**Road to the Second World War  
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Introduction PPT [here](http://weebly-file/8/1/8/1/81810018/intro_lesson__year_10.pptx)  
  
**FACTUAL UNIT QUESTION**What is the study of History and how do Historians do?  
**CONCEPTUAL UNIT QUESTION**How is it that historians can come to different conclusions when looking at the same facts?  
**DEBATABLE UNIT QUESTION**To what extent can it be argued that Adolf Hitler was responsible for the Second World War?  
  
**STATEMENT OF INQUIRY  
​THE BIG IDEAS**

* historical processes are complex and have a multi-causal nature
* historians select and use evidence in support of their explanations of historical change (in particular how different historians stress longterm and short-term causes as agents of change)
* controversies in history are an essential part of the subject, and indeed play an important role in driving it forward.

**WHAT IS HISTORY? WHAT DO HISTORIANS DO AND HOW DO THEY DO IT?**  
**Imagine that you are the principal of a school and you just found out that there was a fight in the lunchroom during lunch. You’ve asked many students and teachers who witnessed the fight to write down what they saw and who they think started the fight. Unfortunately, you have received many conflicting accounts that disagree about important details of the fight, like who started it, when it started, and who was involved. It’s important to remember that NO ONE is lying.**  
  
In pairs, you must answer the following questions:

* How could there be different stories of the event if no one is lying?
* Who are the different people who might have seen this fight? (e.g., friends of those involved versus people who don’t know the kids who were fighting; those who were fighting versus those who were witnesses; adults versus kids).
* What might make one person’s story more believable than another person’s?

**CLASS DISCUSSION**

* Why might people see or remember things differently?
* Who has an interest in one person getting in trouble instead of another? Who was standing where? Could they see the whole event
* The plausibility of the stories themselves (e.g., issues of exaggeration and how the stories fit into what is known about the students’ prior histories). Is the story believable? Trustworthy?
* Time: Do stories change over time? How might what we remember right after the event differ from what we remember a week later
* Does time make the way someone remembers something more or less trustworthy?
* Physical Evidence: What physical evidence might affect who/what you believe (bruises, missing objects, etc.)?

**SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER**

* The principal needs to consider which stories are more or less reliable because it’s important to understand why the fight began. Not only is it important that the instigator (if there was one) be punished, but also it’s important to think about how to prevent such fights in the future.
* Historians, in trying to figure out what happened in the past, essentially engage in the same work. Just like the principal, there’s no way to actually recreate the moment or time-travel to witness it. All that historians have to work with is the remaining evidence**--**ranging from people’s stories to physical artifacts.
* Sourcing is the act of questioning a piece of evidence and trying to determine if it’s trustworthy. When you source, you ask how people’s biases or perspectives shape their story. This doesn’t necessarily mean that a person is lying if he or she comes from a particular
* perspective. They still might have something valuable to contribute to your understanding of what happened in the past. But as a reader it’s important to keep in mind that each person sees the world in a particular way. When you keep that in mind, you’re sourcing.

**CORROBORATION OF EVIDENCE**  
This lesson is about the skill of corroboration. Corroboration is the act of comparing pieces of evidence and seeing where they agree and disagree. When you have multiple pieces of evidence that say the same thing, your argument is stronger. When you only have one perspective on an event, you risk that it might be incomplete or maybe even wrong.  
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Historians corroborate evidence when they try to figure out what happened in the past. If they find multiple pieces of evidence that support their initial hunch, their case becomes stronger. If they can’t find enough evidence to support a particular argument about what happened in the past, they consider other explanations or interpretations.  
  
Because the goal of corroboration is to build a strong argument, it also involves sourcing. You want to source for two reasons: (1) you want each piece of evidence to be reliable; and (2) you want to see if people with different perspectives agree about what happened. It’s always more convincing when two people who usually disagree happen to agree.  
  
For example, a famous painting of the Battle of Lexington (see below) shows the American colonists standing their ground and fighting while the British fired on them. If you read the primary sources about the event, the Americans say the British fired first, and the British say the Americans fired first. So they disagree about who shot first. But both say the colonists scattered and ran away once the shooting started. So although we might not know who shot first, we can say with some confidence that the colonists did not stand their ground, despite the portrayal in the painting, because both sides agree on that point.  
We’re going to practice corroboration today with two examples.  
  
Work to answer the questions from the ["Make your Case" document](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0ByBE66-4xFAhVjVfZmhXcnA5UmM)