CASE #4

Crafting a Research Question: Differentiated Teaching for Instruction With Primary Sources Across Diverse Learning Levels

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES ENGAGED BY THIS CASE STUDY

1C. Draw on primary sources to generate and refine research questions.
1D. Understand that research is an iterative process and that as primary sources are found and analyzed the research question(s) may change.

LOCATION OF CASE STUDY

Brooklyn Connections
Brooklyn Public Library
10 Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, New York
https://www.bklynlibrary.org/brooklyncollection/connections

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Introduction and Institutional Context

Brooklyn Connections is the school outreach arm of Brooklyn Public Library's (BPL) archive and rare book division, the Brooklyn Collection. The goal of the program is to cultivate 21st-century learning skills in 4-12th grade students as they complete standards-aligned projects about Brooklyn history using primary sources from the archive. The program was founded in 2007, simultaneous with the opening of the Brooklyn Collection's public reading room. Since its inception the program has grown from serving 400 students in ten schools, to serving 2,000 in thirty-five, with nearly 15,000 total students engaged since its inception. The concept of running a school outreach program in an archive responds directly to the recognition that today's students lack knowledge on how to access, synthesize, and utilize primary sources to complete research projects and meet academic standards. Brooklyn Connections demystifies archives and the research process by contextualizing major historical themes through a local history lens.

Brooklyn Connections functions primarily as a residency program for Brooklyn public schools and as such, classroom teachers and school librarians apply each summer to partner with the program over the following academic year. In the 2017-2018 school year, Brooklyn Connections' three full-time program educators worked with 75 teachers in 63 classes at 34 schools, working with a total of 1,618 students. Program educators see each partner class an average of six times over the course of the academic year with interactions occurring almost exclusively at the schools, with the exception of one research session in the Brooklyn Collection and a culminating presentation of students' work at BPL. The classroom teacher, in collaboration with their Brooklyn Connections program educator, determines the schedule of these sessions. Sessions may be scheduled weekly, biweekly, or monthly, depending on how the classroom teacher wishes to integrate this program with their curriculum and learning goals. This model of school outreach, in which the archive travels to the classroom, enables participation by underserved schools that lack resources to leave their building and/or don't have access to primary sources through traditional means, such as libraries and archives.

The following quote from a 2017 application for the program articulates one partner's multi-faceted reasons for wanting to participate:

> Our school would like to be part of Brooklyn Connections school outreach program in order for students to: learn about local history as it outlined in the New York State Social Studies Curriculum in conjunction with the English Language Arts Common Core Standards; view, analyze, understand, and appreciate the value of local library resources, archives and primary sources; research, create, and develop a culminating project which presents students' understanding of the research [process] and then present their projects at the end of year culminating celebration; transfer their application of new research skills and appreciation [of] the research process with confidence toward their assignments as they move on to junior high and beyond; inform students about the different professions related to the research field [such] as library media specialists, researchers, [and] archivists, and the college and career path requirements.

For this case study, Brooklyn Connections illustrates methods for drawing on primary sources to instruct students on how to generate and refine research questions (*Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy*, learning objective 1C) and to recognize that research questions may change (*Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy*, learning objective 1D). Partner teachers frequently highlight the need to improve these skills, and consequently request that Brooklyn Connections' Crafting a Research Question lesson

(Appendix 1) be delivered in their classrooms. Given the diversity of the students served, the key challenge faced by Brooklyn Connections program educators when teaching these skills revolves around the complexity of adapting a standard research question lesson to speak to the range of learning styles inherently represented across many grade levels and classroom types. To illustrate that need for adaptation, this case study features three examples of lesson implementation, one each in elementary, middle, and high school, varyingly composed of honors, English language learners, and special education students.

Narrative

This narrative describes Brooklyn Connections' methodology for meeting learning objectives 1C and 1D of the *Guidelines for Primary Source Literacy* through the experiences of program educators Jen Hoyer and Julia Pelaez at three schools: New Utrecht High School, Junior High School 291, and Brooklyn Arbor School. Although this case study utilizes the terms "research questions" and "basic questions," K-12 educators employ a variety of terms, including open and closed questions, thick and thin questions, and essential and guiding questions.

Readers will note that while each of the three examples presented is rooted in the same Crafting a Research Question lesson plan, it is implemented to varying extents based on the baseline skill level of the students and their aptitude for learning new skills. Our case study begins with an examination of New Utrecht High School because it exemplifies the most complete implementation of this lesson plan, and students were successfully able to engage with both previously noted learning objectives. Because of various learning differences in the classrooms at Junior High School 291 and Brooklyn Arbor School, these students only engaged with learning objective 1C and did not progress to the part of the lesson plan that would require them to engage with learning objective1D. This case study shows how Brooklyn Connection program educators adapted the lesson plan, by adjusting worksheets and creating learning aids, to work successfully with students at different learning levels in the classrooms at the latter schools.

