

LESSON PLAN 74: TwHistory

Objective: Re-enact historical events using microblogging tool Twitter.

Age range: 10-16



INTRODUCING TWHISTORY

This is a website that has been developed to help students 'live' history. Using Twitter, they can 'act out' moments in history using tweets. As it says: "Pick an event. Pick a person. Do the research and prepare the Tweets. Then watch history unfold via the most modern of experiences – Twitter."

DEVELOPING SKILLS

History, timelines, writing and discussion, literacy, dialogue, computer skills.

YOU WILL NEED

Computer and internet access.

METHOD

1. Talk to your students about the concept of re-telling historical events by acting out the parts of the people involved. Discuss how this can be done and the benefits it can bring (such as getting a better insight into the thoughts and actions of the person, a deeper understanding of events and how they unfold, and so on).
2. Explain that you're going to re-enact an event using Twitter and introduce them to TwHistory.

SOMETHING PREPARED EARLIER

Get a feel for the site by looking at re-enactments that others have already created. From the sinking of the Titanic to the assassination of John F. Kennedy, the Battle of Waterloo to the mummification of Tutankhamen, there are some great events to choose from. To see what's available, click the 'Browse Re-Enactments' tab or search by keyword(s).

3. Get your students to pick an historical event and real figures who were there. Create Twitter accounts for the individual characters, research what happened, and plan the times, dates, and durations of events to create hundreds of tweets as they

might have been broadcast had Twitter existed in the past – these can be people's thoughts or messages or news flashes, whatever you like.

4. Go to twhistory.org and create an account.



5. Once you have created an account, there are several things you can do. You can create your own re-enactment, invite others to participate, or follow re-enactments already taking place. To start your own TwHistory re-enactment, click on the Create a Re-enactment button on the right side of the page. Give your re-enactment a name and description. You can then either add tweets manually, or upload an excel spreadsheet with the content.



6. The site will store your re-enactments – both finished ones and those you're still working on.
7. Submit your story to TwHistory, specifying a start date, and then watch it unfold – over a day, a week, a month or more – reflecting the event's actual duration. The end result is a virtual re-enactment, which will give your students a unique experience and understanding of a small segment of history.



Finished re-enactment...

Battle of Waterloo

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. If you don't fancy creating a re-enactment from scratch, how about modifying one that's already been done? All material is available through a Creative Commons licence, so can be edited and changed.
2. Or you could simply join in an event that's currently being broadcast.

