Understanding the Delaware History Standards
for teachers in grades 6–8

History is the study of the past that affects today. It differs from the more structured social sciences of civics, economics, and geography in that history is a story. But, not everything that happened in the past is worthy of our contemplation and reflection. What someone had for breakfast is not history, unless it becomes part of a future story that becomes important. Perhaps it will become apparent years from now that what people ate for breakfast in the early 21st century contributed significantly to the slow decline of our society's intelligence capacity. In other words, breakfast made people dumber! Maybe breakfast will become history. Right now it is not, and probably will not become so. History studies what is important. But, *what is important* is the difficulty. Different individuals and different generations and different societies always define and redefine the word "important" according to their ideas, not ours.

History in many ways performs the same function as literature—it helps us to understand life. As much as possible, however, the historian must stick to what actually happened, giving the facts, and explaining how and why something happened. That makes history more "scientifically" based than literature. History is based upon facts. But the facts the historian uses are *selected* facts—facts that have been selected from the vast amount of information potentially available. History differs from the sciences in that an event, a person, or a situation cannot be re-created in a laboratory setting to test if the outcome will be the same. Some revolutions are successful; some are failures. The reasons may be the same or they may be unique to that particular revolution. Historians are interested in both—what about this revolution was similar to other revolutions and what about it was unique? Both the similarities and the differences will teach about the phenomenon of revolutions and equip citizens with the knowledge needed to deal with future revolutions.

The Delaware History standards require a student to become historically minded to reason, think, and perform as a historian. An understanding of history helps us to predict what will happen in the future based on our understanding of what happened in the past. Both literature and history can be just a good story to pass the time. But, both can also add immensely to our ability to understand human beings and how and why they act the way they do in situations. Sometimes the lesson we learn is not appropriate. That is why different historians and others offer their knowledge to explain new situations. They believe, sincerely, that they have a clear understanding of the new situation. Sometimes they actually do; other times they do not.

In the study of history, chronology is important. As a concept, chronology does not mean exact dates, overly detailed timelines, and long exercises putting events in order. Instead, it means understanding (*why* and *how*) that one event may or may not lead to subsequent events. The Second World War developed from the inadequate peace following the First World War. It does not necessarily follow that the Third World War will develop from the inadequate peace of the Second World War. One can easily argue that the results of the two wars differed greatly especially considering the long time span since the Second World War ended in 1945.

Nothing changes as much as history, because history is not what happened but what historians say happened. Each historian investigates a topic or an event by selecting a set of guiding questions and by researching the available records. Please note—*the available records*—some

topics cannot be researched. The questions that guide one's research affect the conclusions. For example, after the Second World War the European powers lost their colonial empires in Africa. One historian may research this series of events by asking, "What in their tribal culture failed to prepare the Africans to take advantage of the economic opportunities that accompanied independence?" A second historian might ask, "How did the colonial European powers fail to prepare the Africans to take advantage of the economic opportunities that accompanied independence?" Asking two different sets of guiding questions from two different viewpoints results in two very different answers. And, notice that both historians assumed that the Africans could have easily taken advantage of the economic opportunities. That is, of course, if the economic opportunities even existed. The questions matter as much, if not more, than the answers.

Each person comes from a societal and personal background and lives in a particular time and place. But, we all share a past together—the history of our state and nation. The history that all of us know, what one historian once called "the history that the ordinary person carries around in his head," is the glue, the collective memory that holds us together as a people and as a nation. This is one of the reasons for school to pass society's values and beliefs on to the next generation. When the public urges the schools to teach more and better history, it is this collective memory that they have in mind. A shared knowledge of history binds together a diverse America and guarantees the continuation of our prevailing values.

But, each historian also comes from a societal and personal background and lives in a particular time and place. These influences sometimes lead an individual historian to ask new questions of old events. This rewritten new history, called "revisionist history," is an effort to "get it right." For example, the new revisionist Western history emphasizes the cowboys less and the family experiences of the farmers more. It is less colorful, but it is closer to the average person's experience in settling the Great Plains. Over time, this revision of the older history may or may not come to be widely accepted. The influence of Hollywood films will probably (incorrectly) continue to cause all of us to think of the cowboy as more important than the farmer in settling the West. With each fresh look, we gain insight into the forces that may have molded and shaped our times. That is why the study of history is so crucial. It enables us to better understand the *now* around us and to hypothesize about the future based on our understanding of similar situations in the past. The dilemma we face is that we can never be absolutely certain about either our understanding of the past or of the applicability of that understanding to the new situation. In the sciences, some "laws" are absolute; in history, the "laws" are not absolute.

The standards provide a very broad description of the history content for each grade cluster: K–3, 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12. A student who is answering a question must know something with which to argue or explain his or her response. But, there is no list of specific events everyone must know to use in asserting one's position in a written response. Indeed, part of the challenge of history is that two people cite different facts and ideas to argue their position. Someone listening to a debate or reading a history book must decide not only who argued their position better but also who selected the most appropriate and relevant facts. Since it is impossible for a curriculum to cover everything that has happened, as a textbook will try to do, in a limited frame of time, decisions must be made about which ideas, trends, and patterns in history should be studied in classrooms. Teachers and other local decision-makers should choose historical content based on its relevance to contemporary issues, its importance, its relationship to the big ideas of social

studies, and its transferability. For example, immigration—who, from where, and how many—was as important, relevant, and controversial 100 years ago as it is now. Understanding immigration's causes, effects, and importance to the American culture is necessary for contemporary citizens to reach decisions about how to handle it. Teachers might ask students: how is today's immigration like or unlike past migrations?

Goal Statements for the Delaware History Standards

- Students will organize events through chronologies to suggest and evaluate cause-and-effect relationships among those events.
- Students will study the ways in which individuals and societies have changed and interacted over time.
- Students will acquire the skills of gathering, examining, analyzing, and interpreting data.
- Students will understand that, before choosing a position or acting, research needs to be accomplished in order to understand the effect of historical developments and trends on subsequent events.

