

I found the discussion of the various WWII diaries fascinating. We took some time before class to read journals of Japanese in Japan during a period during the war and read their perspective of events. The journal dates didn't match up, but that was ok. What was interesting is getting the perspectives from soldiers, housewives, and students. In gifted and non-gifted classes alike we use the icons of depth and complexity (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I_4MUTM5s94), and one of the more challenging ones is the Multiple Perspective icon. With this icon students are taught to look at a story or event through the eyes of other participants and see a different way of looking at said event. The diary lecture allows for that and I have used parts of it to expand it to a lesson for my elementary level class.

I. Title of Lesson: Reading Journals

II. Grade Level and Subject Area: 4th grade, various subject areas

III. Standards

A. CCSS Literacy

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3](#)

Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.6](#)

Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9](#)

Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

B. CCSS Writing

Production and Distribution of Writing

W.4.4: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

W.4.6 With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others

Engaging Context: We will begin with some copied experts of the popular children's book *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*. Here we will discuss how events can be interpreted differently depending on the witness to the event and how people of all ages keep journals to chronicle day-to-day events and important ones too.

Measurable Objectives: Students will compare the journals and events detailed within. What kind of language does Hisako use to describe the bombs and enemy aircraft. How does she explain her feelings with words? Is Itabashi afraid, brave, or both about his duty? If he was our enemy, should we care about his feelings? Would a U.S. soldier have similar thoughts in those days? Are you like Mihoko? What kind of student is she?

Would you have felt the same way as her? When we look at Junipero Serra's diary, and compare San Diego to today, can we see the same things he did? What kind of observations would we make if we were on a boat like Dana but in today's world?

If you were a Native American, be it Miwok, Chumash, Cahuilla, or Hupa (AND happen to have a written language) how would you write about the events of the missions being created in your village?

Total Time: 60 Minutes minimum

Materials List:

- PDF version of The Hoover Institution Archives: The World War II Diaries of General Joseph W. Stilwell. Page 70, among other random pages. Page 70 refers to X-Mas time.

- PDF version of *Leaves from an Autumn of Emergencies* by Samuel Hideo Yamashita. Page 79 (the last entry from this soldier who went on a suicide mission), 199 (looking at a burned out building that she used to have coffee at), 271 (student entry where she refers to her taking class pictures at a morning assembly), and other pages as selected by teacher or students.

- PDF (or e-book) version of The Anza Expedition of 1775-1776, Diary of Pedro Font.

<https://books.google.com/books/reader?id=7XcUAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader&pg=GBS.PA13>

- PDF version of Junipero Serra's Baja California Journal. Page 42, among others

http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCAQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.sandiegohistory.org%2Fjournal%2Fv59-4%2Fv59-4beebesenkewicz.pdf&ei=_saxVNDZDo7coAS3iYGABQ&usg=AFQjCNEyT0YtYJVwwBSrpt67I2xskoe2yQ&sig2=C7BXjFSuHdAY0UVya99Vrw&bvm=bv.83339334,d.cGU

This journal provides some info about life in early California (a 4th grade standard).

- PDF, or copied from book, pages of Richard Henry Dana Jr.'s *Two Years before the Mast*. I read the book and have pictures of my visit to Dana Point in Southern California where there is a fully functioning replica of the ship *Pilgrim* that he was on. I'll have to look for the exact page numbers but I am most interested in having students see my current pictures of a visit to Santa Barbara and the mission. In his book in the mid 1830's he refers to being able to hear the mission bells ring from the ship! With that 101 freeway passing between the mission and coast today, not to mention the Amtrak, and regional airport, how would that be possible today? His last section (my favorite) is "Twenty-Four Years After" (the Mast). In this reflective journal of 1869 he laments and reflects on the changes, particularly San Francisco with the huge population then of 100,00 inhabitants!

- Copies of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*

Resources:

- *Tokugawa Order* "Maturation & Decay (eighteenth century)" Chapter 17 Edo Japan, Page 291. As it refers to how people who had more opportunity to travel with the creation of the National Road were able to keep diaries of their travels.

Procedure:

I would begin by going over some of the pages selected from *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* and discuss why keep a journal and how can different people see the same event differently? Using the icon of Multiple Perspective I would ask students to write about a particular incident that occurred in our class so that we can compare how similar and different interpretations can exist.

Using information that students have been exposed to we would use the California journals to compare contrast events and geographical changes from today and the time period the journals were written. Students will write in their journal differences in their school over the course of a few years. New buildings, new fence, murals, buildings in the community.

Finally we would briefly talk about the WWII conflict and jump in with these journals and have students discuss questions brought up in the *measurable objectives* section. As an extension we could try to find an appropriate clip from you tube of WWII and have student imagine that the screen is their window and to write their feelings on the clip.

Notes:

It's interesting how when you begin reading the Itabashi's journal you can quickly suspend the knowledge that he is the "enemy" and just go with his narrative. While he doesn't provide too much detail on the day-to-day activities, real feelings, or mundane activities, he does give detailed accounts on team members and military activities. In one section he talks about sinking two heavy cruisers and other assorted ships. This was well into his diary, and it was there that I finally remembered that the ships sunk were American and they had their own journals, feelings, and people waiting for them in the

States, possibly even here in Los Angeles. I didn't have anger towards the Japanese, but I found the different perspective of looking at the war from the other side intriguing.

Interesting that what I find interesting about Itabashi's final letter is not that "Japan definitely will win!" but to use his left over money to "construct a plane."

Hisako's journal is rather philosophical talking about the bombs as "falling wind chimes," the unimpressed sun shining for thousands of years while mankind fights itself, or even the look of the planes.

Mihoko's journal is interesting because of the lack of war. While she does mention singing war songs, and those comings and goings, it's primarily an interesting day-to-day record of her school life. I find it comforting.