political boundaries in Europe since 1815.
- Identifying the distribution of major religious cultures in the contemporary world.

Time, Continuity, and Change
People, Places, and Environments
Culture
Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
Power, Authority, and Governance

Activity 4: Women Working During War

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Analyze Photograph

Use the National Archives and Records Administration *Photograph Analysis Worksheet* located in the Resources section of this document as a guide for analyzing the photograph of women taking a break after detasseling corn in the *Farming for the War Effort* story (page 3 of 3) in the *Nebraskans and World War II* section.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0801_0102.html

Nebraska State Social Studies/History Standards

Standard 12.3.17 Students will develop skills for historical analysis, such as the ability to:

- Analyze documents, records, and data, such as artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, journals, newspapers, and historical accounts.
- Evaluate the authenticity, authority, and credibility of sources.
- Formulate historical questions and defend findings based on inquiry and interpretation.
- Develop perspectives of time and place, such as the construction of various time lines of events, periods, and personalities in American history.
- Communicate findings orally, in brief analytical essays, and in a comprehensive paper.

Time, Continuity, and Change

Nebraska State Reading/Writing Standards

Standard 12.1 Reading

The standards for grade 1 presume that basic skills in reading have been taught before grade 4 and that students are independent readers. For those students who are still having difficulty in developing grade level reading skills, teachers should continue to work with students in those areas appropriate to the skills and needs of the individual student. Grades 8 through 12 should continue the emphasis on developing reading skills (skill building) while maintaining the emphasis on expanding the variety and depth of reading experiences.

Skill building should continue for all students in the following areas:

- Use knowledge of roots and affixes to read specialized vocabulary in the content areas.
- Use knowledge of literary allusions to read and understand word meanings.
- Adjust reading rate based on purposes for reading.
- Identify words and phrases that are causing comprehension difficulty.
- Identify meanings associated with prefixes, suffixes, and roots to understand specialized vocabulary in the content areas.
- Identify and use correctly in all content areas words with literal and figurative meanings, idioms, and structural patterns of words that indicate different meanings or functions.
- Use reference materials, such as a standard dictionary or thesaurus, to learn and confirm word meanings.

In order to expand the variety and depth of the reading experience, students should be assigned regular reading activities from reading lists developed by schools or other recognized sources.

1925 – 1949

NEBRASKA AND

WORLD WAR II

RESOURCES

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Nebraska Department of Education Academic Standards	
http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/AcademicStandards.htm	
Nebraska Department of Education Social Studies and History Standards	
http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/DOCUMENTS/TheHistory-SocialStudiesStandardsPDF.pdf	
National Archives	
http://www.archives.gov/index.html	
Library of Congress Learning Page Lesson Plans	
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/index.html	
Six Trait Writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Sentence Fluency, Word Choice, and Conventions.	
http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/concord/teacherlinks/sixtraits/sixtraits.html	
Nebraska Trailblazer World War II (4 th grade level)	
http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/material/trailist.htm	
Educational Packet: <i>What Did You Do in the War?</i> Nebraska History. Volume 72. No. 4 Winter 1991.	
http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/material/nebdata/WWII.pdf	

RESOURCES

How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interviews

By **Michael Young**, former History Department Chair, Omaha Burke High School

Oral history is the process of collecting an individual's spoken memories of his or her life, of the people he or she has known, and the events which he or she witnessed or participated in. Oral history is another primary source technique historians use to help them interpret the past. Oral histories can be used to supplement written records, complement secondary sources (what has been written by historical scholars), and to provide information that would exist in no other form.

But, using oral histories as a source can also pose problems. Interviewees are human. They can forget things. Their memories can play tricks on them. You have to be very careful as a historian when you use oral history as a source.

Teachers need to explore activities that help students strengthen their abilities to develop good interviewing techniques. The teacher might conduct a personal interview with a person representative of whomever the students will be interviewing (an elderly person, etc.) in the classroom.

Students could then practice interviewing one another in the classroom as part of a paired activity. The practice interviews can help students develop awareness of key techniques that will help them when they conduct an actual interview. The teacher and/or students can offer suggestions on what the characteristics of a good interview are. The teacher may also want to review passages from actual transcripts of interviews to illustrate key attributes of successful interviews.

Caution students that oral history (conducting interviews) is not a substitute for basic research. Students should research printed and electronic resources for background information and historical accounts of the issue, event, or personality being studied.