New Utrecht High School

New Utrecht High School is a public school located in the Bensonhurst neighborhood of Brooklyn. Established in 1915, it serves approximately 3,800 students in grades 9-12. The student population is 40% Asian, 4% Black, 30% Hispanic, and 26% White. Tiffany Hamilton has taught social studies for fifteen years and partnered with Brooklyn Connections the past three years with her eleventh grade American History honors students.

Entering into a recurring year of the partnership with added perspective on what worked well with her students and the curriculum, Hamilton chose the Civil Rights Movement in Brooklyn as the topic of study with Brooklyn Connections. In the context of five classroom visits, program educator Hoyer scheduled the research question lesson fourth, after an introductory lesson on working with primary sources, a lesson on internet research, and a lesson on taking notes. Students completed the Brooklyn Connections' *Civil Rights in Brooklyn Primary Source Packet* with corresponding document-based questions before Hoyer delivered the lesson.[1] All of this meant that students were very familiar with using primary source material and with their topic.

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[1] Brooklyn Connections program educators create Primary Source Packets using primary source material from Brooklyn Public Library's local history archive, the Brooklyn Collection. Each topic-based Primary Source Packet begins with one

Based on Hoyer's experience with these students, her awareness of their advanced learning level, and their ability to complete a large amount of work during a single class period, she prepared to deliver the complete Crafting a Research Question lesson plan (Appendix 1). Class sessions are dependent on the bell schedule of each partner school and generally range from thirty-five to sixty minutes; at New Utrecht High School each session is forty-eight minutes. The fourth class session began with a discussion of what constitutes a research question, defined as the big question that guides an entire project, and how a research question is different from the basic questions—with short, single-fact answers—asked while working on a research project.

Hoyer then introduced students to the preliminary steps for creating research questions, including the importance of picking a topic (i.e., the Civil Rights Movement in Brooklyn) and conducting introductory research prior to crafting research questions: one can't ask questions until one has base knowledge.[2] This provided an opportunity for students to review the primary sources collected and reflect on what they learned thus far about the Civil Rights Movement in Brooklyn. Based on this foundational knowledge, Hoyer invited students to narrow their research focus by identifying subtopics from their work with primary sources. Students individually brainstormed subtopics on a Mind Map (Appendix 1), and then came back together as a group to draft a collective Mind Map on the classroom white board.

Following this activity, students received the Crafting a Research Question worksheet (Appendix 1) to record the subtopic that most appealed to them with an explanation of their interest. Students then independently wrote three basic questions about their subtopic.

After students completed drafting their questions, the class engaged in a group conversation about the difference between basic questions—those that provide background information, can be answered from one source, and have one answer—and research questions, which have multiple answers and require that a researcher look at many sources to construct an answer. Hoyer modeled the process of turning one basic question into a research question through the incorporation of one of the following words: cause, effect, compare, impact, change, or influence. Students independently practiced this exercise on their worksheets, swapping with a neighbor and then evaluating each other's research questions to suggest further refinement where needed. They evaluated each other's

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secondary source to provide context, followed by a minimum of ten primary sources, each of which is accompanied by a series of document-based questions that help students analyze the sources. These document-based questions can be tailored using feedback from the teacher to make the packet more appropriate for the learning level of students, and primary sources can be changed to better fit the learning style of students. For example, a class of English language learners may be better served with more visual sources, while an Honors high school class will be more engaged with a combination of text-based and visual sources alongside document-based questions that require deeper analytical skills. A selection of primary source packets, including the *Civil Rights in Brooklyn Primary Source Packet*, are available for download at https://www.bklynlibrary.org/brooklyncollection/connections/resources

[2] When we speak of the base knowledge necessary to ask questions, we understand this to be both basic information about a topic so that students have necessary vocabulary to articulate relevant questions, as well as a basic understanding that asking questions is a research skill. Our experience in K-12 classrooms gives evidence that students are often uncomfortable asking questions. Today's education system emphasizes that the student's role is to provide specific answers to questions; turning the tables and asking students to create questions brings them outside their comfort zone. We have found that many students are resistant when initially prompted to make questions, because this is an unfamiliar and uncomfortable activity. It is valuable to devote lesson time to asking basic questions because this makes students aware that questioning is a skill to be developed and implemented throughout the research process. Starting with the process of crafting basic questions by looking at primary sources—using words like who, what, when, where, and why— helps students begin to feel comfortable with this skill.

questions by examining whether the question was clear, focused, and arguable. Hoyer engaged the students in a conversation about what it means for questions to be clear, focused, and arguable, in order to make sure these concepts were understood by everyone.

Lastly, students drafted up to three basic questions that could ultimately answer the research question they had worked to refine. Because students had worked through learning objectives 1C and 1D by this point in the lesson, Hoyer wrapped up the class discussion by asking students for examples of how they had refined their questions during class. She concluded by explaining ways that questions may be refined further as students continued to do research on their topic.

