***Lesson Plans: Grades 9-12***

**Garment Workers of South Jersey: Oral History**

**Introduction**

Oral history plays a crucial role in the construction of identity and information. The passing on of stories holds a deeply personal connection for those telling the stories as well as those given responsibility for them. Oral testimonies create the heart of *Garment Workers of South Jersey*. The collections in the work speak to the lingering power of memory.

This lesson will allow students to investigate the concept of oral history using Garment Workers of South Jersey. Students will explore different practices for engaging in oral history collection, evaluate the pros and cons of using oral history, and create a list of best practices in oral history interviewing.

**Essential Questions**

What is oral history?

What techniques are used in oral history interviewing?

How does oral history shape identity?

**Learning Objectives**

*Students will be able to*

Work collaboratively to synthesize material.

Evaluate the merit and success of various oral history interview techniques.

Evaluate the role oral history has towards identity.

Create a list of best practices involved in oral history construction.

**Lesson Activities**

**Activity 1**

Focus Activity: How do we record history? Ask students to engage in a “Think-Pair-Share” to brainstorm ways that history is collected and recorded.

1. Read Preface on Oral History and Discuss. Together as a class, engage students with the Preface in Garment Workers of South Jersey. Discuss and note what the author says about oral testimonies.
2. Stations Activity. Create several stations with different oral testimonies from Garment Workers of South Jersey. Allow students to collaborate, traveling to each station, to collect information from each selected reading. Students will be asked to note what oral history techniques are used in each testimony and to consider how effective it was in telling the story of the specific garment worker.
3. Debrief. Allow students to evaluate the material they investigated and consider the benefits to all the methods used in the testimonies. Facilitate a class discussion.
4. Creation of best practices list for oral history. As a class, develop a list of best practices for engaging and recording oral testimonies.

Closure: Students will develop a list of pros and cons of using oral history.

**Common Core Standards**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.1

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each source, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1

Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.3

Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

**American Studies Habits of Mind**

Interpreting the work of culture

Practicing collaboration and public engagement

**Teacher Preparation**

1. Read the article “Ready to Wear” for background on the garment industry: <https://bellatory.com/fashion-industry/Ready-to-Wear-A-Short-History-of-the-Garment-Industry>