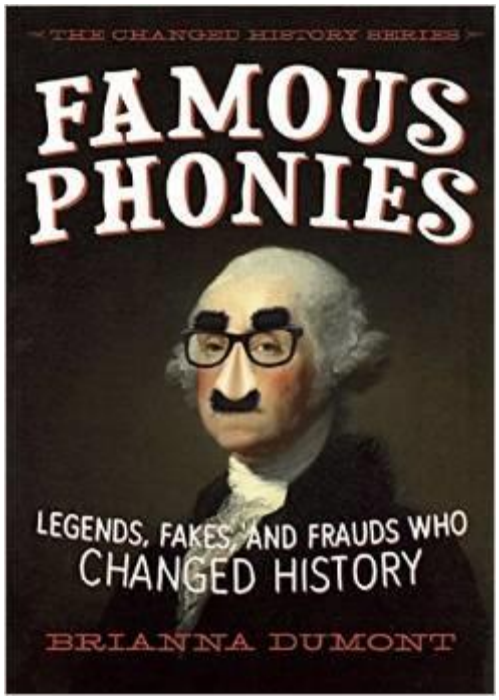
A Curriculum Guide for Educators & Readers

Aligned to the Common Core Grades 5-9



Discussion points, activities, and writing prompts to help educators use *Famous Phonies: Legends, Fakes, and Frauds who Changed History* as a classroom read aloud or as a selection for independent reading. Great for book clubs, too!

About the Author

Brianna DuMont got her degree in art history and archaeology, and classics. She's traveled extensively in search of great museums and historical sites to visit. When she's home, she is an independent historian and full-time writer who is quickly becoming best friends with her local librarian. She lives in Chicago, IL with her husband.

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About the Book

Fakes, frauds, and phonies.

Sounds like a book filled with criminals and delinquents, doesn't it? Well, it's not. Some of the biggest names in history can be found between these pages—and the light isn't flattering. (We're looking at you, George "I must not tell a lie" Washington.)

Famous Phonies: Legends, Fakes, and Frauds Who Changed History is the first book in a new nonfiction middle grade series that will explore the underbelly of history, making you question everything you thought you knew about history's finest. Follow the fake lives of these twelve history-changers to uncover the fabrications of the famous, and the should-be-famous!

Before You Read...

CCSS: RI.5.4,7,8; SL.5.1a,4; L.5.4a,b,c;
RI.6.4,5,6; SL.6.1a,3; L.6.4a,c,d
RI.7.4,5,6; SL.7.1a,3; L.7.4a,c,d
RI.8.4,6; SL.8.1a,3; L.8.4a,4c,d; RH.6-8.2,4,6
RI.9-10.4,5,6; SL.9-10.1a,4; L.9-10.4,a,c,d; RH.9-10.2,4

1. Take a close look at the front cover illustration of *Famous Phonies: Legends, Fakes, and Frauds Who Changed History*. Who is the person on the cover? Is this this way you are used to seeing this person? Why or why not?
2. Can you predict what this book is about? What from the illustration and title of the book supports your prediction?
3. Read the Author's Note and Introduction. What seems to be Brianna DuMont's purpose in writing this book? Who is the intended audience?
4. Read Brianna DuMont's biography. What is her background with the subject matter of this book? Would you consider her an expert?
5. Grab a dictionary and look up these words: *legend, fake,* and *fraud*. Based on the definitions, what do you think this book will tell you about the people discussed within its pages?
6. What do you think is meant by saying, "The people who were once real have been crushed by their own legends long ago"?

