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Philosophy of Teaching Social Studies

Social Studies get a bad reputation. Many students say it’s their least favorite subject because it’s boring. One could say that student needs to change their attitude but as a social studies lover myself, I can agree that sometimes it is boring. With that said, it does not have to be boring. It can be engaging and informational all in one. The teacher needs to find out what will do just that.

A lot of social studies classes are lecture and PowerPoint based. That’s a great tactic, but the teacher needs to be aware that doing the same thing every lesson might result in losing the students attention. Simply relaying information is not always going to make those connections that are necessary for student learning. Social studies, especially history is such a hard concept to grasp because it does not effect the student in that moment.

There are two different kinds of connections a student can make: personal knowledge and personal experience. The student might have an experience that happened to them or that they witnessed that helps them remember information. That is the best connection to make but a student can’t experience everything. That is when they tap into their personal knowledge. The student will need to think back to what they might already know. A teacher can push the student in that direction by having examples or going over previously learned material before starting new material.

Overall, connections are the key to teach social studies effectively. If that means that I need to dress up as Abraham Lincoln for them to remember that he led the Emancipation Proclamation, then I will do that.