Junior High School 291

Junior High School 291 is a public school located in the Bushwick neighborhood of Brooklyn. It serves approximately 309 students in grades 6-8. The student population is 14% Black, 83% Hispanic, and 2% White. Caroline Balan has worked as a teacher for the last fifteen years, and partnered with Brooklyn Connections for the past three years with her 8th grade Social Studies classes. Balan's class is comprised of English language learners, students in the special education program, and general education students.

Balan's goal for her Brooklyn Connections partnership with program educator Pelaez was to improve students' research skills, while instilling the value of the resources provided by the Brooklyn Collection. Most of her students had never visited a library, possessed a library card, or accessed primary source material for research. Balan chose to research Bushwick neighborhood history with her students so they could learn about their school's surroundings.

Pelaez scheduled the research question lesson after an introductory lesson on making observations and inferences from primary sources, as well as a lesson on taking notes. At this school, each session was forty-five minutes. Because of her observation of students' penchant for using the same basic questions in all their homework assignments, Balan requested that the lesson emphasize the difference between basic and research questions in order to generate better, more intentional questions focused on a specific research outcome. Balan advised that due to classroom behavior and attendance issues, students best engaged with lessons which required individual or small group work. Consequently, Pelaez revised the standard worksheets for this lesson plan to create more individual work for students.

Pelaez began the research question lesson with a "Do Now" activity to reinforce students' ability to make observations and inferences about a primary source photograph of Bushwick.[3] Following this, she invited students to complete a "Think-Pair-Share"[4] exercise on the following questions: Are there

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[3] A "Do Now" is a brief assignment or activity that students do as they enter the classroom. It may be a short worksheet, or it may be a series of questions written on the board for students to think about and respond to. Many teachers use Do Nows as part of the routine for every class, because they provide a way for students to transition to the content and subject at hand while they and their classmates are settling in at the start of the period. Do Now activities are usually created so that they can be graded by teachers and used in student assessment. The internet is full of great ideas for creating Do Nows; one starting point is the *Teach Like a Champion* blog: http://teachlikeachampion.com/blog/now-primer/.

[4] "Think-Pair-Share" describes a collaborative strategy in which students reflect independently on a question they have been presented with before finding a partner to discuss their ideas with (some classrooms have a buddy system in which all students are assigned a partner for activities like this). Finally, these partner groups share their ideas out with the class in a group conversation.

different kinds of questions we ask when conducting research? What makes a good research question?

Students struggled to respond to these prompts. While some recognized the terms "research questions" and "basic questions," they could not articulate the difference between the two. Because of the class's uncertainty at this point, Pelaez shifted the lesson to a discussion about different types of questions such as When is your birthday?, What is your favorite color?, and What neighborhood do you live in? The students correctly identified these as basic questions, which demanded easy, short answers and did not require extensive research or complex thinking. Pelaez then shared examples of possible research questions such as the following: Who has had a major influence on your life, and how have they impacted you? The students responded well to this activity and were able to identify the difference between research and basic questions after this discussion.

After reviewing definitions and examples of research and basic questions, Pelaez instructed students to independently complete the Asking Questions for Research activity (Appendix 2). These handouts asked students to make observations and inferences about primary sources, pairing the inferences with the added skill of articulating basic and research questions for each source (called guiding and essential questions in the terminology of the classroom). Students exhibited excitement when they realized the photographs were taken near their school. Pelaez projected the definitions for types of questions (guiding and essential) on the board and circulated through the classroom to provide individualized assistance to the students who continued to struggle with creating questions on their own.

Brooklyn Arbor School

Brooklyn Arbor School is a public school located in the South Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn. Founded in 2012, it serves approximately 597 students in grades Pre-K-5. The student population is 2.5% Asian, 3% Black, 65.4% Hispanic, and 26.1% White. Karin Islim has taught a self-contained class of students in grades 3, 4, and 5 at Brooklyn Arbor for three years. Self-contained classrooms have a maximum of twelve students and are designated for learners with disabilities who are unable to participate in general education programs and thus receive specially designed instruction. Self-contained classrooms may also have more flexibility in their classroom schedule than traditional classrooms. Brooklyn Connections sessions at the school ranged from thirty to fifty minutes. The 2017-18 school year marked Islim's first year partnering with Brooklyn Connections.

Program educator Hoyer worked with Islim to plan their lessons with the students' preferred learning styles and low reading levels in mind. Islim noted that her students benefit from emphasizing new vocabulary related to their research topic, the Brooklyn Bridge, and learn best when presented with a variety of tactile objects. She also indicated the importance of designing lessons for delivery without projected visuals because she hadn't yet used the smart board in her classroom, in an effort to help students learn without technological distractions.