Chapter 1—Confucius: Man of Many Sayings

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.4,5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.4,5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. Who, according to legend, was Confucius? When did he live? What is he credited with doing?
2. What is the name of Confucius's book? What was the book about?
3. Why is there doubt about who Confucius really was?
4. What are some of the truths about Confucius?
    a. His appearance?
    b. His birth?
    c. His childhood?
5. What was Confucius's vision for China? How did he go about it?
6. How did Confucius treat people, including his followers? Create a dramatic re-enactment about what supposedly happened to Ren Qui.
7. After his death, his followers glossed over the nasty stuff about him and worked to spread Confucianism throughout China. What is Confucianism?
    a. What are its core values?
    b. How did the Qin dynasty react?
    c. What about the Han dynasty?
    d. What are *Ren* and *Li*?
8. What was Confucius's legacy? What is he known for today?
9. Write the Confucius quotes on page 12 in your own words. How would you re-write them for Twitter?

Confucius for a Better China

Confucius wanted nothing more than to be promoted to government office. He "campaigned" all over China.

Create a campaign poster for Confucius. Use a quote or two of his and some information regarding his core values.

Making Connections:

Legends are created stories passed down through generations about a person doing (usually) incredible things. There's (usually) some truth to the stories, but they can't be proven.

Write a legendary version of the life of an ancestor who has passed. Start with some facts. Did your great-great grandfather travel from Ireland to America as an immigrant? Perhaps the legend can include taming the storms at sea or fighting pirates along the way.

Chapter 2—George Washington: His High Mightiness

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3,9; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2
RI.6.1,2,3,9; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.4,5; L.6.1,2
RI.7.1,2,3,9; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.4,5; L.7.1,2
RI.8.1,2,3,9; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2; WSH.6-8.7,8,9
RI.9-10.1,2,8,9; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2; WSH.9-10.7,8,9

1. Quick! Write down what you know about George Washington.
2. Now, grab a history book or an encyclopedia and write down as many facts as possible about George Washington.
3. There are several myths about George Washington. Which of the following myths are true:

a. He had wooden teeth.

b. He couldn't tell a lie.

c. He chopped down a cherry tree.

d. He had no professional education.

e. He was a down-to-earth, calm hero.

f. He once threw a silver dollar across the Potomac.

4. When George Washington called for a boycott of all imported goods from England he was being contradictory. How so?

I Cannot Tell a Lie!

Politicians, including George Washington, are not known to be truthful. In this game, see if you can spot the lying spy!

1. Choose one student to be the President.
2. Have the President go out of the room and choose one person to be the spy.
3. The spy is the only one in the group who is allowed to lie.
4. The President will return to the room and start a line of questioning to find the spy. They can question up to five people to discover the spy. Questions like "Is it true you have black hair" work well, since the spy would have to deny black hair, when they actually have black hair.
5. Play continues with a new President and spy each round.

5. How did George Washington "buy" votes to secure a seat in the Virginia House of Burgesses?
6. Image was everything to George Washington. How is this evident in:
    a. His marriage?

b. His not taking payment as general in the war?

c. The Life Guard?

d. How he treated his soldiers?

e. How he was chosen as the general?

7. We associate George Washington with the dollar bill. What kind of relationship did he really have with money?

8. Research the conditions at Valley Forge and write a diary entry as one of the soldiers. How do you feel about General Washington?

    a. Then, write a diary entry from Valley Forge as Washington. How did Valley Forge change Washington?

9. Research the Articles of the Confederacy. Write each of the thirteen articles in your own words. Why did they fail? Why was the Constitution a better solution?

    a. In the spirit of the Articles of the Confederacy, hold a classroom vote regarding what to eat for lunch or what book to read next or something else that not everyone will agree on. However, each student represents a colony with equal power and the teacher can represent the federal government. What happens when trying to reach an agreement?

    b. Now, in the spirit of the Constitution, hold the same vote but this time the colonies will vote and the federal government will be given more power to settle differences between them. What is different about trying to reach an agreement?

10. What is Washington's legacy as America's first president?

Making Connections:

John Adams wrote a letter stating that the "talents" that got George the general job were his "handsome face" and "tall stature."

Gather a bunch of old school yearbooks. Look closely at the Student Counsel photographs. Would you say these students are good-looking? Tall? Do they stand out physically from the rest of the student body?