HISTORY STANDARD ONE: Students will employ chronological concepts in analyzing historical phenomena [Chronology].

Enduring Understandings (K–12):

- History is often messy, yet a historian must logically organize events, recognize patterns and trends, explain cause and effect, make inferences, and draw conclusions from those sources which are available at the time.
- The questions a historian chooses to guide historical research that creates accurate chronologies will affect which events will go into the chronology and which will be left out. Competing chronologies can both be accurate, yet may not be equally relevant to the specific topic at hand.

The study of history is grounded in chronology. Historians rely on chronology to arrange events and ideas in history and to analyze and to explain change or lack of change over space and time. **Chronology** is the main way historians arrange events and trends in history to see patterns of continuity and change in history. Historical events happen at a specific time and location, and reflect the history, culture[1], and geography of the time and place in which they occur. Although each society is unique, certain trends and ideas recur across time and space. In addition, understanding the order of events is crucial if one is to understand the importance and meaning of those events.

Time is a concept that must be taught to students. Students must recognize the application of time to prediction, cause and effect, change, and drawing inferences. The concept is introduced in grades K–3, while the 4–5, 6–8, and 9–12 clusters require an advancing and deeper understanding of the results and consequences of schedules and chronologies, such as cause and effect and change over time (while drawing logical inferences). Students who fully master this standard are ready to apply it in daily adult life as a citizen by analyzing contemporary issues; by researching or hypothesizing how that particular situation came to exist or how that particular policy came to be; and, by demonstrating the ability to determine consequences. Records can be lost, altered, damaged, or destroyed.

Students need to learn how to organize what looks like a mess of historical records and information. Chronology is one tool, easily the most frequently used tool, to accomplish this end. But sometimes chronology does not help us as much as we would like. For example, mail service between the colonies and Europe was not very dependable. Shipwrecks were fairly common, and many letters never arrived. A historian using correspondence between the colonies and England needs to be aware that the surviving letters probably are not all the letters that were sent.

Students can learn the concept of chronology (and its limitations) from all types of puzzles or situations. A teacher might take a paragraph out of a favorite book and give students the sentences all scrambled, simply a listing of sentences. Or, give them four or five paragraphs out

[1] When historians use the word culture, they mean the following: Culture is the sum total of the accepted characteristics, learned behavior patterns, and composite group thinking for any specific people or period of time, expressing the way of life associated with that people or time. Examples are Victorian culture, Hispanic culture, antebellum Southern culture, or American culture. The word "culture" needs defining adjectives to narrow its usage.

of order. Challenge students to put the sentences and paragraphs in logical order. That is what historians do; they create a chronology, a logical sequence, out of chaos. Dates help in doing this, but many times the pictures or documents or artifacts are undated. The limitations of chronology come from its seamlessness. When is it possible to link events in a cause-and-effect relationship? Where do we begin to claim that an event caused or affected a later situation—10 years ago, 100 years ago, 500 years ago? And, what do we put into our chronology and what do we leave out? Both questions are part of the judgments a historian makes while researching a topic, judgments that by definition are imperfect.

History Standard One 6-8a: Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; analyze change over time, and make logical inferences concerning cause and effect.

Essential Questions:

- Is change inevitable?
- How often does the past predict the future?
- What is the evidence for my conclusion?

In the 6-8 cluster, students learn how to analyze long-term change and to draw logical inferences concerning cause and effect over time. Students should study trends and themes. After gathering, examining, and analyzing data, students will develop inferences and cause-and-effect relationships.

For example: using a chronology of events leading up to the American Revolution, students will explain why and how one specific event led to subsequent events, logically drawing inferences based on historical understanding. Would it have been likely that war with Great Britain could have been avoided after the initial battles of Lexington and Concord? A teacher might give the students facts from the time period and let them brainstorm through the facts, arranging them in their order of importance. This requires that a student studying the American Revolution knows some events or trends that can be used to analyze what was happening in this period and can draw conclusions that explain cause and effect with factual support.

Themes over the long run of colonial history illustrate this standard very well. In many of the American colonies, religion played a crucial role. Nine of the thirteen had an official church; either you attended your own church regularly or you paid taxes to support the official church. So why does the U.S. not have an official national church? The answer to this question is extremely complex, but one clear factor was the sheer number of different religions throughout the colonies. We will never know how many people attended which church, but we do know how many church buildings there were in 1776. A historian counted them using old maps as evidence. There were 3,142. The largest denomination, the Congregational (Puritan) Church, had only 668 buildings. The complete list is as follows: Presbyterian, 588; Anglican (modern Episcopal), 495; Quaker, 310; Lutheran, 150; Methodist, 65; Catholic, 56; Moravian, 31; Dunker, 24; Mennonite, 16; Huguenot, 7; and Jewish synagogues, 5 (plus some isolated others). What conclusion can be drawn? The Founding Fathers wanted an official church, but each wanted his church, not someone else's. So, they finally went to the next best solution, no official church. Over time, early Americans came to regard the absence of an official church as a good

thing, leaving everyone to privately practice (or not) his or her own religion. Diversity prevented conformity.

Another trend during the colonial era concerns the slow expansion of the powers of the lower house, the branch of the colonial assemblies based on population. Eventually they asserted themselves and gained powers such as the right to select their speaker, the right to control the budget and taxes, and the right to introduce legislation. By the time the relationship with England soured in the 1760s, the lower houses had become hotbeds of opposition. The rise of the lower house, an almost imperceptible shift in power, was not apparent until it was too late for England to regain control.

One of the most difficult questions to answer in American history is why the abolitionists failed politically in elections before the Civil War, but lived to see the Thirteenth Amendment adopted through the political process. Events during the war changed both the popular voters and the politicians. Historians have argued the relative weight of the factors involved for years. The real lesson, and one that is transferable to any time period, is that war often causes unforeseen effects.

HISTORY STANDARD TWO: Students will gather, examine, and analyze historical data [Analysis].

Enduring Understandings (K–12):

- Many different types of sources exist to help us gather information about the past, such as artifacts and documents. Sources about the past need to be critically analyzed and categorized as they are used.
- Critical investigation demands constant reassessment of one's research strategies.
- A historian must prove where the information can be found that is the basis for historical conclusions.

