

Aim: Did Jacob Riis's photography capture the immigrant experience accurately?

Students Will Be Able To:

Analyze historical photographs

Create investigative questions for future research

Investigate the accuracy and intent of Riis's photographs

Evaluate research findings

Write a persuasive essay

Motivation:

1. Students will be told that they will be taking a look at two photographs of immigrants in New York. Then the students will take a minute to *observe* a Riis photo (pg 56) and The LaFata Wedding photograph.
2. Students will take a few minute to identify all that they see in the photographs.
3. The teacher will ask the students a question, "Based on these two photographs, which of these photographs is the most accurate portrayal of immigrants in New York? – And Why"

Activity One:

1. The class will be divided into groups, and each group will receive one of these two photographs.
2. Each group will be responsible for creating a list of questions that they would need to have answered about the photographs in order to answer the aim question.
3. After the groups are finished brainstorming, the students will share out their answers and the teacher will create a master list of research questions on the board.
4. The class will then determine one question from the master list that they would like to focus on and bring back information to the class.

Students should brainstorm questions such as: What year where these photographs taken? Who took the photographs? What was the purpose of the photograph? How long had these immigrations been in America for? What was the context?*

Activity Two:

1. The teacher will distribute readings about the nature, intent and purpose of both photographs.
2. The students will need to read and look for the answer to their questions.
3. The students will then share out their research.
4. The teacher will write the answers on the board.

Homework:

1. Students will investigate one more question that was in the master list and bring in information to share with the class. The students will use their research skills to effectively find reliable information and to cite their sources appropriately.

Next Day Project:

1. Once the students return to class, the students will share their findings and create a bibliography of their sources.
2. Then the students will begin their persuasive essay based on this statement: Jacob Riis's photographs are an accurate portrayal of the immigrant experience in New York.
3. The students will use their information to then write a persuasive essay with the goal of persuading the reader of their argument.