Look at your own school. Do you think image plays in to who is popular and who is not? How so?

Chapter 3—Pythagoras: The Father of Everything

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2
MATH—6.G.1; 7.G.6; 8.G.6.7.8; G-SRT.4

1. Pythagoras had many followers in what now is thought to have been a religious cult. What are some of the crazy rumors or legends Pythagoras's followers made up about him?

2. What were some of the rules that Pythagoreans followed in order to try and achieve immortality?

    a. Why didn't Pythagoreans eat meat?

    b. Why didn't they eat beans?

3. Today most groups or associations have a logo that serves as a symbol of their beliefs and purpose. Based on what you know, what would a logo for the Pythagoreans look like?

    a. Create a logo for the "acusmatici."

    b. Create a logo for the "mathêmatici."

    c. Who was Hippasus and to which camp did he probably belong?

"Hello? History, calling!"

There were lots of rumors about the eccentricities of Pythagoras during his lifetime. But within two hundred years after his death, and several rounds of the Telephone Game, he was considered the Father of Everything.

Have several books on historical figures within arm's reach for this game.

1) Open up a book on historical figures to a random page.
2) Pick a fact from the page and whisper the fact to your neighbor.
3) The neighbor will then whisper it to their neighbor and so on.
4) Write the new "fact" about the historical person on the board.

4. In your own words, explain the Pythagorean Theorem.

    a. How do scholars think this theory came about?

    b. Why do we need to care about triangles and their measurements? Research why the Pythagorean Theorem is important.

c. Create a triangle of any size and test out the Pythagorean Theorem. Did the theorem work?

5. Many people started attaching Pythagoras's name to their accomplishments. Why do you think they did this?

6. Describe the odd circumstances of Pythagoras's death.

MATH BONUS!

Try your hand at these word problems using the Pythagorean Theorem. Draw visuals to support your answers. *CCSS:* ***6.G.1; 7.G.6; 8.G.6.7.8; G-SRT.4***

1. To get from point A to point B you must avoid walking through a swamp. To avoid the swamp, you must walk 34 meters south and 41 meters east. To the *nearest meter*, how many meters would be saved if it were possible to walk through the swamp?

2. A suitcase measures 24 inches long and 18 inches high. What is the diagonal length of the suitcase to the *nearest tenth* of a foot?

3. In a computer catalog, a computer monitor is listed as being 19 inches. This distance is the diagonal distance across the screen. If the screen measures 10 inches in height, what is the actual width of the screen to the *nearest inch*?

Chapter 4—Hiawatha: Incarnation of Wisdom

CCSS: ***RL.5.1,2,3; RI.5.1,2,3,9; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.5; L.5.1,2,3***
RL.6.1,2; RI.6.1,2,3,9; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RL.7.1,2; RI.7.1,2,3,9; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RL.8.1,2,3; RI.8.1,2,3,9; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2; WSH.6-8.7,8,9
RL.9-10.1,2; RI.9-10.1,2,8,9; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2; WSH.9-10.7,8,9

A Man of Pure Poetry

Draw an outline of a human figure, which will represent Hiawatha, on a large piece of paper.

Using this chapter, write any known details about Hiawatha outside the outline.

Now read a section of the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow poem, *The Song of Hiawatha.* Either choose 2-3 sections to read as a class, or assign individual sections to groups of students so that the entire poem is covered.

Describe the Hiawatha of the poem inside the outline.

1. Hiawatha and the Great Peacemaker are credited with bringing peace to the various Iroquois tribes and creating the first republic. In your own words, explain the legend. Don't forget the cannibals!

2. Who was the Great Peacemaker? How did he come to partner with Hiawatha?

3. What was pre-settler North America like? Re-write the scene in *Pocahontas*, as described on page 39, with this real-life setting.

