 Construction of modern histories – JFK cold case

Duration - 20 hours

This document references the [Modern History Stage 6 Syllabus](https://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/modern-history-stage6/) © 2017 NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales.

Description of unit

Students explore the different types of histories, including narrative history, biography, social and cultural history. A close investigation is undertaken to examine the issues of evidence and interpretation and how historians in the make sense of the abundance of source materials when constructing an historical account. These themes and issues of the syllabus are taught explicitly and also explored and integrated into a study of the JFK Assassination.

Focus questions

What types of history do we have and how do historians construct their histories. How can these issues be explored in the study of the JFK Assassination.

Historical concepts and skills

Analysis and use of sources, historical interpretation, Historical investigation and research, Explanation and communication.

Outcomes

* MH11-3 analyses the role of historical features, individuals, groups and ideas in shaping the past
* MH11-6 analyses and interprets different types of sources for evidence to support an historical account or argument
* MH11-7 discusses and evaluates differing interpretations and representations of the past
* MH11-9 communicates historical understanding, using historical knowledge, concepts and terms, in appropriate and well-structured forms
* MH11-10 discusses contemporary methods and issues involved in the investigation of modern history

Assessment

Formative assessment task – JFK the Cold Case – multimodal presentation and research.

| Outcomes/content | Teaching and learning | Differentiation |
| --- | --- | --- |
| * An overview of the different types of histories, including narrative history, biography, social and cultural history
* The role of the evidence, interpretation and perspective in the construction of historical accounts.

Historical investigation and research* Frame questions to guide historical inquiry and develop a coherent research plan (ACHMH004)
* Use evidence from a range of sources to inform investigation and research (ACHMH005)
* The role of the evidence, interpretation and perspective in the construction of historical accounts.

Analysis and use of sources* Explain the meaning and value of sources for an historical inquiry (ACHMH007, ACHMH009)
* Analyse and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop reasoned claims (ACHMH008)
* The role of selectivity, emphasis and omission in the construction of historical accounts
* Problems associated with the construction of modern histories: the abundance of documentary materials, the incomplete nature of evidence and political controls to source materials, including classified records.
* Identify and analyse problems relating to sources in the investigation of the past (ACHAH011)
 | Types of HistoryInquiry question – what different types of history are there and what similarities and differences do they share?* Students investigate the origins of history. Use a copy of Herodotus; The Histories and explore the role and nature of ‘story’ in History.-examine story-telling vs. fact.

Narrative history* Students investigate the role of narrative history teacher demonstrates some common examples and explore the role and nature of ‘selectivity’ in narrative history.
* History of Australia – Manning Clark.

Biographical histories* Students explore the nature of Biographical history. What is the structure of a Biography and what are some famous Biographical histories?
* Winston Churchill: The Last Lion: Winston Spencer Churchill. William Manchester.

Auto-biographical histories* What issues arise with auto-biographical histories?
* Nelson Mandela’s’ Long Walk to Freedom.

Social and cultural history* Students explore the different areas of society and culture which are the focus of popular social and cultural histories.
* Guns, Germs and Steel: A short history of everybody for the last 13,000 years – Jared Diamond.
* Rockin' in time: a social history of rock-and-roll-David P. Szatmary.
* Using ICT In pairs, students identify the different types of history. What are their common characteristics and differences? Draw up a table to record findings.

the image shows a table with the headings "narrative", "biographical", "auto-biographical" and "socual and cultural". The headings down the first column read "purpose", "audience", "style" and "structure".* Students discuss the strength and weakness of each type of history employed by historians when constructing accounts.
* Interview a friend or family member about the types of history are they are most familiar with.
* Visit to a local book shop and make a list of the ‘types’ of history you find on the shelves – record some titles.

Digital and multimedia histories* Students investigate a number documentary histories and historical-miniseries or history documentaries found on YouTube.

Class Debate* Is it possible for anyone write and produce history?

JFK and the assassination – Dallas, 1963* Students are provided an overview of the JFK Assassination by the teacher using images of JFK and the key individuals and events association with the assassination in Dallas and its aftermath.
* Students are introduced to the key ideas of ‘political assassination’ ‘conspiracy theory’
* Students view YouTube clip – [The JFK assassination (The actual footage) Rare/Vintage](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdxRGfTjP18)
* Students are provided with structured questions from the clip. Examples could include:

Student questions* Describe the atmosphere surrounding the visit of President Kennedy to Dallas in 1963.
* What are some of the important events demonstrated in the clip regarding the motorcade and the route taken by President Kennedy?
* Why do you think this mystery continues?
* What drives conspiracy theories about the Kennedy Assassination?
* In pars, student use ICT to structure a response about the events of 11 November, 1963 in Dallas, Texas.
* Writing task – use ICT to research and word process a response.
* Key Inquiry question – why do numerous conspiracy theories surrounding the assassination of JFK exist, which one are most plausible and why.

