



# Classroom Ready Activities for Teaching History and Geography in Grades 7-12

*Thomas P. Ruff, Stephen L. Nelson*

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Combining a selection of resource and reference materials with specific classroom-tested activities, this imaginative book offers teachers many new ways to help students understand the concepts underlying the study of history and geography. The book can be used by secondary teachers with their students, or as a text for prospective teachers preparing to teach history in grades 7-12. The authors begin by discussing the impact of recent studies and commissions established to arrive at a consensus on what students need to know. In particular, they focus on the National Geography and History Standards of 1994, pointing out that an understanding of history and geography is a critical element in the preparation of 21st century citizens. They also suggest some reasons for the apparent historical and geographical illiteracy of many adults in spite of their exposure to the subjects during their years in school. To create a sense of history as a living, ongoing study, the authors provide a decade by decade review of the 20th century, drawing on news stories, historical and political events, science and technological firsts, literature, theater, music, visual arts, sporting events, everyday life, and nations that came into being during the decade. To demonstrate that teaching history and geography is a daily activity, they offer numerous creative ways to use the calendar as a teaching tool, including activities for every month and calendar pages for all 12 months filled in with significant events and dates. And finally, capitalizing on the popularity of trivia-related games, they also include a list of fascinating historical factoids.

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