

Name of Educator: Holly Yates

Title: Introduction to Symbolic Interactionism

Subject Area: Sociology

State: Tennessee

Description of Plan: This lesson will occur toward the beginning of the Sociology course as students investigate the Symbolic Interactionist perspective. Symbols are seen as defining individuals and giving people meaning. A Symbolic Montage will be created by the students for themselves as well as for a participant in the Homestead Steel Strike of 1892. Steffi Denike's film "The River Ran Red" will be used as an introduction to the idea of a Symbolic Montage. Through the use of symbols, students will explore the meaning of symbols as well as understand better the individuals involved in the 1892 Homestead Strike.

1. Introduction: This lesson will follow an introductory description of three Sociological Perspectives: Functionalism, Conflict Theory and Symbolic Interactionism. I find that the symbolic interactionist perspective is the most challenging for students to understand. In this lesson, which is part of the Sociology Introductory Unit, students will use symbols to define themselves as well as define the characters in the Homestead Steel Strike.
2. The unit goal is a workable understanding of the Three Sociological Perspectives. This lesson's goal is the application of the **Symbolic Interactionist Perspective**.
3. State Standards require students to define and use the Symbolic Interactionist Perspective in describing a past or current event.
4. Depending on the length of the class period, this lesson could take three - four class periods.

Day One: The teacher will introduce students to the idea of symbolic montage and will show an example. The example I use will have four component pieces and will be a description of me, but student will have to figure out what work this individual does. Students will then view the film, The River Ran Red paying particular attention to the use of the symbolic montages which describe the characters. The film is available on YouTube: The River Ran Red, Homestead, PA, 1892 from the Battle of Homestead Foundation. The film is about an hour in duration. After viewing the film, students will be asked to write a description of one of the characters from the symbolic montage shown in the film.

Day Two: Students will get into groups according to the character that was chosen to describe. Students will share their descriptions and be attentive to similarities and differences in their work. Then, students will be asked to create a symbolic montage that describes themselves. Students will be limited to choosing four items for this Montage. Students will work individually and will create a digital montage. As part of this assignment, students will be asked to justify in writing why they chose the symbols they chose for their montage.

Day Three: Students will be assigned a character to research from the Homestead Steel Strike of 1892. The character list will include:

- Emma Goldman
- Alexander Berkman
- Hugh O'Donnell
- John McLuckie
- Andrew Carnegie
- Henry Clay Frick
- Skilled Workers
- Unskilled Workers
- Wives of the Workers
- Pinkerton Detectives
- National Guardsmen
- Press Reporters

Students will then research their character. A list of resources will be provided to students for their use. Students will then select four items for the character's digital montage. Students must be prepared to share their montage with the class and again justify why they chose the symbols that they did.

Day Four: Students will share their symbolic montage with the class and explain their character as well as why the symbols are included in the montage.

5. Informal Assessment will include the student description of their own symbolic montage. This assessment will ensure that students understand the concept of a symbolic montage. Formal Assessment will include their character montage as well as their justification of the symbols chosen.
6. Technological Needs include computers for student use as well as an application like Canva for digital montage creation.
7. The list of resources for students to use for their research can include:
 - HistoricPittsburgh.org
 - Battleofhomestead.org
 - Library.pitt.edu
 - Pitt.libguides.com
 - Riversofsteel.com