Following three lessons familiarizing students with primary sources about the Brooklyn Bridge, Hoyer presented a lesson on developing questions from primary sources. In designing this lesson, she understood that the learning level of the students was too low for the full complexity of the standard Crafting a Research Question lesson plan, and adapted it to incorporate tactile learning objects as the teacher recommended. Hoyer planned to teach the difference between research and basic questions, and the development of both types of questions from a single primary source. To embrace tactile

learning, she created flash cards with sentence stems of basic questions to use in a group activity. These sentence stems were then replicated on a simplified worksheet for an independent activity (Appendix 4). Hoyer selected a familiar primary source from previous lessons, "An artist's conception of the Brooklyn Bridge tragedy of May 30, 1883," from *Harper's Weekly*, 9 Jun 1883 (Appendix 3).

To begin the class, students sat in a circle on the carpet at the front of the class and Hoyer presented them with the selected primary source. After all students had a moment to make observations, reinforcing a skill developed and practiced in previous sessions, Hoyer presented the flash cards with sentence stems and introduced the task of creating questions related to the primary source. The flash cards were placed face down on the carpet, and students took turns selecting a flash card and sharing a question about the primary source beginning with the sentence stem on their flash card. Several students struggled with articulating questions. Many wanted to voice observations instead, and so Hoyer and Islim led a discussion with students about the key characteristics of questions, such as always ending them with a question mark.

After students had the opportunity to create questions in this group activity, they transitioned to independent work at their tables. Each student received a worksheet with the same sentence stems for basic questions. Due to the struggles students exhibited in crafting questions during the group activity, Hoyer and Islim focused on creating basic questions, rather than moving on to discuss the difference between research and basic questions as originally planned.

Results

It is helpful to bring together these three examples of teaching students to generate and refine research questions from primary sources. By looking at varied settings we can reflect on how instructional approaches and materials change for different classrooms, and how different learning goals around the same objectives can be achieved with different and diverse types of students.

Beyond their success in completing classroom assignments on creating research questions, the effectiveness of the Crafting a Research Question lesson at New Utrecht High School was ultimately demonstrated through students' final research projects. All Brooklyn Connections partner classes are required to create final projects based on their research, and to present these projects at a year-end Convocation Ceremony. The partner teacher can decide on the format of this project to ensure it meets other curriculum objectives for their class, including whether it is produced individually or in groups. The only stipulation by Brooklyn Connections is that the final project must have a visual, oral, and written component. At New Utrecht High School, students worked in groups to research a specific subtopic of the Civil Rights Movement in Brooklyn. For their final projects, their teacher required students to complete two related tasks. First, they had to create posters advertising a historic protest related to their chosen subtopic. Second, they had to write a newspaper article explaining the effectiveness of that protest. This research required students to analyze primary sources critically and ask good questions about details relating to their topic—including individuals involved, tactics used, and outcomes accomplished—to construct a successful final project. Overall, the students excelled at this assignment, and the most effective projects were clearly guided by good research questions.

At Junior High School 291, student responses on independent work as well as overall class participation helped in assessing their progress. Caroline Balan, the teacher, previously commented on her students' tendency to create the same basic questions for all homework assignments. This lesson challenged students to analyze primary sources and draft a variety of basic questions, and then

research questions, in response to each source. By the end of the lesson most students exhibited competency at this exercise. They could create questions on their worksheet, and they exhibited comprehension regarding the need to ask questions for research, though many expressed that they had never previously seen the value of this. Additionally, at the subsequent session with a Brooklyn Connections program educator, many of the students had no difficulty creating rapid-fire questions about a primary source as part of an icebreaker activity. This is not something they had previously been able to do. However, English language learners in the class still struggled. While they understood the concept of writing and refining research questions, they were unable independently to implement the skill in the time scheduled for the lesson. Balan reinforced the lesson with the English language learners in her class over an additional class period. She noted that these students benefited from the extra time and attention, and generally grasped the skill by the conclusion of the second lesson.

Teaching the same set of skills for developing questions from primary sources at Brooklyn Arbor School highlighted the importance of laying a foundation for the grammatical structure of a question: that each one must have a question mark at the end. It also reinforced the possibility for teaching a lesson on research questions at a much lower learning level, albeit in a differentiated format. Karen Islim, the teacher, was thankful for the sentence stem flash cards, which supported the tactile learning preferences of her students. While students were only introduced to basic questions and did not complete all the work prepared for this lesson, Islim indicated this was an effective and successful exercise for introducing her students to the concept of asking different types of questions for research.

Lessons Learned

Overall, the delivery of a lesson incorporating the same primary source literacy objectives across different educational settings helped unpack the many ways it could be scaffolded for different learning levels. The students at New Utrecht High School were incredibly competent and successful at mastering the art of crafting research questions from their work with primary sources. Because of that success, this lesson could have been elevated to better meet their advanced learning level by incorporating new, unseen primary sources, seeking to stretch their ability to analyze and synthesize information from multiple primary sources in nuanced research questions. Students at this school have consistently demonstrated a high level of achievement in each year of the partnership, and project educators from Brooklyn Connections have responded by working to incorporate more challenging archival material that demonstrates multiple viewpoints for them to analyze. This class of students was also able to reflect on how their process of refining questions could potentially continue (learning objective 1D). Because of their success at this within the timeframe of this session, it would have been interesting to reflect with students again at the culmination of their research project about how they had continued to refine their research questions.

