Legal Timelines Timeline Curator

Overview

This Legal Timelines Timeline Curator is designed to help students focus on sub-themes and/or cross-cutting themes found within one or more Legal Timelines and engage in more close reading and analysis of the timeline(s). The activity can be particularly helpful in getting students to think about how legal issues have evolved over time. Students will search through the Legal Timeline(s) they are studying to identify key events related to the theme provided by the instructor. Students will construct their own timeline place and these key events onto it and will reflect on their constructed timeline.

Using the Timeline Curator

To set up the activity, determine a theme on which you want students to focus, and decide which Legal Timeline or Timelines they should use to find events. Provide students with the attached worksheet and have them fill in the theme and the Legal Timeline(s) they will use to pull their answers from before completing the activity. Students may complete the assignment individually or in small groups as part of class work or a homework assignment.

Sample themes may include:

- Women's Rights
- The Death Penalty
- Civil Rights
- Minors' Rights
- Federal Powers

Note that it may be important to emphasize to students that their curated timelines may not tell the whole story of the theme they are studying. Instead, it will offer a snapshot to help them think about the theme and how it shows up across the Legal Timeline(s) they are studying.

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Timeline Curator Worksheet

Instructions: Find 5–7 events on your assigned Legal Timeline(s) related to the assigned theme. Use these to create your own timeline by writing the date and name of each event in chronological order. When your timeline is complete, answer the questions on page 2.

Your Timeline Theme:

Legal Timeline(s) Your Entries Will Come From:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

Year:
Timeline:
Event:

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Questions to Consider

1. **Observe:** What do you notice first about your newly created timeline?

2. **Reflect:** What story does your timeline tell? How would you describe the legal changes that occur in your timeline?

3. **Question:** What questions do you still have about the way the rights on your timeline have changed over time? What additional information would you like to find out about the information on your timeline? Write 1–3 questions.

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