

Jigsaw Activity: Henrich Miller (1702-1782)

Student information and course type		
High school	Grades 11-12	AP course (US History, World History)
Type of Activity		
Cooperative learning: jigsaw; partner work and class discussion		
Useful for differentiating instruction?		
Yes. Students work at their own pace, depend on each other to succeed, can bring in their individual strengths and help others with difficulties.		
Unit length		
4 lessons	Mini-unit	May be split into 2-4 sittings.
General Goals/ Deep Structure		
Students gain insights into early American society and first-generation immigrant settlements. They learn about religion and the press in an emerging nation. They look at biography as a genre. The jigsaw exercise trains the students' understanding of chronology and cause and effect. The unit's deep structure moves along the lines of historical thinking. It starts with collecting context information, moves on to source analysis and ends in a genre evaluation exercise.		
Content Addressed		
The teaching tool centers on Henry Miller, a German-born printer and publisher in 18 th -century Pennsylvania. It addresses the value of a free press, the role of the media in the political and civic culture of an emerging nation, the importance of group-specific media for immigrant settlements, the strong influence of religion and faith on people's private lives and business decisions as well as the complexities of immigration (moving back and forth between two continents, failed business ventures).		
Historical Thinking Skills		
Students assemble historical context information by reading a whole biography in a group effort (reading for gist, later for detail). The students offer research ideas, thus training to find historical questions. The focus of the lessons' tasks is the analysis of specified segments of the biographical article. Therefore, secondary source analysis with a special focus on the biographical genre is trained. Both reading and writing skills are fostered through respective assignments. Students evaluate the biographical genre with regard to its informational value and are asked to pass critical judgment based on their engagement with the text.		
Concrete Learning Objectives		
After the mini-unit, students should be able to outline the central role media played in immigrant settlements and the way newspapers etc. were influenced by secular and religious considerations. They should be able to offer some insights into the connection between a person's religion and their business decisions in early American society. Also, students should be able to explain the advantages and shortcomings of biographies as suitable sources for historical research. With a view to products, students should present two concise and well-written answers to the two research questions.		
What standards are covered (only for high school courses)?		
Common Core	NCHS	AP
RH: 1., 2., 3., 4., 8. WHST: 1., 2., 4.	US History: Era 4, Standard 2C.	US History: 4. The American Revolutionary Era; Theme: Colonial North America 1690-1754; World History: 5.4 Global Migration.
Materials		
http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=10		
Homework Assignment Provided?		
No.		

Level of challenge: ★★★★★

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German-American Business Biographies

1720 TO THE PRESENT



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Part 1 (Lesson 1-2)

(Lesson 1) Briefly introduce the students to the topic which will span the next four lessons. Mention that they will be working with the biography of a German-born printer and publisher who ran a very influential German newspaper in 18th-century Pennsylvania and witnessed the American Revolution first-hand. Present the biography's short preface to the class in order to put them all on the same page (read it out yourself, have a student read it out,...). Then, begin the jigsaw activity.

Preface to Miller's biography

"A printer, journalist, bookseller, and translator who had traveled much of the eighteenth-century Atlantic world before beginning his publishing business in Philadelphia in the early 1760s, Henrich Miller counteracted ethnic isolationism among German immigrants and ensured their investment and enfranchisement in the emerging public sphere of early national America. From his ardent rejection of the Stamp Act to his enthusiastic support of American Independence, Miller did not merely witness and report the momentous political, civic, and cultural changes occurring in North America, but he actively shaped and participated in these events."

(<http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=10>)

Biography segments

- 1) Introduction; Family and Ethnic Background
- 2) Business Development 1 (par. 1-7)
- 3) Business Development 2 (par. 8-14)
- 4) Business Development 3 (par. 15-17)
- 5) Social Status and Personality
- 6) Immigrant Entrepreneurship and Conclusion

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The jigsaw classroom is very simple to use. Just follow these steps:

1. Divide students into 6 jigsaw groups. The groups should be diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, and ability.
2. Appoint one student from each group as the leader. Initially, this person should be the most mature student in the group.
3. Assign each student to learn about one biography segment, making sure students have direct access only to their own segment. The segments should be numbered 1 to 6. Explain that every student reads only one segment of the biography, and that a full understanding of it will be reached by the end of the activity.
4. Give students time to read over their segment at least twice and become familiar with it. There is no need for them to memorize it.
5. Form temporary "expert groups" by having one student from each jigsaw group join other students assigned to the same segment. Give students in these expert groups time to discuss the main points of their segment and to rehearse the presentations they will make to their jigsaw group.
6. **(Lesson 2)** Bring the students back into their jigsaw groups.
7. Ask each student to present her or his segment to the group, following numbers 1 to 6. Encourage others in the group to ask questions for clarification. Students should take notes while listening to their peers.
8. Float from group to group, observing the process. If any group is having trouble (e.g., a member is dominating or disruptive), make an appropriate intervention. Eventually, it's best for the group leader to handle this task.
9. Reserve a few minutes at the end of the lesson for questions.

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Part 2 (Lesson 3-4)

Introduction

(Lesson 1) Have one student from each group (follow numbers 1-6) very briefly summarize what he/she remembers about their biography segment. Then ask the class what they would retain from Miller's life for their general knowledge of history and collect their ideas on the board.

Aspects that might come up are...

- the value of a free press
- the role of the media in the political and civic culture of an emerging nation
- the importance of group-specific media for immigrant settlements
- the strong influence of religion and faith on many people's private lives and business decisions
- the complexities of immigration (moving back and forth between two continents, failed business ventures)

Secondary Source Analysis

Provide the lesson's central questions (either A or B, B is more challenging and likely to take more time) by visualizing them on the board, via the smart board, etc.

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German-American Business Biographies

1720 TO THE PRESENT



A) Media in immigrant communities

1. Outline how German immigrants in Pennsylvania gained access to news items.
2. Analyze the role that Miller's group-specific media played in German immigrant settlements of 18th-century America.

Students should work in pairs and answer in writing (collaborative). As a text basis, have all students (re-)read par. 8-15 of the *Business Development* chapter in Miller's biography as well as the *Immigrant Entrepreneurship* chapter.

B) Religion and business decisions

1. Name and describe the incidents when religion and faith influenced Miller's business decisions.
2. Analyze how business and religion are intertwined in Miller's case of immigrant entrepreneurship.

Students should work in pairs and answer in writing (collaborative). As a text basis, have all students (re-)read *Family and Ethnic Background*, *Business Development* and *Social Status and Personality*.

Class Discussion

(Lesson 2) Discuss the following question with the students in free conversation:

How useful is the biography that has been read and analyzed for learning about A) media in immigrant communities or B) religion and business decisions in 18th-century America (discuss according to the chosen analysis questions)? What are the advantages of this biography, what are its shortcomings with regard to gaining general knowledge of history?

Collect ideas on the board and try to come to a first evaluation of the biographical genre. Possible answers could include...

Immigrant Entrepreneurship

German-American Business Biographies

1720 TO THE PRESENT



Advantages of biography	Shortcomings of biography
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- an individual case gives us a very vivid and concrete idea of a historical phenomenon – it makes history “come to life”- biography stresses how history is shaped by human agency, not by anonymous forces- ...	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- it centers on an individual case, which makes it hard to draw generalized conclusions- biography is a construction following special narrative conventions, which need to be taken into account (a “dramaturgy” of climax, cohesion, closure)- ...