Lesson Plan: Introduction to the Archive

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

What is an archive? What stories are in this archive? How does the information in this archive inform my understanding of activism? Historically, what strategies do students deploy to enact change?

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S)

SWBAT define the purpose of the archive. SWBAT discuss the information found in this archive. SWBAT practice analyzing one document within the archive.

HOOK / INTRODUCTION

(Adopted from Columbia Lehman Center)
What archives are part of our lives? How do we create archives every day?
-What do you think an archive is? Have you ever visited an archive?

Explain to students, during this series of lessons they will practice being archivists. To introduce the archive, ask students to look through their backpacks and identify one object that represents them that they would leave behind in a time capsule? Have students share their item in pairs. Rather than present their item, each partner share what they think the item represents. After, students will share why they chose the item and what it represents.
Connect back to the ethics of the archive. Explain we do not always get to choose what we leave behind, what we choose is a snapshot in time and how what we leave behind is left up to the interpretation of others.

EXPLORE THE ARCHIVE

Give students the opportunity to explore the archive and organize their thoughts into the three categories below.
-See: What information is available in this archive? How is the information organized?
-Think: What can I learn from this archive?
-Wonder: How is this archive organized? What other ways could this information be organized or categories? Is time the best unit to organize history?

THINKING LIKE AN ARCHIVIST

Introduce students to the Analyze a Written Document activity. (If middle school go through one example with students first).
Together students will complete the activity for the Black Student Action Group document.
Note this activity can be used for multiple documents within the archive after students analyze multiple documents across different times in history they can reflect on the ways students continue to struggle with similar themes over different generations.

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7
Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9
Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

TEKS STANDARDS

d(9) History The student understands the impact of the American civil rights movement.
d(10) History The student understands the impact of political, economic, and social factors in the U.S. from the 1970s through 1990.
d(20) Government The student understands the impact of constitutional issues on American society.
d(22) Citizenship The student understands the promises of the Declaration of Independence and the protections of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
d(25) Culture The student understands how people from various groups contribute to our national identity.
d(28) (28) Social studies skills. The student understands how historians use historiography to interpret the past and applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of valid sources, including technology.