Most students at Junior High School 291 demonstrated the ability to craft and refine research questions while analyzing primary sources by the end of this lesson. The English language learners, though, struggled to access prior knowledge and required repetitive activities and additional time in order to succeed. In retrospect, delivery of this lesson with these students would have benefited from the inclusion of a vocabulary list, recall lists (a prompt to remember five points discussed in the previous class), and an exit ticket (a short questionnaire used at the end of class to reinforce material learned). The lesson plan could have been expanded over two class periods in order to allow further repetition of the skills involved, since students in this class demonstrated that they learned best through repetition.

At Brooklyn Arbor School, BPL's Jen Hoyer learned the value of thinking outside the box to adapt lessons for different learning styles. This teaching opportunity explored the value of differentiating a complex lesson for self-contained primary school learners. While the students only mastered the skill of creating basic questions, this was still a valuable step in their learning. Our partner teacher at Brooklyn Arbor was incredibly grateful for the way the lesson was adapted for the visual and tactile learning style of her students. She felt confident that our decision to spend an entire session focusing on basic questions, rather than pushing students to move on to complex research questions, provided them the time to focus on mastering a foundational skill.
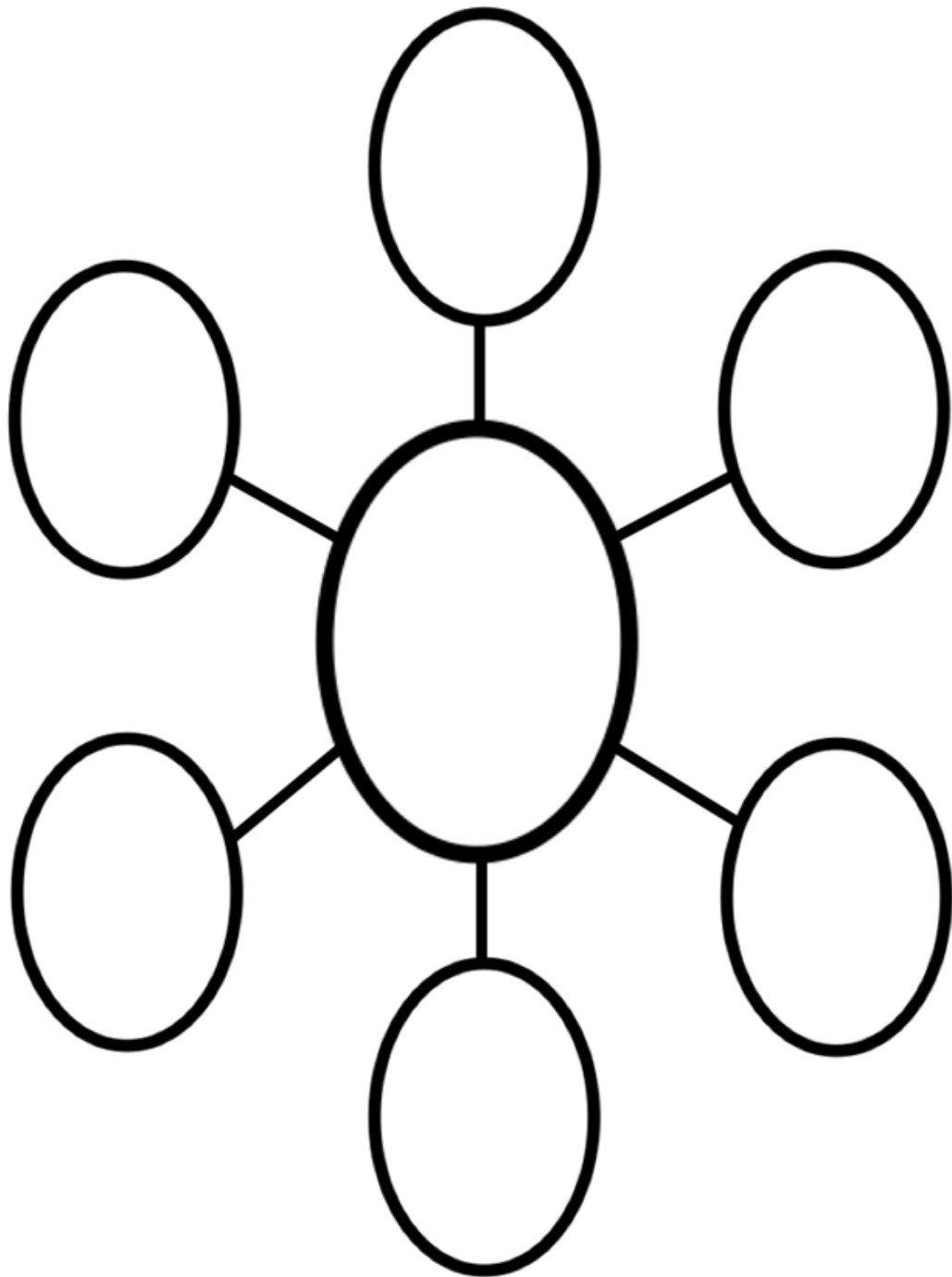
BROOKLYN CONNECTIONS