The role of evidence in the JFK assassination* Students access information relating to the role of evidence in an historical investigation, students select a range of ICT sources which provide an account of the events of the assassination.
* Student are required to provide an analysis of the context of each source and explore its value and usefulness to an historian study the assassination of JFK.
* Students construct a table to record findings for Example:

the image is a table with the headings "source" and "interpretation, perspective, usefulness".  the headings down the first column read "the zapruder film", "magic bullet" and "warren report"Evidence on JFK assassination* [The Zapruder Film](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iU83R7rpXQY)
* [Lee Harvey Oswald – Biography](https://www.biography.com/people/lee-harvey-oswald-9430309)
* [Warren Commission Report – National Archives of America](https://www.archives.gov/research/jfk/warren-commission-report)
* [‘The Magic Bullet’ Theory – JFK Assassination Magic Bullet Computer Recreation](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfSXkfV_mhA)
* [Badge Man at Grassy Knoll](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtOCJplSLf8)

Construction of historical accounts* From their source-based research, students engage in class discussion and brainstorm their ideas about the amount of evidence in the Kennedy assassination and the need to critically analyse each source particularly those that suggest a conspiracy for their emphasis, selectivity and omission to prove a conspiracy theory.
* Students view the ABC 4 Corner documentary to understand how eyewitness testimony, and a digitally enhanced Zapruder film, in combination with several other home movies shot at the time explore the nature of historical evidence about the assassination.
* Students are introduced to the issues of selectivity, emphasis and omission that are involved when constructing an historical account and consider why some sources of evidence may be absent in accounts of conspiracy theories.

the image is a table with the headings "evidence" and "selectivity, emphasis and omission".  the first column headings read "zapruder film", "digitally enhanced zapruder film" and "bell and nix films"The incomplete nature of evidence and political controls to source materials, including classified records* Students review TIME Magazine article regarding the release of files on October 2017 from the American government on the JFK assassination.
* [Time magazine – History](http://time.com/4606082/jfk-assassination-secrets/)
* Explore with the students the nature of the political controls surrounding evidence which is released to the public and the manner in which National Archives are controlled by governments.
* Provide a guided explanation of the 1992 JFK Records Act which resulted from Oliver Stone's 1991 movie JFK, and led to a revived fascination with the idea of a cover-up--the government was given 25 years to make public all related files. On Oct. 26, 2017 3,000 never-before-seen documents, along with 34,000 previously redacted files, are scheduled for release.
* Students undertake ICT and library research on the abundance of documentary evidence on the Kennedy assassination and use this information to populate a table such as the one below.

the image is a table with the headings "sources of evidence", "documentary materials" and "incomplete nature of evidence".  the headings down the first column read "time magazine", "movie JFK oliver stone", "youtube conspiracy theories" and "other evidence"Problems associated with the construction of modern histories* Students research the ‘latest’ Kennedy conspiracy by Australian detective Colin McLaren that the Secret Service was responsible for shooting Kennedy from the rear support vehicle in the motorcade and then organised a cover up.
* Students also will view a YouTube clip exploring this theory and the 1967 book written by Bonar Menninge Mortal Error; The Shot that Killed JKF.

[JFK: The Smoking Gun by Colin McLaren](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaFAZDeTexk)[Mortal Error: The Shot That Killed JFK by Bonar Menninger](https://www.bookdepository.com/Mortal-Error-Bonar-Menninger/9781490952420)Historical reflection task* After exploring the above conspiracy theories on JFK students are asked to examine and reflect upon the process of constructing an historical account, student should address the following.
* the abundance of documentary material
* the incomplete nature of evidence
* Access to source materials
* The access to digital media
* The role of Popular and narrative history

Formative group presentation task – JFK the cold casePart A – each group is randomly provided a well – known conspiracy theory for example, Lone Gunman, CIA, Mafia, LBJ, Secret Service. Students must present and justify their particular conspiracy theory to the class using multimodal presentation methods, which could include.* ICT
* Multimedia
* Drama
* Student re-enactment
* Animation
* Class debate
* Interview
* Roll play
* Student recoding using IPads.

Part B: Students must collaboratively produce a response to the following question.“What problems are faced by historians when they are constructing historical account of the past’?Ensure you make reference to the JFK Case study for examples. | ExtensionUse ICT to research [Manning Clarkes History of Australia](https://independentaustralia.net/australia/australia-display/the-history-man-manning-clark-centenary-1915-2015%2C7465). What criticisms are made about this famous narrative history?StructuredUse laminated cards to create a storyboard of the different types of history.ExtensionStudents are to use ICT to explore the following types of history and record their findings.* -Oral history
* -Grand-narrative
* -Macro History
* -Micro History
* Structured

Use a series of laminated photos of Kennedy and the assassination to storyboard the events in Dallas, 1963.ExtensionUse the Warren Commission report to complete research on Assassination of JFK including exploring the Table of Content and selecting 4 areas for investigation and exploration.StructuredScaffold task to present the key findings of the Warren Commission. Using a graphic organiser. |

Resource list

[Narrative History explained:](http://understandingsociety.blogspot.com.au/2008/11/narrative-history.html)

[JFK Rare/Vintage](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NdxRGfTjP18)

[Time magazine](http://time.com/4606082/jfk-assassination-secrets/)

[JFK: The Smoking Gun by Colin McLaren](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaFAZDeTexk)

[Mortal Error: The Shot That Killed JFK, by Bonar Menninger](https://www.bookdepository.com/Mortal-Error-Bonar-Menninger/9781490952420)