“Why Study History?” Historical Reasoning Activity (Teacher Intro.)

Teachers: I created this with the intent of making my “why study history” day (usually day 2 of AP World for me) a bit more relevant and engaging. As of posting this, I haven’t tried it yet, but I think this should get some good discussion on what historical reasoning skills (or historical thinking skills) are and how to spot them in the wild.

I plan to divide students into eight groups of four to five (my classes are always packed the first week) and have groups rotate to each station where they will get a “DBQ like” primary source which is purposely not historical. Students then have 5 minutes to determine which HRS it applies to and describe why. It’s meant to be easy, but is also meant to ask students to think about they interpret each skill.

Each student (or each group, perhaps) will receive the first page and turn it in. Each “DBQ” document will already be at each set of desks. I also made a PowerPoint to go with this on the Drive titled “Why Study History Historical Reasoning Activity PPT.pptx” which can be used to guide the discussion.

Handouts:

- “Why Study History” worksheet (see next page)

- Copy of page 9 of 2017-2018 CED (also on a slide on PPT)

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“Why Study History?” Historical Reasoning Activity

To help us understand why we study history, we are going to practice some AP History Reasoning Skills. To do this, you will work in a group of 4-5 students to identify which History Reasoning Skill is being practiced at each station. There are 4 skills and 4 stations, so you can go back and re-consider each choice as you move along OR simply use process of elimination if you are feeling confident. You will have 20 minutes to complete this activity. Use the back if needed.

To sum up the above: at each station you should ask yourself “**which History Reasoning Skill** is best depicted in this source?” Fill out the chart below as you move along. Only one chart needs to be handed in for each group. No two skills will be the same, so use all four.

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| Station 1 Primary Source: *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* Excerpt (1985) |
| Skill depicted:  Our reasoning (2-3 sentences – be concise!): |
| Station 2 Primary Source: |
| Skill depicted:  Our reasoning (2-3 sentences – be concise!): |
| Station 3 Primary Source: *Star Wars* Opening Crawl (1977) |
| Skill depicted:  Our reasoning (2-3 sentences – be concise!): |
| Station 4 Primary Source: |
| Skill depicted:  Our reasoning (2-3 sentences – be concise!): |

**Document 1**

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| Source: Excerpt from *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, a popular children’s book written by Laura Numeroff, 1985.  If you give a mouse a cookie, he's going to ask for a glass of milk.  When you give him the milk, he'll probably ask you for a straw. When he's finished, he'll ask you for a napkin.  Then he'll want to look in a mirror to make sure he doesn't have a milk mustache. When he looks in the mirror, he might notice his hair needs a trim. So he'll probably ask for a pair of nail scissors. |

**Document 2**

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| Source: Graph from *Runners World* magazine, 2014. The visual source depicts how the authors viewed each show as put on a spectrum between cushioning versus amount of material used.  https://www.runnersworld.com/sites/runnersworld.com/files/fall2014shoegrid.jpg  Image from “Fall 2014 Shoe Guide: Stability in a Variety of Packages,” running shoe review guide printed in *Runner’s World* magazine, by Adam W. Chase, 2014. |

**Document 3**

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| Source: “Opening crawl” sequence from the introduction of *Star Wars*, one of the most groundbreaking science-fiction films, 1977.  STAR  WARS  A long time ago in a galaxy far,  far away....  Episode IV  A NEW HOPE  It is a period of civil war.  Rebel spaceships, striking  from a hidden base, have won  their first victory against  the evil Galactic Empire.  During the battle, Rebel  spies managed to steal secret  plans to the Empire's  ultimate weapon, the DEATH  STAR, an armored space  station with enough power  to destroy an entire planet.  Pursued by the Empire's  sinister agents, Princess  Leia races home aboard her  starship, custodian of the  stolen plans that can save her  people and restore  freedom to the galaxy.... |

**Document 4**

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| Source: “Counting the Change,” article about digital media published in *The Economist*, August 16, 2013.  After years of wreaking havoc, the internet is helping media companies to grow. PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWC), a professional-services firm, reckons that revenues for online media and entertainment will increase by around 13% a year for the next five years. Even in music, which took the biggest hit from the internet, downloads are something to sing about. For the first time in over a decade global music-industry revenues grew last year, by about 0.2%, according to the IFPI, a trade group. Online sales just about made up for the drop in physical ones for the first time. Subscription services, such as Spotify and Deezer, let people stream songs over the internet either for a subscription or free with adverts. Online radio is also growing. On-demand and radio streaming services raked in about $1 billion, 15% of the industry’s revenues in America in 2012. |