Bracketology - Incorporating Bracket Competitions in Social Studies

Easily and Effortlessly incorporating evaluation level writing assignments into secondary classrooms.
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Learning Target/Objective

I can easily and efficiently incorporate upper level Bloom's writing activities into my instruction by encouraging students to evaluate the significance of historical events, documents and individuals.
Rigor & Relevance/ Bloom’s Taxonomy

**Knowledge/Awareness**

1. Knowledge in one discipline
2. Apply in discipline
3. Apply across disciplines
4. Apply to real-world predictable situations
5. Apply to real-world unpredictable situations

**Application Model**

**Quadrant A - Acquisition**
Students gather and store bits of knowledge and information. Students are primarily expected to remember or understand this knowledge.

**Quadrant B - Application**
Students use acquired knowledge to solve problems, design solutions and complete work. The highest level of application is to apply knowledge in new and unpredictable situations.

**Quadrant C - Assimilation**
Students extend and refine their acquired knowledge to be able to use that knowledge automatically and routinely to analyze and solve problems and create solutions.

**Quadrant D - Adaptation**
Students have the competence to think in complex ways and to apply their knowledge and skills. Even when confronted with perplexing unknowns, students are able to use extensive knowledge and skill to create solutions and take action that further develops their skills and knowledge.

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**Bloom’s Taxonomy**

- **Remembering**
  - Find or remember information
  - List, find, name, identify, locate, describe, memorize, define

- **Understanding**
  - Understanding & making sense out of information
  - Interpret, summarize, explain, infer, paraphrase, discuss

- **Applying**
  - Use information in a new (but similar) situation
  - Use, diagram, make a chart, draw, apply, solve, calculate

- **Analyzing**
  - Take info apart & explore relationships
  - Categorize, examine, compare/contrast, organize

- **Evaluating**
  - Critically examine info & make judgements
  - Judge, test, critique, defend, criticize

- **Creating**
  - Use information to create something new
  - Design, build, construct, plan, produce, devise, invent
Top 10 Activity Rubrics

https://tinyurl.com/txcssbracket
Writing Assignment: Evaluate the significance of individuals and events in the Texas Revolution to create a combined Top 10 List that includes the individuals and events you think were most important in determining the outcome of the Texas Revolution.

Requirements of the Writing Assignment

* 10 Points for each Ranking

Look at all the individuals and events during the Texas Revolution. Determine which 10 individuals and events were most significant to Texas Revolution. Rank them in order from least (10 being the least important) to greatest (1 being the most important).

Each individual or event in your Top 10 List should include:
1. the significance of each individual or event
2. an explanation as to why you believe in your ranking.

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Example:

Top 10 Individuals and Events of the Texas Revolution

1. Sam Houston: He was the Commander of the Texan Army and led the Texan army to victory in the Texas Revolution. I believe Sam Houston is the single most important individual or event in the Texas Revolution because without his leadership, Texas never has a chance. Houston was outnumbered, had fewer supplies, less experience, and lost a large portion of his army at the Alamo and Goliad. However, he use successful delaying tactics, which ultimately led to the Texan victory at San Jacinto.

2. San Jacinto: Sam Houston was able to win the final decisive battle in the Texas revolution. Houston was not only able to capture Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, but he was able to capture a large portion of the Mexican Army in just eighteen minutes. I believe San Jacinto is the single most important event in the Texas Revolution because the smaller Texan army was able to effectively divide the larger Mexican army and capture the political/military leader of Mexico with only minor casualties.
United States History  
Top 10 Individuals and Events of Civil War  
Teacher: 8th Grade Social Studies

Writing Assignment: Evaluate the significance of individuals and events in the Civil War to create a combined Top 10 List that includes the individuals and events you think were most important in determining the outcome of the Civil War.

**Requirements of the Writing Assignment**  
* 10 Points for each Ranking

Look at all the individuals and events during the Civil War. Determine which 10 individuals and events were most significant to the Civil War. Rank them in order from least (10 being the least important) to greatest (1 being the most important).

Each individual or event in your Top 10 List should include:
1. the significance of each individual or event
2. an explanation as to why you believe in your ranking.

Example:

Top 10 Individuals and Events of the Civil War

10.

3.

2. Gettysburg Address: This was .... It is number 2 on my list because ...

1. Abraham Lincoln: This was .... It is number 1 on my list because ...
World History
Top 5 River valley & Classical Civilizations

Writing Assignment: Evaluate the significance of River valley & Classical Empires to create a Top 5 List that includes the contributions of each empire to our modern civilization.

Requirements of the Writing Assignment

* 20 Points for each Ranking

Look at all the significant empires that we covered over the last two units. Determine which empires that were most significant to our modern civilization. Rank them in order from least (10 being the least important) to greatest (1 being the most important).

Each individual or event in your Top 5 List should include:

1. the significance or contributions of each Empire
2. an explanation as to why you believe in your ranking.

Example:

Top 5 River and Classical Civilizations

5.

1. ... is significant to Global history because ... I believe ... is the |most important civilization because...
United States History
Top 10 Individuals and Events of the 1960s

Writing Assignment: Evaluate the significance of individuals, laws, documents and events during the 1960s to create a combined Top 10 List that includes the individuals, laws, documents and events you think were most important in the development of 21st century America.

Requirements of the Writing Assignment

* 10 Points for each Ranking

Look at all the individuals, laws, documents and events during the 1960s Determine which 10 individuals, laws, documents and events were most significant during the 1960s. Rank them in order from least (10 being the least important) to greatest (1 being the most important).

Each individual or event in your Top 10 List should include:

1. the significance of each individuals, laws, documents and events
2. an explanation as to why you believe in your ranking.

Example:

Top 10 Individuals and Events during the 1960s

10.

3. Vietnam War
2. Title IX:
1. Martin Luther King Jr.:
Pointers for a successful Top-10 activity

- Identify a group of Standards (TEKS) that can be bundled together into a Top 10 activity.
- 10 is not a magic number, you can modify the number to meet your designed time-limit.
- Provide your students with sentence stems. It will help them get started and encourage the production of a more orderly product.
- I would encourage students to utilize their notes.
- Remind the students their rankings are their own opinions. There are no right or wrong answers (as long as they provide adequate justifications).
Bracketology – an AP/PreAP strategy

- Create a survey with the desired historical topics.
- Have the students complete the survey the night prior to the activity or as an exit ticket the previous class period.
- Create a class/grade level bracket based on student responses.
- For each pair of historical figures, documents or events, have the students:
  1. Explain the significance of the individual, document, or event to the American history.
  2. Justify their decision.
Impact of historical eras on American History

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Q & A

You have Questions
We have Answers
Top 10 Activity Rubrics

https://tinyurl.com/txcssbracket
Closing Question

▪ How could you use this instructional strategy in your classroom?
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