

Save the Last Word for Me – Teaching Strategy

Quick Overview

Students read a primary or secondary source and identify a key quotation they want to share with the class. Other students respond to the selection before the student explains the significance of their selection.

Skill Objective

Students will...

- Practice deep-reading sources for meaning
- Explain how individual parts contribute to an overall message or idea

Content Objective

Students will...

- Develop and share a personal, evidence-based interpretation of a source or a historical topic

Civics Skills Connection

Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

- Connection to daily life and culture: Encourages personal connections to historical texts and subjects, bringing students into the conversation with history more directly.
- Emphasis on respect: Fosters deep listening and respectful turn-taking.
- Self and social awareness: Encourages students to justify their thinking and reflect on others' interpretations.

Prep ahead

- Educators print out several copies of the selected source and provide them to students to read.
- Each student receives an index card to write their selection on.

Strategy Steps

1. Students read through the source in its entirety.
2. Each student selects a key quotation that they particularly resonate with.
 - a. Students might pick a quotation for a number of reasons, including:
 - i. it says something they agree with
 - ii. it says something they disagree with
 - iii. it makes them wonder about something
 - iv. it helps them make a connection to other things you have studied in class
3. Students write their selected quotation on one side of the notecard, and they write their reason for selecting it on the other.

4. In groups of 3-5, students share the quotation that they chose.
5. Group members respond with their interpretations before the original student explains their reasoning.
6. Students rotate within their groups until all students have had a chance to share their selection.

Customizations

- **Option 1: Extend it**
 - After students complete the activity, regroup students based on similarity of the quotations that they have selected. Put students who selected the same quotation (or quotations with similar ideas) with each other for this follow-up activity. Have students compare their different reasons for picking these selections.
- **Option 2: Write about it**
 - Students write a full paragraph based on the evidence they pulled from the source and their initial reason for selecting it. They craft a more formal written product than they did during the group exercise to help translate from oral processing of information to written articulation of ideas.