CRAFTING A RESEARCH QUESTION LESSON PLAN

AIM:	The student will learn to craft a well-rounded research question.
OBJECTIVE:	Students learn the difference between guiding, general questions and a research question. Tools are provided for helping students to turn guiding questions into strong research questions. The research question will then be evaluated to make sure it is clear, focused, and arguable.
MATERIALS:	• Crafting a Research Question Prezi: http://prezi.com/sgtenfebpirt/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy&rc=ex0share • Crafting a Research Question (Handout) • Mind Map (Handout) • Evaluating Research Questions (Handout)

PROCEDURE:	1. Why do we need a strong research question?
	It helps students focus their research
	2. Discuss pitfalls of bad questions: Too much information, too little information, information not applicable to your overall topic, harder to stay organized, etc.
	3. Walk students through the steps to forming a strong question: use the *Crafting a Research Question* handout
	  a. Pick a topic
	  b. Do background research: Students must know something about their topic to ask questions about it. If students do not have background information, provide a primary or secondary source for students to work through and reflect on, independently or as a class.
	  c. ASK: What do you know? What do you want to know? Use a Mind Map to break down the topic into subtopics you're aware of from your background knowledge
	  d. Invite students to identify a subtopic that interests them, and write what interests them about this subtopic
	  e. Write three questions about this subtopic
	  f. Evaluate your questions. Choose one and reflect: Is your research question clear, focused, and arguable? Does the sentence structure make sense? Would someone else know what you're asking? Is the question too broad, making it hard to find a clear answer? Is the question too narrow, making it hard to find enough information? Is your research question arguable? Research questions allow a student to form an opinion and must be opened ended enough that students will have to support the opinion.
	  g. If you feel that students would benefit from evaluating other research questions before they evaluate their own, use the *Evaluating Research Questions* handout. Go through each question and invite students to discuss why each question is NOT strong.
	    i. Question 1's problem: Yes or No
	    ii. Question 2's problem: Value judgement
	    iii. Question 3's problem: Too narrow
	    iv. Question 4's problem: Too broad
	    Ask students to fix all four questions, addressing the discussed problems.
	  h. Invite your students to rewrite one of their questions include active words that increase complexity: Cause, Effect, Compare, Impact, Change, Influence
	  i. Ask students to pass their research question to their neighbor for evaluation using learned tools
	  j. Allow students time to use comments to fix their questions
	Invite students to think of three guiding questions that would help them find information which would help answer their research question.

ASSESSMENT:	• Research Questions should be evaluated based on whether they are clear, focused, and arguable.
	• Student work should be evaluated based on their ability to reflect on their own work and refine questions to create better research questions
DIFFERENTIATION:	• Use Think Small (handout) to help students break down their topics
	• Use Research Questions KW Chart (handout) for lower level students
	• Allow more time for guided practice for lower level students
	• For younger grades, simply focus on KW chart
	• Alter given questions to better fit class needs
CCSS ADDRESSED: (CCSS, or Common Core State Standards, are a set of standards adopted across 42 states to describe what skills students should have attained by the end of each grade. CCSS.ELA specifically refers to ELA, or English Language Arts, standards. The full standards are available at www.corestandards.org)	**4th Grade** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. **5th Grade** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.5.2** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. **6th Grade** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.6.8** Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1a** Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. **7th Grade** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.8** Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.7.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1a** Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. **8th Grade** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.8.8** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1a** Introduce claim(s) about a topic or issue, acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically. **9th – 10th Grades** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of

substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.1b Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.9-10.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.9-10.1b Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.

11th- 12th Grades

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1b Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.1b Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

MIND MAP

CRAFTING A RESEARCH QUESTION

1. What is your topic?

2. What interests you about this topic?

3. List three questions you have about this topic:

4. Look at the above questions. Increase the complexity of ONE of these questions, to make a good research question. Use words like **cause, effect, compare, impact, change, influence**.

5. Evaluate your question. Is it clear? Is it focused? Is it arguable? Reword and rewrite your question below.

6. Based on your main research question, list three sub-questions below. These should be questions that will help you find the answer to your research question.

EVALUATING RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Below are poorly written research questions.

Practice writing strong research questions by fixing them to make them
clear, focused, and arguable.

Use strong words to make your question more complex:
cause, effect, compare, impact, change, influence.