Standard Two deals with the building blocks of history: the documents and artifacts that historians rely upon to systematically investigate and construct the story of the past. Ultimately the historian ranks the different sources in terms of their credibility and usefulness to the specific argument he or she is making.

One obstacle that appears in this task is the key question of what documents or artifacts are available. Not all documents are saved. Sometimes there never were documents. Why would someone doing something bad write down all his plans? Even love letters may be eventually (or quickly) tossed. Sometimes new documents are discovered, but this is unlikely if the event being researched is far back in history. Sometimes new techniques enable historians to get answers to formerly unanswerable questions, such as DNA establishing paternity. For example, a breakthrough in deciphering Mayan hieroglyphics and modern forensic medical techniques revealed that the Mayan Indians were more violent than previously thought. Some documents were intended to be seen by many others, and some documents were meant to be seen by very few people, such as a written copy of a speech or a private letter. Obviously documents have limitations. That is why historians doing research keep looking for documents longer than it seems necessary. After decades, a historian still has much to learn. One must accept the fact that you can never, even as a dedicated student of history, know all the nuances. A field that studies human beings and their actions has unattainable levels of understanding.

At the higher grades, the use of evidence requires the skills a historian uses. A researcher needs a healthy skepticism to guard against easily believing that one has found all the answers. The researcher may not have asked the right questions. Critical investigation demands constant reassessment of one's research strategies. The search for an absolutely foolproof, definitive answer is unending. And, it is generally unachievable.

The study of history depends upon evidence. In our daily lives, we all too often hear comments based solely upon opinion. Effective history writing rests securely upon a base of factual information and artifacts that another researcher may re-examine. That is why a historian must prove, with footnotes, endnotes, or other forms of documentation, where the information that is the basis for the historical conclusions can be found. There are guidelines as to how to do research, how to analyze a document, and how to inspect an artifact. Since learning can occur from a fresh look with a new perspective and new questions, historians seem to go over the same ground again and again. They are asking new or different questions. Ultimately every conclusion by a historian rests upon the documentary evidence; if it does not, it is fiction.

History Standard Two 6-8a: Students will master the basic research skills necessary to conduct an independent investigation of historical phenomena.

History Standard Two 6-8b: Students will examine historical documents, artifacts, and other materials, and analyze them in terms of credibility, as well as the purpose, perspective, or point of view for which they were constructed.

Essential Questions:

- Is this source credible? How do I know?
- What questions should I ask before I use this source? After I use it?

The benchmarks in the 6–8 cluster are closely linked. Students are exposed to research skills that need to be learned and used to guide historical research. Secondly, the students are exposed to a set of questions about every document a researcher uses when encountering a source. Click here to read about using focus questions to analyze a document.

Historians write books describing the essential research skills in history. A student undertaking research should begin with who, what, where, how, and why. Students should be advised and encouraged to continually investigate: become like detectives, keep asking questions; brainstorm new questions to ask, especially as answers are learned to the first few questions. The first thing to do is to get the simple facts straight. Use a dictionary; a biographic dictionary[2]; or documents to establish a date, such as a person's life span; or to discover elementary information, such as he attended William and Mary College in the 1760s. Now ask new questions. Did he graduate? What major? (They did not have majors back then!) Even asking a wrong question gets closer to what actually happened. Now more is understood about attending a college in that period. Students should think about what questions a historian might ask when researching a given topic. Students should formulate questions as often as they try to find answers.

Modern technology has given us new weapons to use in research. *The Federalist Papers* is a collection of essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to convince the states to ratify the Constitution. All 85 essays are unsigned so we cannot be certain who wrote which essay. After they were all typed into a computer along with known works by each

[2] Here is an example of a biography you would find in an encyclopedia or biography of famous people in history. It is from the *Encyclopedia of American History*. Another excellent source is *Webster's American Biographies*.

> Boone, Daniel (b. near Reading, Pa., 2 Nov. 1734; d. near St. Charles, Mo., 26 Sept. 1820), pioneer. Becoming a hunter at the age of 12, he settled (1751) at Buffalo Lick in the Yadkin Valley of North Carolina; served as a teamster and blacksmith in Braddock's campaign (1755); made his first trip into Kentucky (1767-1769), leading a party through Cumberland Gap over a trail later known as the Wilderness Road, living and exploring in central Kentucky with his brother-in-law, John Stuart Finley and others, returning to North Carolina after his 2d trip (1769-1771). Serving as the agent of Col. Richard Henderson of the Transylvania Co., he returned to Kentucky with a party of settlers (1775) and established a fort at what became the site of Boonesborough. Captured and adopted by the Shawnees (1778), he escaped. After Virginia repudiated Henderson's land titles and made Kentucky a county of Virginia, Boone served as lieutenant colonel of the Fayette County militia, and was chosen a delegate to the legislature, and was made sheriff and county lieutenant (1782). He moved to Maysville in 1786 and in 1788 left Kentucky, going to Point Pleasant in what is now West Virginia. Because of failure to make proper entry of his land holdings, he lost all of his claims. After being ejected from his last holding, he moved (c.1798) to present-day Missouri, where he received a land grant and continued his hunting and trapping. One of the folk heroes of American history, Boone is popularly credited with deeds, such as the discovery of Kentucky, which have no foundation in fact.

author, an analysis of the frequency of certain words clearly identified the author of each essay, at least with a very high degree of statistical reliability

Future historians will use the same sources but will ask new questions from the old sources. Teachers and students should try not to become discouraged at the roadblocks encountered along the way—unanswerable questions and seemingly impossible difficulties. Sometimes the answers to particular questions must wait for future historians. For example, during the Reagan administration, American political observers and historians were already convinced that the president's advocacy of "star wars," the space-based antimissile defense system, was the final push that forced the Soviet Union to declare an end to the Cold War. Since then, the Russian governmental archives have been increasingly opened and former officials have become available for interviews. Nothing, not a document or an interview, from the Russian perspective indicates that "star wars" was a factor in their thinking. The history of the end of the Cold War already is being "revised," a term historians use to refer to the rewriting of the history of an event or idea. The truth will never be reached because history is partly interpretation. At best, historians get closer to the truth to what actually happened. The interpretative part of questions in history means that historical conclusions will likely be challenged sometime in the future as different historians ask different questions or find different sources.

