



Healing Through The Arts®

Where those who are healing find strength,
hope and inspiration through the arts.

Social Studies, Lesson 4 – F.D.R.’s Fireside Chats

Lesson goal – To develop critical thinking and analysis skills

Target students – History students in grades 8 and higher

Learning Objective – Students will analyze F.D.R.’s “Fireside Chats” for major meanings and context

Outcome – Students will create their own version of the “Fireside Chat” for an issue that is facing Americans today

Standards – The following educational standards are addressed in this lesson:

- PA History 8.1.9 A, B, D
- PA History 8.1.12 A, B, D
- PA History 8.2.9 A-D
- PA History 8.2.12 A-D
- PA History 8.3.9 A, B
- PA History 8.3.12 A, B
- CC RH 1, 4, 5, 10
- CC WHST 1, 4, 8, 9

Materials / Resources – The following resources will be required for this lesson:

- Internet access
- Power Point, some multimedia editing program

Description of Lesson (recommended duration: two to three 90 – minute blocks or four to six 45 – minute classes)

1. Break students into groups to discuss and share their thoughts about F.D.R., the major crisis he confronted, and what made radio so revolutionary in the 1930’s.

2. Students will then choose one of the “Fireside Chats” and listen to the recording while reading the transcript. They should consider and attempt to answer the following questions:
 - What is the theme of the address?
 - What argument or point-of-view is President Roosevelt making with the chat?
 - What words or phrases does the president emphasize or use frequently?
 - What overall tone does the “Fireside Chat” have—relaxed? Informative? Alarming?
3. Students will then create their own version of the “Fireside Chat”. They will collaborate on a brief script running no more than five minutes, emulating the style and tenor of the chats. The topic should be a current and relevant one, for either the school community or entire world.

Resources:

- Audio Recordings and Transcripts of F.D.R.’s Fireside Chats. Miller Center at UVA.
<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches#fdroosevelt>
- Audio Recordings of F.D.R.’s Fireside Chats. American Presidency Project.
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/medialist.php?presid=32>
- Transcripts of the Fireside Chats. Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum.
<http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/firesi90.html>