

WISCONSIN BIOGRAPHIES

Purpose: Developing and Using Criteria

Task:

Students will critically analyze the stories in the Wisconsin Biographies collection to develop criteria for selecting a story for the series, and then use the criteria to choose a new person and write a biography or create a video.

Sample Essential Questions:

What are criteria? How do criteria affect decision making?

Standards:

Wisconsin Model Academic Standards: Social Studies

- B.4.4 Compare and contrast changes in contemporary life with life in the past by looking at social, economic, political, and cultural roles played by individuals and groups
- B.4.5 Identify the historical background and meaning of important political values such as freedom, democracy, and justice
- E.4.10 Give examples and explain how the media may influence opinions, choices, and decisions.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

- RI.4.8 Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text

Materials:

Animated videos and books/ebooks from WisconsinBiographies.org

Developing Criteria worksheet (attached)

Directions:

1. As a class, watch all videos in the Wisconsin Biographies series.
2. Create a list of common facts and themes presented in the videos, as well as a list of details about what made the videos fun to watch. Record on the *Developing Criteria* worksheet.
3. Analyze the lists to develop criteria for choosing a new story for the Wisconsin Biographies series. Criteria may be:
 - historical: effect on people, environment, etc.
 - personal: interesting life story, models personal characteristics like bravery, etc.
 - literary: strong theme, surprise ending, etc.
 - media related: dramatic, funny, strong audio, etc.
4. Using the criteria developed, have students choose a historical person to add to the series. Each student or team will either write a biography or create a video and present it to the class. During the presentation, students will describe how the story meets each of the criteria.

Optional:

- Have the class develop a rubric based on the criteria; use it for self/peer evaluation during presentations.
- Instead of watching the videos, students can read the biographies in order to complete the activity.

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Developing Criteria

Name _____

Things we learned from the video	Things that made the video interesting