Historical sources all mislead to a certain extent because they tell only part of the story from one perspective. As long as human beings generate documents, there will never be an unbiased document. When a historian encounters any document, questions must be raised. Sometimes a document will seem perfect, but caution students to not get so thrilled about the contents of a document that you overlook necessary questions. What is the genealogy of this document? How did it come to be located in this archive or collection? Is the path from its creation to its location believable? Could it have been planted? Is the document out of character with other documents? Click here to read about verifying credibility and authenticity of a document.

For years, late 19th century Lincoln scholars were perplexed by the widespread use of a Lincoln quote praising the virtues of the free enterprise system. They could not locate any copy of that quote in Lincoln's papers. Finally, researchers tracked down the distributor. When confronted with a request to provide the source document, the businessman admitted that he made it up. But, he still defended his action by claiming it was what Lincoln would have said if he had said anything about the free enterprise system! Could your document source be forged? How would you know? This particular quote is still being used; to those using it, usefulness is more important than honesty.

Suppose a student found a newspaper clipping that featured a headline quoting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., as saying the "segregation of the races is a good thing." This does not sound like something he would say, ever. By attempting to verify the source, the student discovers that the quote was edited and shortened from, "Some politicians believe that segregation of the races is a good thing." Now the student knows to ignore that newspaper clipping. (Unless, of course, the research is focusing on attempts to discredit Martin Luther King or the civil rights movement. In that case, the student found a gem!) Documents can also be accidentally misquoted by mistakes in transcription and by mistakes in typing. For whom was the document intended? How many eyes were meant to see it? The smaller the number, the closer it may be to revealing the truth, at least as seen by the author of the document. Are there any corroborating documents or sources? Just as in a court trial, multiple witnesses seem to cement the case. Students should continually

question the trustworthiness and credibility of sources, particularly for online research. Anyone can start a website to say almost anything. Students at this grade level tend to trust or use the first site to appear in a search engine. A good rule of thumb for academic research would be to use websites from educational institutions—universities, museums, archives, etc.

Students should learn to question everything about a time period and not assume that the way they do something today is similar to what was done. In the early colonial era, for example, children did not eat with their parents; they waited until the parents had finished, then ate. Another trap for researchers is how words are used. Definitions change over the years. A waterfall was called a fountain in the 1500s and 1600s. Now Ponce de Leon's search in Florida for the "fountain of youth" makes more sense. Suppose a student reads a primary source in which a historical figure was described as "nice." This sounds straightforward, and a student might begin to form a mental picture of the historical figure's character, but "nice" meant the opposite hundreds of years ago!

One way to get students to see the need for asking exhaustive questions about a topic at this grade level is a classroom exercise involving coins. Give each student a coin and have each one explain what they could learn from that coin about the United States in the year 2000 if they found this coin five thousand years from now, in the year 7000. The penny will tell you everyone wore beards. The older quarters with the eagle on the back show a society's preoccupation with birds. The various state quarters could either give accurate information or confuse us. The Vermont quarter shows buckets hanging from a tree—a student might know that is how sap is collected. The New Hampshire quarter has the words "Old Man of the Mountain" on one side. Is the "Old Man" the guy on the other side? The Tennessee state quarter shows that the state makes guitars (or does it?). Unless they find another source to confirm the name of the rider on the horse or what is happening, the Delaware quarter is baffling. Remember, it must be a logical inference based only on the coin, which incorporates the ability to draw conclusions (Standard One) at this grade level, and by keeping the focus on the questions asked, allows the learners to increase the complexity of their thinking from Standard Two at the 4–5 grade cluster. This will show students how information may be misinterpreted, even by people trying to do a good job.

A Delaware historian and teacher told this story: "Years ago I used an exercise with early elementary grade kids. I brought a bag into the room. I told them that the bag contained stuff that belonged to my two children when they were that age. Immediately (those of you who teach the early grades know this) they asked if the children were boys or girls. I told them I would let them guess. As I pulled boy-type toys out, the whole class in unison agreed it was boys. (My daughter played Little League.) When I got to the dolls, they switched. The lesson was that they should keep asking questions; even when you think you know the answers." This is also a good lesson for the hazards of stereotyping.

An instructional unit for the Delaware Recommended Curriculum entitled "Historical Research" that measures History Standard Two 6-8a can be found at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/content_areas/social_studies/standards/pilot.shtml.

HISTORY STANDARD THREE: Students will interpret historical data [Interpretation].

Enduring Understandings (K-12):

- What is written by a historian depends upon that historian's personal background and methods, the questions asked about the sources, and the sources used to find the answers to those questions.
- Historians select important events from the past they consider worthy of being taught to the next generation. That selection process, deciding what to emphasize, and the questions that historians ask of the documents and other evidence contributes significantly to the conclusions drawn.
- History is what the historian says it is. Different historians collect, use, and emphasize sources in ways that result in differing interpretations as they describe, compare, and interpret historical phenomena. Disagreement between historians about the causes and effects of historical events may result from these differences.

As students mature intellectually, they begin to learn that not everything is true because it appears in a book, on television, or online. Students come to realize that history can be presented from different perspectives. The existence of different viewpoints makes history a lively field. A historian gathers factual information from all kinds of sources and weaves it into a story, a narrative. Along the way, the historian decides what to emphasize, what to minimize, and what is significant. The reader goes along for the ride. But a savvy reader should understand that the historian is giving his/her definitions of significance and emphasis based on their beliefs, their judgment, and their interests. Sometimes interpretation creeps into the narrative and sometimes it roars into the narrative. The latter is obvious; the former is often overlooked. Anyone reading a historical narrative needs to be alert for the author's interpretations, both large and small. It will be there—it always is.

