



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

## **GENERATIONS JOURNAL**

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### **Activity Description**

Students will keep a historical “journal/diary” where they take on the persona of a person living in the various historical periods studied throughout the year. The students will write entries that chronicle the events they learned about from a first-person point of view, causing them to look at events in history with a new perspective.

The journal/diary should be a continuing activity throughout the year. You can account for the different times in history by having the students pretend they are characters of different generations of the same family (i.e., one character writes about colonization, then when it’s time to write about the American Revolution they can write as the grandchild of the first character).

Students should use a variety of resources to help their entries sound authentic. They should gather facts from both primary and secondary sources to assimilate into their writing. Writing should not only include major events in history, but also take into account the weather, mood of the country, and any other extenuating circumstances that may have affected life during that period of time.

You should share an example prior to starting. The *Dear America* series provides an example of how this activity works.

### **Suggested Grade Level**

Upper elementary through high school

### **Estimated Time to Complete**

This will be worked on throughout the school year but will require 60–90 minutes per week.

### **Objectives**

Students will

- write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences;
- integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably;
- integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue;
- analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic;

- analyze in detail a series of events described in a text;
- determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them;
- evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence;
- explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

### **Materials Needed**

- An example of a journal entry (real or fictional) that describes a historical event
- Notebook
- Primary sources
- Internet access
- *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* textbook

### **Examples of Possible Journal Entry Topics**

#### Colonization

- Explain in detail why you are moving to the New World. Provide information about who is going with you and what you are taking on your voyage. Include how you are paying for your journey.
- Write an entry about where you and your family have chosen to settle, including why you chose that specific area as opposed to any other. How are you making your living and how does this relate to the area you have chosen to live?
- A “daily life entry” should include the everyday activities that have to be completed as well as the hardships you face.