Preparing:

1. **Decide which individuals would be most appropriate to interview.** There are many ways to find someone to interview. Ask your family members. Contact veterans' organizations, church groups, civic organizations etc. Put a request in your local newspaper. It's a good idea when you find someone to have them complete a brief preliminary questionnaire to give you some background on the person.
2. **Schedule the interview as soon as possible and by telephone if possible.** Confirm the meeting time and date a day before conducting the Interview.
3. **Learn as much as possible about the topic of your interview before conducting the interview.** Contact the local media reporters for suggestions on related topics, sources, etc. Carefully read the person's completed questionnaire. Make up a list of questions from things on the questionnaire. Do enough preliminary research so that you are able to ask intelligent questions. Prepare a brief outline of questions you will be asking.
4. **Make sure you are familiar with your recorder.** Make sure any equipment you will be using is working properly (camcorder, tape recorder, etc.) and secure the interviewee's permission to record the interview. Practice to make sure you can operate. Have an extra tape in case the interview is longer, or in case the tape would break.
5. **When selecting the location for the interview, ask the interviewee where he or she would be most comfortable.** Choose a place that is quiet, where there won't be a lot of distractions.

RESOURCES

Oral Interviews (continued)

Conducting the Interview:

1. **Dress appropriately and create a good impression.**
2. **When you get to the interview, chat briefly with your interviewee to get him or her feeling relaxed and comfortable with you.** Explain, again, to the interviewee your purpose for the interview. Do not begin the interview abruptly. Introduce yourself, make the interviewee as comfortable as possible, and review the interview process you will be using. Be sure to let them know how much you appreciate getting the chance to talk with them.
3. **During the interview, keep things moving.** Express an interest in what the interviewee is saying and listen carefully. Make a conscious effort to be unbiased and try not to influence how the interviewee will answer your questions. Have your questions ready, but do not rely totally on them. By listening carefully to what the person is speaking about, you can come up with additional questions. Avoid too many open-ended questions that require long complicated answers.
4. **Use a tape recorder or camcorder to more accurately record the interview.** In addition, take notes and accurately record the correct spelling of name, places, etc. Silence can be productive. Do not rush the narrator to respond.
5. **You may need to have the interviewee sign a legal release form** enabling you to use any information gained through the interview for research purposes.
6. **Know the physical limitations of the person you are interviewing.** If the person has a hard time hearing, make sure you speak up loudly and clearly. Don't let an interview drag on endlessly. If you still have areas to cover, you might want to take a short break.
7. Have a good closing question that helps the interviewee summarize his/her statements and helps bring closure to the interview.
8. **Be sensitive.** Indicate to the interviewee that his/her answers will be reported anonymously if requested. Some subjects may provoke an emotional response. If a person starts to cry, you might turn off the tape recorder for a few minutes.
9. **After the interview,** send a thank you note to the person being interviewed within one week of the interview. If you transcribe the tape, send your interviewee a copy of the tape, or if you don't transcribe the entire tape, send them the paper you wrote.

Examining:

1. Prepare a written summary, note cards, and/or outline of the key points discussed in the interview that are relevant to your topic.
2. What perspective did the interviewee give you about the topic?
3. What did the interviewee tell you about the lifestyles, culture, political atmosphere, economic issues, education, etc. of the time period being studied?
4. Is the interviewee a dependable source of information? Did the interviewee have a difficult time remembering dates, places, and events?
5. Compare/Contrast the information given to you by the interviewee with the factual information you have learned from researching other primary and secondary sources.

RESOURCES

Oral Interviews (continued)

Determine Its Usefulness:

1. What information from this interviewee is useful for the development of your topic?
2. What does this information contribute to the development or analysis of your topic? How can incorrect information or biased viewpoints be used?
3. How can the information gained from your interview be most effectively used in your research project?
4. Oral history can be used to validate other data, to collect opinions reflecting different points of view, to acquire background or perspective, and to collect "up-to-date" data.
5. In summary, oral history can also demonstrate cause and effect, objectivity versus subjectivity, reality versus abstraction, fact versus opinion, and attitudes then and now.

Bibliography:

American Memory. Life History Manuscripts from the Folklore Project. WPA. Federal Writer's Project 1936-1940. Summary of Resources. U.S. History Content.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpaintro/wpahome.html>

Lanman, Barry A. and Mehaffy, George L. *Oral History in the Secondary Classroom.* Oral History Association, 1988. "Pointers How to Prepare for and Use an Oral Interview". Indiana History Day. Indiana: Historical Bureau, 1989. Located in Magazine of History. Summer 1990. p. 54.

RESOURCES

National Archives Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE

OBJECTS

ACTIVITIES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

B. Where could you find answers to them?