4. What does it mean to have a matrilineal society? How is a matrilineal society depicted in the design of an Iroquois longhouse?

    a. Draw a picture of a longhouse. Label where your own family would be in the longhouse based on hierarchy and power. Be sure to include grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, and even the family pet!

5. Describe the terms of The Great Peace League of the Iroquois. Conduct an Internet search to find some of the laws of the League. Site your sources.

6. How does legend say Tadadaho came to be the first fire keeper?

7. When the white settlers arrived, the Iroquois were helped by their strong alliance. What does *alliance* mean? How is the Iroquois alliance symbolized in the Hiawatha wampum belt?

    a. Who would you consider your alliance in life? Why?

b. Using the Hiawatha wampum belt as inspiration, design a symbol to represent your own alliance.

8. The Iroquois started to adopt to colonist culture and became dependent on the settlers for what kind of items? What happened to wampum beads and the Iroquois commerce? What was the only thing the Iroquois had left to use as money?

9. How did the American Revolution end up being the "death blow" to the Iroquois tribes?

10. How is Hiawatha's vision reflected in the current U.S. government? How did Hiawatha further inspire Karl Marx and Fredrich Engels?

Making Connections:

Native Americans have a strong tradition of oral history. Much of what we know from their past has been passed down through generations in storytelling. This is how the legend of Hiawatha and the Great Peacemaker has been shared for many centuries.

Take a story that is often shared in your own family. Maybe it's a story of struggle or humor. It could be a story about you or a story from before you were born. Rewrite this story as if you were going to share this with a group of people that you wanted to impress. Make sure to exaggerate and embellish where needed.

Chapter 5—Gilgamesh: Two-Thirds Divine

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. Read "Spielberg Worthy." Divide a piece of paper into two columns. In one column jot down any of the information that you believe might be true about Gilgamesh. In the other column, write down information that seems fictionalized. Which column has more notes? What do you think this says about the plausibility of Gilgamesh's legend?
2. What are some of the reasons given that scholars and historians think that the Gilgamesh story might be real?
3. What does it mean to be deified?
4. How does Shulgi the Avenger play into the Gilgamesh legend?
5. Gilgamesh's tale traveled far during the Bronze Age. How? What is some evidence of his influence on other cultures?

Be Your Own Epic Hero!

Be like Shulgi the Avenger! Rewrite yourself into an encyclopedic or textbook entry about a famous hero in history.

Making Connections:

What would it be like if a culture centuries in the future found several Superman comics, movies, merchandising, etc.? How might a future George Smith think Superman really existed?

Chapter 6—Major William Martin: Operation Mincemeat

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. What does James Bond have to do with the Trout Memo?
2. What does "disinformation" mean? How did the Allies use this technique in Operation Mincemeat?
3. What were some of the issues of finding the perfect corpse? Who was Glyndwr Michael and why was he chosen?

Tricks not Treats

"The Trout Memo" contained 51 Ways to Trick the Enemy. As a class, come up with some ways to trick people. See if you can come up with 51!

4. What details did the British create for a believable identity for Major William Martin?
5. What was the significance of the eyelash? Brainstorm some similar ways you could tell if someone has been in your belongings or in a particular room or desk drawer.
6. Why was Spain chosen as the spot to drop the body? Why Huelva, Spain?
7. Create a map of Europe and the Axis powers prior to Operation Mincemeat. Then, create a map of Europe and the Axis Powers after Operation Husky.
8. Explain the following statement: "The best way to dupe someone is use things already in their minds—your enemy's fears and desires." How did Operation Mincemeat do just that?
9. How did Operation Mincemeat lead to a successful Operation Husky?

Making Connections:

The Allies knew that Major Martin would need to appear to be a real person, should the Axis powers research his background. Therefore they even went so far as to announce a fake engagement in the newspaper.

If you were to create a fake identity on a Facebook profile page, what would you need to include in order to convince others that this person existed and not raise suspicions?

