

Local History Project 2019-2020

I. Purpose and Objectives

Why study local history?

During the course of this academic year, we'll be making an in depth study of the social, economic and political phenomena that have made the United States what it is today. However, we're all susceptible to removing ourselves from those events and trends, despite their very real impact on our community. In order to gain a much more nuanced and personal understanding of American history, we will be conducting an investigation into the history of our town of Littleton, Massachusetts. While it's easy to look at Littleton as almost static ("it's always been that way!"), we will come to understand that Littleton has in fact been very much tied to all of those movements and wars and revivals that we study in our textbook and primary sources. Indeed, while the past really is a foreign country to us, we'll come to find that it is not a foreign planet- despite all that is different about our town's past, we'll also find that much is familiar.

It is my hope that by seeing these phenomena acted out in Littleton, we will achieve the following:

- Learn and competently apply research skills, including but not limited to, the collection and evaluation of primary and secondary sources, the analysis and synthesis of these sources, and the proper use of citation.
- Practice and refine the ability to communicate in the written word.
- Identify and explain at least one cause and effect relationship that contributed to the development of Littleton as a community.
- Practice and refine new media skills.
- Engage in the creation of sound historical narratives rather than the passive consumption of historical narratives founded on myth and misconception.
- Demonstrate an understanding of history as a reflexive activity; that is, reflect on how on how community changed and stayed the same over time, and consider how our understanding of our town's past contributes to our beliefs in contemporary society.

To do this, each of you will be undertaking a research project on a topic in Littleton History. This research paper will use not only secondary sources on various parts of American History, but also primary sources that are particular to Littleton. We will have access to these sources through a partnership with the Littleton Historical Society and the Reuben Hoar Library.

As you can probably surmise, this project will require considerable time and effort. You will be researching and creating this project over the course of the year, all the while balancing your other commitments. However, do not lose heart- this project will be rewarding and even a little

(but only a little) fun! Moreover, we will afford time in class to work on our projects together. By its conclusion, you will not only have learned about the history of our country, but also the history of our town and a little bit about yourself.

II. **Milestones and Final Submission**

How and when we will accomplish this? (Dates to be supplied later)

- Explanation and Introduction to the Project: At the conclusion of the second unit
- Introduction to Research Paper Writing
- Visit to the Littleton Historical Society
- Topic selection:
 - See Topic selection sheet
- Reuben Hoar Library Field Trip
- Annotated Bibliography
 - During this meeting, we will discuss one primary source that will serve as the foundation for your project and one secondary source you are using to contextualize your topic.
- Research Question
- Updated Annotated Bibliography
- Outline:
 - See sample outline distributed by Mr. Miskinis
- One main idea
- Second main idea
- Rough draft
- AP Exam
- Final Draft
- Presentations
- Submission of final ***final*** draft to be placed in the Littleton Historical Society: Day of final exam (shared with me via Google Drive)

III. Littleton Historical Society and Reuben Hoar Library

How we will access the resources necessary to accomplish our goals?

- You must access at least four primary sources that are directly related to Littleton (or the Littleton Area)
- We will be making at least one class field trip to the Littleton Historical Society
- We will be making at least one class field trip to the Reuben Hoar Library
- Otherwise, you must go to these institutions on your own time! The Society is open during the following times:
 - Wednesday 1-4
 - Wednesday 7-9 until end of October
 - Every second Sunday from 2-4
 - Special hours by appointment

IV. Grading

How we will know we accomplished our objectives?

- The written portion of your project will count for 75% of your final exam grade
- The documentary will count for 25% of your final exam grade