1. Was Jackie Robinson a member of the Brooklyn Dodgers?

    _____

    _____

2. Was Ebinger's Bakery a bad company?

    _____

    _____

3. Why did Shawn Carter choose the alias Jay-Z?

    _____

    _____

4. What are the causes of gentrification in Brooklyn?

    _____

    _____

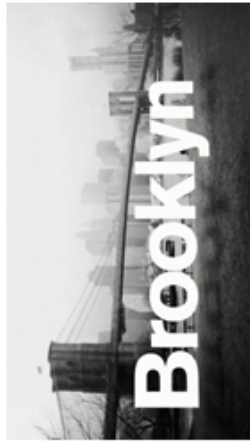# RESEARCH QUESTION – KW CHART

Topic:

This topic is interesting because:

KNOW	WANT TO KNOW

What is one strong question you will work to answer with your project?
This question cannot be a yes or no question.

THINK SMALL

Brooklyn
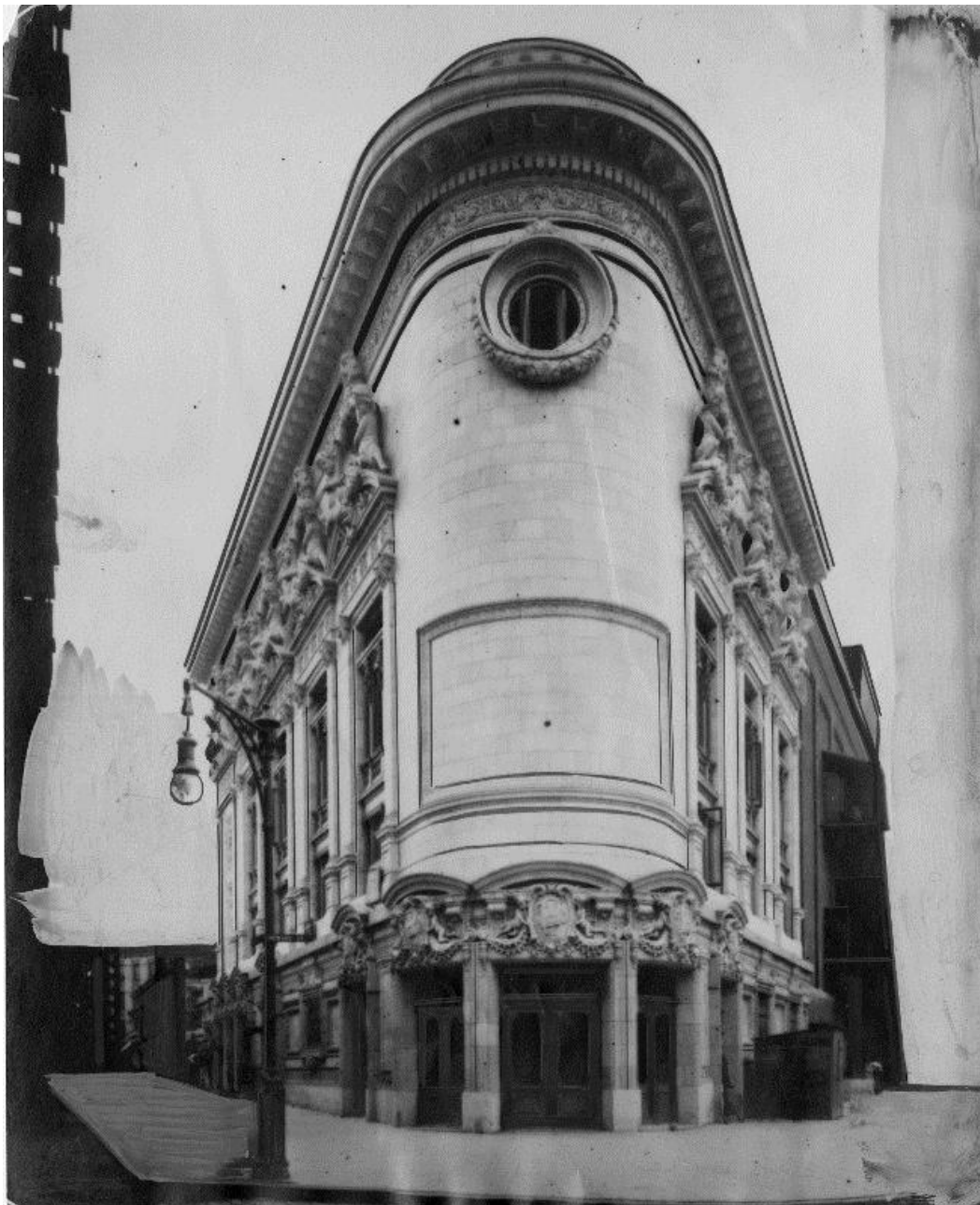
NAME: _____

BROOKLYN CONNECTIONS

ASKING QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH: BUSHWICK

Examine the following primary source:

Create three guiding questions about this source:

-
_____

_____

-
_____

_____

-
_____

Create three essential questions about this source:

-
_____

_____

-
_____

_____

-
_____

Based on your observations, what would you infer this building was used for? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Based on your observations, when do you think this picture was taken?

_____

Examine the following primary source:

[Horse-drawn beer wagon]. [194-?] Brooklyn Public Library, Brooklyn Collection.

