

Application Exercises Provide Deep-Dive Learning in US History

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*“Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”
– George Santayana*

For many years history teachers have recited this famous, if somewhat overused, quotation to reinforce the critical role of the discipline. But how are students to develop an actual skill set? Can you practice using historical lessons to evaluate current events? Our answer is yes!

If you’re a social studies teacher, you may already be familiar with the resources from the [Turning Points in US History series](#). They offer interactive narratives that explore pivotal events, like Jefferson’s foreign policy, Jackson’s Nullification Crisis, Lincoln’s Civil War and FDR’s New Deal. This series features formative assessments and a cumulative online quiz. But that is not all.



Added to the Test Your Knowledge section of each is a compelling online activity that hearkens back to a sometimes neglected step in [Bloom’s Taxonomy](#) – application.

Here’s how it works: As students investigate [Voting Rights for Women](#), for example, they first complete the interactive narrative, encountering multiple opportunities for formative assessment. In the Test Your Knowledge section, The Practice and Quiz provide students with summative assessment of the historical content. Apply then invites them to practice higher-level thinking skills, in effect to consider proposed contemporary scenarios using knowledge from the past.

In the voting rights resource, for example, students are challenged to associate what they’ve learned with a scenario where 16- and 17-year-olds petition for the right to vote. Each step of the real-world scenario in this Apply activity corresponds with steps in the historic 72-year struggle undertaken by the woman suffrage movement. It serves both as a great review and as an opportunity to broaden student perspective on this turning point in US history.

Similarly, students investigating the social, economic and political changes on the **Homefront during WWII** apply that knowledge as they work through key steps that might be taken in a smaller-scale crisis.

The Apply activity asks students to explain any connections they can make from the scenario to the historical event they just studied. This back-and-forth association promotes critical thinking and should inspire them to identify additional scenarios for comparison and discussion.

History does not exist in a vacuum, so don't miss this opportunity for students to dive deeper and take their learning to a new level.

These US history titles from the **Turning Points** series have Apply sections:

[Early Foreign Policy](#)
[Voting Rights for Women](#)
[WWII: The Homefront](#)
[FDR and the New Deal](#)

[Lincoln and the Civil War](#)
[Jackson and the Nullification Crisis](#)
[Nixon and the Watergate Scandal](#)