History Standard Three uses three concepts that are often confusing to non-historians—beliefs, perspectives, and point of view. All of them ask for information describing the historian who argues an interpretation. At the higher grades, a student is expected to differentiate between two interpretations and to come to some conclusion as to why they differ. Someone once said that any relationship is really five relationships. There is how you look at it, how I look at it, how I think you look at it, how you think I look at it, and then how it really is. What lies behind differing interpretations is complicated.

A point of view is not a viewpoint expressed by a historian—that is a simplistic, popular definition. A point of view is not just any person's way of looking at something. A point of view, as used in the study of history by professional historians, asks such questions as: Where is this historian coming from? What are the historian's nationality, race, gender, age, and personal background? Could any of these factors have played a role influencing that historian's conclusions or the questions that guided that historian's research strategy? Is the historian a young African-American female writing about the role of women in the civil rights movement? Or, is that historian an elderly white male Southerner with deep family roots in the antebellum South writing about the role of women in the civil rights movement? An Arabic historian would certainly write a history of the Crusades that differed from one written by a Western European historian (assuming he or she is not of Arabic descent). Each historian selects events from past experiences that he or she labels as important and therefore worthy of being taught to the next

generation. That selection process, deciding what to emphasize, and the questions that historian asks of the documents and other evidence contributes significantly to the conclusions drawn. If two historians disagree, they do not have two different points of view. You would reasonably expect that these factors—race, age, gender, and personal background—would influence a person as they grow to intellectual maturity and therefore would influence their research interests, methods, and strategies. It makes a difference.

Or does it? Sometimes a person's beliefs simply do not seem to fit into the mold from which they supposedly came. A wealthy capitalist of the late nineteenth century would reasonably be expected to enthusiastically support the drive for markets and raw materials associated with the acquisition of colonies, such as the Philippines after the Spanish American War. Andrew Carnegie opposed it. We can never know for certain what is inside a person's head. What ideas and understandings are floating around in there? A person's beliefs usually are philosophically consistent but not always. We all know people whose political beliefs are consistently liberal or conservative, except on one issue. What does that historian believe? And why do they believe it? And how does it impact their research and writing?

Perspective is the platform upon which a historian stands. Is the historian a Southerner writing about slavery or a former slave, such as Frederick Douglass, writing about slavery? A few years ago, Japanese and American historians formed a committee to write a joint history of the coming of the Second World War. After a while they gave up because nationalism overrode professional devotion to objectivity. Many Americans who lived through the 1960s were permanently affected by those turbulent times. Some now hold important corporate, academic, and political positions while retaining vestiges of the radical ideas (for the 1960s) they personally experienced and lived through. When a person lives and writes matters. Germans use an untranslatable word to describe this: Zeitgeist. The closest we can get is "time-ghost." What was in the air at that time? What was the climate of opinion? What were people thinking? A book attacking big businessmen as mean, nasty thieves or "Robber Barons" became immensely popular when it was published in 1934, in the middle of our worst depression. A similar reception would not have happened if it had been published during the Second World War, when we needed all of our big business muscle to win the war. Perspective asks students to recognize and confront the possibility that the times could have influenced the writing of history.

Standard Three deals with what historians do—what influences them, what difficulties they encounter, and how historians look at what other historians write. Two different people may honestly disagree about some event that has already happened. The facts are clear. The team lost the game. Now the interpretation arrives. Did the team lose the game because of a weak defense or because of a weak offense? A policeman investigating an accident wants to know all he or she can learn about the drivers, the road conditions, the mechanical status of the cars, whether seatbelts were worn, the weather conditions, the presence of alcohol, and now, sadly, road rage. Historians function in a similar manner.

What are often believed to be every day, easily defined words instead have specific meaning to practitioners of that academic discipline. Two terms that may cause trouble are "historic" and "historical." *Historic* means important or well known in history. A historic account is an event in history that is worth remembering. The standards use "historical" and the phrase "historical accounts." This is not the same as a "historic account." *Historical* means relating to or connected with history as a discipline or events in history as a historian deals with them. A

historical narrative is a history-based story, and not just any old story. A *narrative* is not simply a story; as the standards use the term it is a historian's written account.

Comparing two different accounts of the same event involves skills that a student should internalize in order to be able to apply them as a citizen every time he or she encounters a written account about current events or historical events. Teachers should bear that purpose in mind when constructing a lesson plan for a topic.

At the higher level for Standard Three, it is not just that history is interpretation. It is how a student can discover for himself that history is interpretation by assessing a historian's choice of questions, his or her choice of sources, his or her point of view, etc. It is not *what* is the point of view, but *how* does a narrative show a point of view. Students are not expected to become knowledgeable about historiography, which is the study by professional historians of how different historians' interpretations conflict with one another. Standard Three is not an exercise in historiography. Standard Three does not measure, ask for, or expect this level of knowledge but just an awareness that historians sometimes disagree and the reasons why they disagree. The key question is, "What factors contributed to this historian's conclusion and how did these factors contribute to this historian's conclusions?" It is the *process*—not the end conclusion—measured in Standard Three. The following illustrates history as interpretation.

No student of history can possibly be absolutely neutral evaluating a historical event. Even professional historians bring values and moral judgments to their investigation of a topic in history. Students need to be alert to pre-existing factors that mold and shape the writing of history. Sometimes bias is obvious in the questions posed. Consider these questions:

a. Why did the United States drop the atomic bomb on innocent, unsuspecting civilians at Hiroshima on August 6, 1945?
b. Why did the United States choose to drop the atomic bomb?
c. Would the United States have used the atomic bomb on a white nation like Germany if it had been developed earlier?

Statement "a" implies that the atomic bomb should have been used only on a military target. This comment might have struck a more responsive chord in the generation that lived in the 1940s because people could remember the years prior to the Second World War when no city had been bombed from the air. Behind this wording is the assumption that using the atomic bomb was a mistake. The historian researching this question focuses on the target decision-making process. How and why did the city of Hiroshima come to be the first atomic victim? Could the United States have merely demonstrated the bomb for Japanese observers? Teachers might ask students how the questions a historian asks reveal or reflect the historian's point of view or potential bias.