Create three guiding questions about this source:

-
  _____

  _____

-
  _____

  _____

-
  _____

Create three essential questions about this source:

-
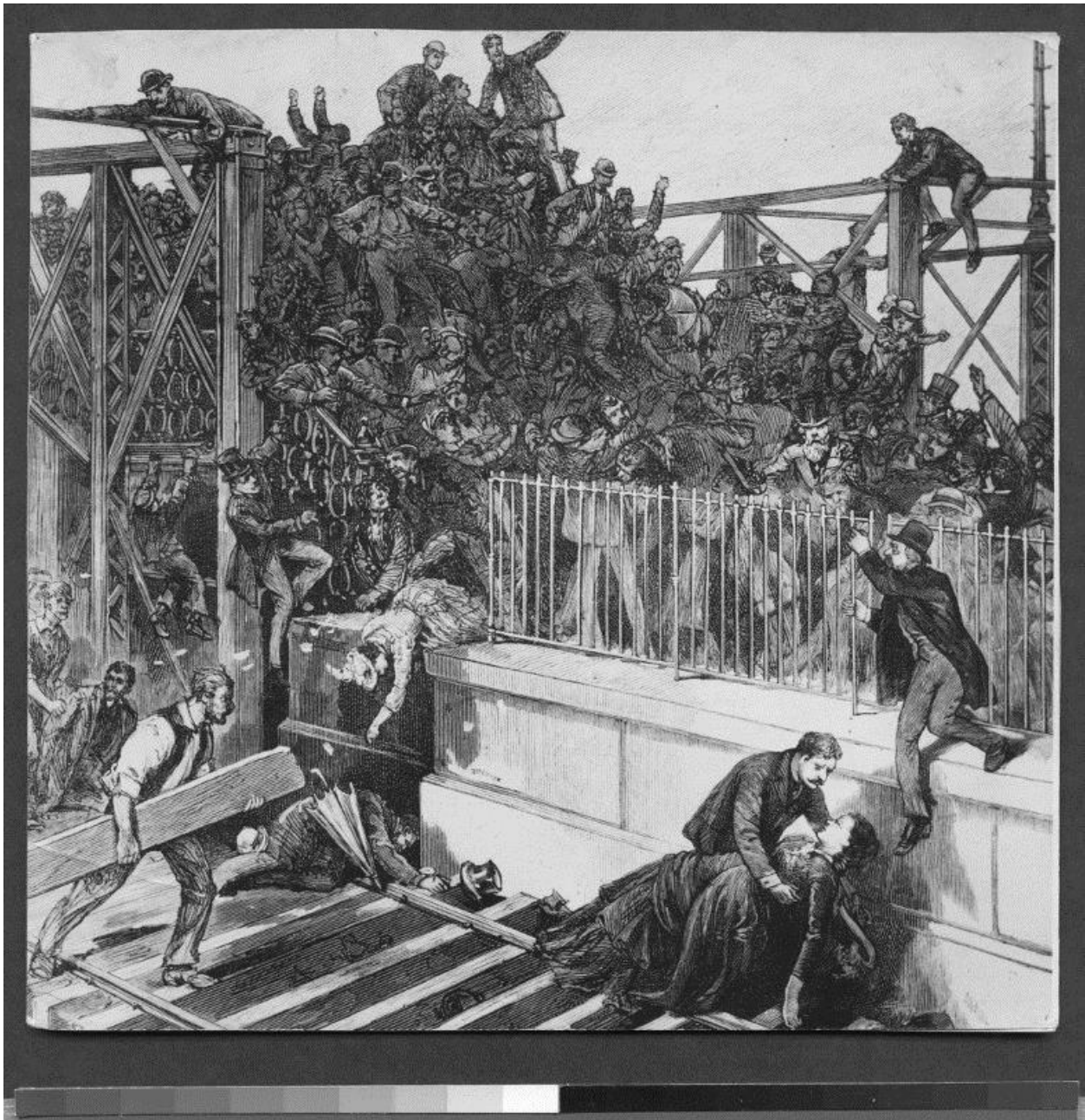 _____

  _____

-
  _____

  _____

-
  _____

What missing information would you need in order to understand the context of this primary source?

_____

_____

What time period do you think this photograph was taken in? Explain your answer.

_____

_____

_____

Seidman Photo Service. *An artist's conception of the Brooklyn Bridge tragedy of May 30, 1883.* Harper's Weekly. June 9, 1883. Brooklyn Public Library, Brooklyn Collection.

WHO IS	WHAT IS
WHERE IS	WHEN IS
WHY IS	HOW IS

Name: _____

GUIDING QUESTIONS

**What questions do you have about this primary source?
Using the prompts, ask a few questions:**

WHO_____

_____

WHAT_____

_____

HOW _____

_____

WHEN _____

_____

WHERE _____

_____

WHY _____

_____

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

WHY DID _____

_____

WHAT CAUSED _____

_____

WHAT IMPACT

_____

_____

WHY MIGHT _____

_____