

# H. S. I. (History Story Investigation)

## Latin Kings: Friends of the Neighborhood or Public Enemies?

Priscilla Kron

AHTC Summer Institute

**Unit/Topic: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade – American History, 50s & 60s**

### **Abstract:**

This lesson explores the nature of inner-city gangs and our emotions surrounding them. Specifically it asks students to examine a set of documents and reach an opinion regarding this question: Are the Latin Kings friends of the neighborhood, public enemies, or both?

- Students will study the Issue File consisting of five records. (primary and secondary sources)
- Students will complete a Record Log (document analysis) which covers the five records.
- Students will write an essay answering the above question, including evidence from the records.

### **Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings:**

1. What is the nature of gangs and how do gang members view themselves?
2. How does society view gangs and their members?
3. Are there multiple viewpoints that are valid regarding gangs?
4. As historians, how do we judge an issue using evidence from primary and secondary sources?

### **Assessment:**

- Students will think critically about the role that gangs have played as our cities have grown.
- During the lesson, the students will examine primary and secondary sources related to the Latin King gang by completing a type of document analysis form.
- After the lesson, the students will use evidence from the sources to support their own opinion regarding the role of the Latin King gang.

### **Setting the Purpose:**

- Students will have spent several days discussing developments and participating in activities about the 1950s, including diversity issues, increase in employment and disposable income, and cultural aspects of U. S. society.
- Students will have been exposed to the growth in teen culture during the 1950s – dress, music, behavior, consumerism.
- Students will have discussed the nature of gangs, their evolution in the inner cities, their own feelings about gangs, and watched selected segments from *West Side Story*.

### **Lesson Plan (Including Analysis of Primary/Secondary Sources):**

- Each small group or pair of students will receive an Issue File which will include the Investigation Instructions, five records related to the issue of the Latin Kings gang, and

copies of the Record Log. (see Annotated List of Materials and Resources for the five records)

- As they read each document in the Issue File, each student will fill out the chart labeled Record Log (a modified document analysis form).
- After completing the Record Log, the groups or pairs of students will discuss the question: Are the Latin Kings friends of the neighborhood, public enemies, or both, in order to begin thinking about ideas for their essay.
- As a culmination of the lesson, students will write a short essay in response to the question above. One criteria of the assignment is that they must use evidence from the Records (as recorded on the Record Log) to support their opinion.
- A follow-up class discussion might address the importance of considering multiple points of view on issues and the need to substantiate opinions with evidence.

**Annotated List of Materials and Resources:**

Issue File

Investigation Instructions

Record A: Excerpt from the Almighty Latin King Nation Constitution

Record B: Excerpt from an Interview, “The Latin Kings Speak”

Record C: “Chicago Latin King Leader Convicted”

Record D: Background on the Latin Kings

Record E: “Building Peace, Unity, and Justice in Greensboro”

Record Log