Statement "b" suggests that there were alternative policies, other than the bomb, which could have been selected. It raises a question by inference. What were those alternative policies and why were they rejected, if they were even considered at all? Historians writing during the Cold War lived with the daily threat of atomic annihilation. Some historians felt that the atomic bomb ushered in a new era in the world's history, a dangerous era. They regretted its initial use. These historians sometimes assume that it was unnecessary to drop the atomic bomb because victory was easily within our grasp. Or was it? Do we know how much longer the war could have gone

on? What did American decision-makers know and when did they know it? Historians call the "what if" judgments "counterfactual history."[3] It is great fun to rewrite history for a different ending, but can we be sure?

Statement "c" approaches history from what is sometimes called "a grand theory." This historian apparently believes that race so dominates history that behind every decision must be a racial basis. In the Second World War, the United States acted out of racial motives, as it always does, according to this perspective.

History Standard Three takes students through a process by which they come to realize that ultimately all history is what the historian says it is. What is written about and what is remembered is passed on to the next generation. One constant dispute involving the teaching of history is the criticism by some of the public that the wrong content is being taught. This assumes that there is a body of knowledge that all might agree upon. It is not so. The same event can be presented from many different perspectives. Certainly the American Revolution must be viewed differently in a British textbook. If current events are depicted differently in different newscasts and newspapers, then surely this was done in the past and surely it will continue in the future.

When this standard is fully mastered, a student is ready to apply it in his or her daily adult life as a citizen by being aware that all written accounts flow from a person who sat down to write that account and brought with him or her a collection of personal influences and perspectives. Nothing is absolutely neutral. Students must have an understanding of how a historian goes about writing. An awareness of this process arms students when they encounter what others write. This skill and awareness is essential for future citizenship.

[3] Counterfactual history is asking the question, "if." Unlike many subjects, history has no particular jargon. Any student can understand what a historian writes (most historians). War is war. Wars have causes. A scholarly historian, after a lifetime of studying the causes of the Civil War, can find their interpretation and knowledge challenged by a casual reader who has invented their own theory of causation. You would not dream of challenging a chemist who told you that mixing two particular chemicals would lead to an explosion. Chemists use jargon, specialized language, which can intimidate. Historians use more common words, which can intrigue. The absence of a specialized history vocabulary invites challenges. Counterfactual history enlivens class discussions. If Hitler had been killed during the First World War, would the Holocaust have happened? This is really a way of asking to what degree Hitler was personally responsible. Or was it the times? In other words, would the times have produced someone similar to Hitler? This is an interesting debate and discussion with no real answer.

Here is another example. Both Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis were born in Kentucky. Suppose Lincoln moved to Mississippi and Davis to Illinois, switching their historical roles as presidents during the Civil War—Lincoln the president of the Confederacy and Davis the Union president. Would their different personal leadership traits have had an impact on the Civil War and changed the outcome?

Some areas of history invite, even demand, some counterfactual history. Examples are the viability of slavery in the territories before the Civil War and the consequences of the creation of a pluralist, multiracial Southern society during Reconstruction.

History Standard Three 6-8a: Students will compare different historians' descriptions of the same societies in order to examine how the choice of questions and use of sources may affect their conclusions.

Essential Questions:

- Why might historians disagree about the same historical event?
- To what extent does history change?

In the 6–8 cluster, History Standard Three introduces students to the concept that historical accounts of the same event may differ because historians have asked different questions of the same sources or because they have used the sources differently. Historical records just lie there. The factual information in them does not jump out without questions being asked. The questions help to determine the answers and therefore the conclusions. At this time, historians are not likely to discover a trunk full of new documents explaining the origins of the slave trade. But, two different historians can phrase their questions differently while investigating the early slave trade. The first may ask, "Why did Europeans begin enslaving Africans?" Seems like a straightforward question. The second may ask, "Why were Africans unable to prevent the slave trade?" This also seems like a straightforward question. Upon closer scrutiny neither one is.

The first rests upon the assumption that Europeans alone began the slave trade. Historical research does not support that. Africans sold Africans to the Europeans, who could not go far into the African interior because of their vulnerability to diseases. The second phrasing shifts the responsibility, although it is not clear how much, for the slave trade to Africans themselves rather than to Europeans. It also seems to suggest that the slave trade could have been prevented, if only Africans had wanted to prevent it. Each of these questions as guides to research will certainly lead to two very different books on the origins of the slave trade. Now comes the hard part for the student. Which sheds the most light on the subject, given the limited documents available? The well-armed student is aware that the phrasing of the questions underlying a research design influences the conclusions. After a few pages of a historical narrative, it is obvious usually where that historian's methods and original questions will lead. Now the student can assess how persuasive the argument is while realizing it is that historian's argument, and not the last word on the topic.

HISTORY STANDARD FOUR: Students will develop historical knowledge of major events and phenomena in world, United States, and Delaware history [Content].

Students should know chronology in broad outlines and enough trends in history that they have a reservoir of information they can use to provide factual support and examples in their short, written responses. Students should have an understanding of trends and patterns in order to use that understanding as evidence when drawing conclusions or making inferences. For example, a student responding to a historian's writing published in the 1950s should be aware that the 1950s came after the Second World War or during the Cold War or during the beginning of a Civil Rights movement. Consider these two sentences the student might write:

a. He wrote this because Americans were angry at Russia.
b. This historian was influenced by the Cold War then taking place between the United States and Russia.

Obviously the second sentence is much stronger and reflects more understanding.

