



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
1982 Volume I: Society and the Detective Novel

The Student Detective—A Textbook Investigation

Guide for Curriculum Unit 82.01.04
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Innate curiosity can make students natural detectives. This unit attempts to get students involved with their social studies textbook by allowing them to search and question the information as presented. As students of history, the students should realize that the textbook is a collection of evidence and it is a guide in learning. By questioning the information, the students can move closer to the people, places, and events of history with understanding. By assuming the role of a detective, the students can investigate the textbook information and be continually thrilled at the moments of discovery. The student detective will gather facts, analyze evidence, and present solutions based on their inquiry. Thus the textbook can become a meaningful challenge to their quizzical minds. The unit is designed for use at the eighth grade level with the classroom reference being the text—"The United States and the Other Americas," published by Macmillan Company. The unit's use need not be limited by this textbook because the examples for investigation are found in most eighth grade level books. Indeed, at any grade or achievement level, the students would benefit from exercises dealing with historical inquiry. The classroom lessons should serve as motivational aids and they should be used before the textbook investigation is undertaken. The three lessons isolate human skills that all students must develop. The objective of the lessons is to make students aware of the importance of observation, including reading, and listening.

(Recommended for 8th grade Social Studies and 10th grade American History)

Key Words

Teaching Methods History

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