Teachers should not be concerned as they examine the content descriptions in Standard Four for each grade cluster and think, "That's too much. I could never do that in a school year." Actually, it is too much to cover, and becomes more ponderous with each passing year. What teachers, schools, and districts must learn to do is selectively abandon certain topics in the course of history. Do not try to cover everything. It is impossible. Adopt an approach that could be called "post-holing." Dig deeply into some topics rather than trying to "cover" everything. It is better for a student to clearly understand a concept and to be able to use *something* in history in an explanation than it is to have a limited understanding of a concept and know a lot of "*somethings*" in history. Students understand a standard when they can apply it in a new or different situation. The teacher does not have to "cover" every potential situation for the student to be prepared. The student who can apply understanding to a new situation is well equipped for any assessment of the Delaware History Standards and for life after school.

Social Studies content should be about:

- Themes, broad historical trends, and topics that allow the four strands of the social studies to be integrated and provide a cultural context for the student;
- Relevant and important contemporary issues;
- Resources for education and not the scope and sequence contained in a textbook.

Select historical topics which are transferable, relevant, integrated, contemporary, and important. Students should study what resonates throughout history and prepares them for decisions they will face as adult citizens.

A student must know history; do not be fooled by Standard Four. The reason why specific people, laws, events, etc., are not listed is because no group of historians will ever agree on the essential and necessary facts that everyone should know. Remember, history does not exist until the historian looks at the sources and decides what is important and therefore what is history. This is why the initial History Standards committee decided not to produce a required list of people, laws, events, etc. Content in History Standard Four is left for each district or teacher to decide. The absence of a specific list does not mean students do not have to know anything. It

means that a student is free to use whatever historical knowledge he or she gained in that classroom.

If students have a reservoir of historical knowledge and they understand the History Standards, they can do well on any assessment. If they lack either one—historical knowledge or an understanding of the standards—they will not do well. Make certain in your teaching that your students acquire an understanding of history and how it works as a discipline (Standards One, Two, and Three) and that they acquire knowledge of people, laws, and events and when these historical specifics fall chronologically (Standard Four).

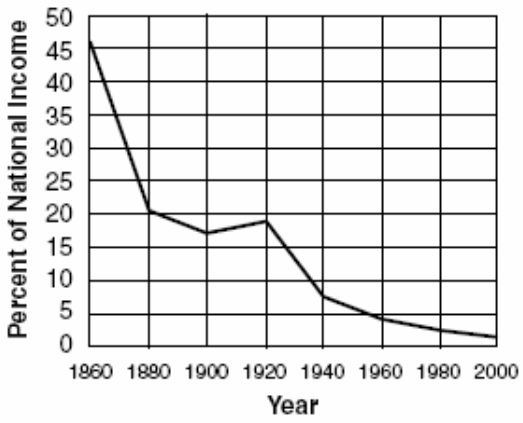
It is hard to imagine a Social Studies, History, Economics, Geography, Civics, or Government course or program that ignores events from 1900 to the present. The History Standards do not dictate a curriculum, but they do require students to have courses that equip them to bring some knowledge of history and an understanding of the standards and how to apply the standards. If the students learn information they can use it. Any assessment of the Delaware History Standards is not one to which a student can simply apply common sense or street-level knowledge. He or she must bring knowledge and an understanding of the standards to it to do well.

A student should know historical chronology in such a way as to be able to place people, laws, and events. For example, from 1850 to 2000, there was a Civil War, Reconstruction in the South, the settlement of the West, the rise of industrialization and urbanization, imperialism, the rise of segregation, two world wars, a Cold War, the rise of the Third World, the end of colonialism, a Great Depression, a civil rights movement in America, a woman's movement, a war in Vietnam, etc. Without knowing the exact years for an event, a student should still be able to place all these events within the chronology, 1850 to 2000, in their approximate place. In other words, students should know the major events and their approximate time. For example, they should know that the Great Depression occurred between the two world wars. It is not enough to minimally know these events in order to merely recognize one, as might happen for classroom multiple choice questions in which the correct answer is selected. In a standards-aligned short answer, a student needs to recall and use historical information as an explanation or evidence. Obviously, if he or she has little to recall (Standard Four), or if they do not understand history as a discipline (Standards One, Two Three), then he or she will have little to offer as a factually supported accurate and relevant explanation.

The following multiple choice question is an example.[4] In order to answer this question a student must be aware of the chronology, impact, and consequences of industrialization and technology on agriculture over a long period, 1860 to 2000. The introduction of more and more mechanization greatly increased output. The long-term effect was to reduce the number of farmers needed to feed the rest of us.

[4] This is a released item from the Delaware Student Testing Program. Item Samplers with annotated student work can be found at http://www.doe.k12.de.us/aab/social_studies/default.shtml

D **This graph shows the U.S. farmers' share of the national income from 1860 to 2000.**



What was the *main* reason for the long-term trend shown on the graph?

F Immigration
G Global warfare
H Natural disaster
J Industrialization

This 11th grade assessment item uses a graph that shows the long-term decline in the farmers' share of the national income. The correct response is option J. All four possible answers—immigration, global warfare, natural disasters, and industrialization—occurred within the dates for the graph, 1860-2000, but only industrialization explains this long-term decline in the farmers' share of the national income, the shift from an agricultural-based economy to an industrial-based economy.

The four disciplines in the Delaware Social Studies Standards—Civics, Economics, Geography, and History—each offer distinct approaches and develop different skills. Unite them in your teaching. All four disciplines are present in the issues and challenges our students face every day in the classroom and those they will confront in the future, both in their personal lives and as voters and participants in our broader society. If a student masters the Delaware Social Studies Standards, he or she will be able to transfer their understanding into a lifetime of active citizenship.

Analyzing Documents: Possible Questions to Focus on the Document

Visuals, Photographs, Cartoons

1. What person or event is represented?
2. When and where is the subject taking place?
3. Is the artist or photographer trying to convey a particular viewpoint?
4. Any symbols pictured?
5. Is the picture titled?
6. For whom was this intended to be seen?
7. What is the general impression presented?

Maps and Charts and Graphs

1. What is the title?
2. What are the labels for the map key or legend and the titles for the lines on the chart?
3. What particular event or time is portrayed?
4. Charts usually illustrate a relationship between two subjects. What are they?
5. Are the numbers absolutes or percentages?
6. If it is a bar graph or a line graph, read both axes.
7. If it is a circle or pie graph, the circle represents the total quantity and the portions represent a percentage.

Printed Materials

1. If a newspaper, is it an editorial or an article?
2. If a magazine, who is the normal intended audience for the magazine/
3. If a book, is it partisan?
4. If the book is a diary or memoir, it will not be self-critical.
5. How well qualified was the author to write on this subject?

Personal Documents

1. If a speech, was it a rough draft, official's speech, or a campaign speech?
2. Letter, to whom, and what is the relationship between the sender and the receiver?
3. Is the letter an official or personal letter?

Political Documents

1. Rarely are they nonpartisan.
2. Who is the document addressed to?
3. If a party platform, it is already the work of a compromise.
4. Is it a government document?

The Authenticity of a Document

There are questions to keep in mind when one initially confronts a document. The first one is to ask, "Is this document authentic?" Historians have created two methods to test authenticity—internal criticism and external criticism.

External criticism concerns the life of the document. How did that document come to be where it is? All documents have a genealogy, a trail of what happened to them from the time they were created to the present. Is that path believable? Was that type of paper in existence then? What do the watermarks on the paper tell you about when and where the paper was made? What does chemical analysis of the paper reveal? Is the linguistic style consistent with other documents from that source? Does carbon-dating pinpoint a date of origination? Fakes abound in history. Several years ago a paralegal was convicted of selling fake love letters supposedly sent between Marilyn Monroe and President John F. Kennedy. Investors had spent $7 million for them, proof that JFK was having an affair. Upon close examination by experts, inconsistencies appeared. The letters had zip codes, which did not exist at that time. They were also typed in a font that had not yet been invented. And, they had used white correction tape for mistakes, which had also not yet been invented. Were the paper, ink, and font in existence at that time? It takes an expert to know. The paralegal traded his $7 million high life for a jail term; the collectors lost their $7 million.

Obviously motivation is part of a document. What was the document created for? What was the intent or purpose of the creator? Historians provide footnotes to give their sources. Some historians have filled in the missing areas of their research with invented sources. Always be leery of a statement that, "I saw it somewhere," or "people say that." The most famous squabble over authenticity in American historical scholarship was the controversy over The Horn Papers. A Kansas resident purportedly found a chest containing handwritten documents kept by his ancestors that extensively described life in Southwestern Pennsylvania and Western Maryland between 1765 and 1795. Eventually a local Pennsylvania historical society published his edited documents in three volumes. The detailed descriptions of the life of the common man astounded everyone. Upon closer inspection problems arose. Words and phrases appeared long before their first use anywhere else, such as racial pride, hometown, frontier spirit, tepee, braves, and trail. A quoted speech showed that a man who died in 1759 was apparently still able to speak in 1769. The maps were far too accurate, far superior to any other maps from that period. Clearly they were based upon more modern maps. Some scholars blamed amateurish, sloppy editing by the documents' owner. In defense of him, the owner of the documents donated them to a local Pennsylvania historical society and never asked for nor received a penny from them in any way. What was his motive? A brief spat of attention? Speaking engagements before local historical society meetings? A name in the newspapers? Who knows? The lack of an apparent motive confounded everyone.

Internal criticism focuses on the text of the document. It seeks to establish the meaning and believability of the contents of a document. What is the style of the writing? Are there mistakes in the document? Are they mistakes that were made in other documents? Some famous people, such as George Washington and Andrew Jackson, were notoriously bad spellers. How does it compare to other documents known to be written by that person? Are the words used according

to their definition at that time? Some words change in meaning over the years. The word constitution during the colonial era meant a body, of common law or of a person. The second definition remains today in the description of a person as having a sound constitution. Now we use constitution almost exclusively to refer to a written framework for a government. The word fountain conjures up a pleasant display in a mall or city square or plaza. What was Ponce de Leon looking for in Florida when he searched for the "fountain of youth"? The old definition of a fountain was what we today call a waterfall. The word also appears in the Christmas song written in 1857, "We Three Kings of Orient Are," in the phrase "field and fountain."

Centuries ago "silly" meant happy and holy. "Nice" was an insult that meant ignorant or unaware. Without checking further you would get the wrong impression from a 16th century document that described a monk as silly and far from nice.

There have been many forged documents in history. Two famous, or infamous, documents are the Donation of Constantine and The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion. The first was supposedly given to Pope Sylvester and his successors by the Emperor Constantine in the 4th century. It granted the popes both spiritual and secular power over the western half of the Roman Empire. The primary center of the Roman imperial government had been moved from Rome to Constantinople by that time. Popes subsequently used the Donation of Constantine to assert their superiority over secular rulers during the Middle Ages. In 1440, the Renaissance scholar Lorenzo Valla discredited the Donation by proving that factual references within it were inconsistent with other known facts and that words were used according to later definitions. The style, legal and political terminology, and language were not part of the earlier time period. Scholars now place the origins of the Donation around 750 to 850.

The Protocols of the Wise Men of Zion, also called the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, is a document crudely constructed by the Russian czar's secret police. It first appeared around 1900 and was largely taken from several novels published in the 19th century. It details a Jewish plot to achieve world domination. In spite of superb scholarship that clearly shows that The Protocols are forged, it continues to stay alive in the writings and references of anti-Semites all around the world. Both Henry Ford and Adolf Hitler repeatedly referred to it. It remains a staple in the anti-Israel propaganda of her neighboring enemies. When your mind is made up the last thing you want is to have it confused by facts.

When you encounter a document that seems to too easily support a point, warning flags should go up. Look for confirmation. Supporters of a high tariff in the 75 years after the Civil War frequently quoted Abraham Lincoln's strong support of the tariff to justify their position. In one long quote, for example, Lincoln praised American steel used for railroads. It was far superior to foreign steel and kept American workers employed. But Lincoln was assassinated in April 1865 and the first American steel rails were made one month later. His tariff speeches are nowhere to be found among collections of his writings or letters. Some high tariff advocates finally simply said that the quotes were what Lincoln would have said! Be careful; be leery of any and all documents. Check them out.