Chapter 7—William Shakespeare: To Be…Or Not

CCSS: ***RL.5.1,2,3; RI.5.1,2,3,9; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.5; L.5.1,2,3***
RL.6.1,2; RI.6.1,2,3,9; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RL.7.1,2; RI.7.1,2,3,9; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RL.8.1,2,3; RI.8.1,2,3,9; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2; WSH.6-8.7,8,9
RL.9-10.1,2; RI.9-10.1,2,8,9; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2; WSH.9-10.7,8,9

1. Have you ever heard of Shakespeare? What do you know about him?
2. Shakespeare lacked education and was not a court insider, leading scholars to believe Shakespeare was not who we think he was. Find and print out a list and synopsis of Shakespeare's plays.
    a. Pick 5 titles and explain why the playwright might need to be a court insider to write it.
    b. With the same 5 titles, explain why a lack of education would make you doubt the supposed writer. For a bonus, use actual quotes from the play to strengthen the argument.

The Bard Today

Contact a local theater company or look one up online. When was the last time they performed one of Shakespeare's plays? When is the next time they will perform one of his plays? How many times have they performed Shakespeare?

3. Speculate as to where Shakespeare was during the "lost years" of 1585-1592? Make a list ranging from the outrageous to the possible.
4. Debate time! Who are some of the people that might have been Shakespeare? Pick one to form a theory about and start researching. Have your teacher facilitate a debate among the contenders. For extra points, champion your pick in a Shakespearean accent.
5. Do you believe that writers need to only "write what they know?" Take a side and write a persuasive essay for your opinion. Present your argument to the class.

Making Connections:

It has been discovered that many of Shakespeare's plays were not original, but adapted from older stories, some even from other cultures. This is actually quite common. Take another often adapted story, like *Cinderella* or *Snow White*. Conduct an online search. What is the story's origin? How many adaptations can you find? How would you adapt it?

Chapter 8—Pope Joan: Not to be Confused with Pope John I-XXXIII

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. Describe, in your own words, the original legend of Pope Joan. Do you believe this story could be possible? Why or why not?
2. Divide a piece of paper into two columns. In one column, describe the legend of Pope Joan according to Jean de Mailly. In the other column, describe Martinus Polonus's version of the legend. What is similar in the two legends? How did the versions differ?
3. In the 16th century the Pope Joan story resurfaces as a weapon the Protestants used against the Catholic Church. How? Up until then, the legend of Pope Joan was ignored. Why did the Catholic Church suddenly take notice?
4. What are some of the theories on why/how the Pope Joan story was created?
5. Although the Catholics and Protestants may have viewed Pope Joan as a warning, many women today view Pope Joan as an icon. Why?

A Woman's Work…

Using examples in this chapter as a jumping off point, research the role of women in medieval times. What was expected in the daily life of a woman?

What would you do if you were told that you couldn't go to school, but had to stay at home and clean all day? Would you be tempted to pretend to be a man to escape?

Create a skit about the daily life of a medieval woman and present it to the class.

Making Connections:

Women in America have come a long way from Pope Joan's time, but there is still more to accomplish.

Type the phrase "*first woman to*" into a search engine and see how many pioneers you can find.

Write a thank you letter to one of these women. How has their accomplishment influenced your life?

Chapter 9—Homer: Blind Bard Be Nimble

CCSS: RL.5.1,2,3; RI.5.1,2,3,9; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.5; L.5.1,2,3
RL.6.1,2; RI.6.1,2,3,9; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RL.7.1,2; RI.7.1,2,3,9; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RL.8.1,2,3; RI.8.1,2,3,9; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2; WSH.6-8.7,8,9
RL.9-10.1,2; RI.9-10.1,2,8,9; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2; WSH.9-10.7,8,9

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

Create a commercial for *The Iliad* or *The Odyssey.* Be enticing so others will want to read it.

Try presenting the stories in different genres such as westerns or horror or comedies.

1. Who, according to legend, was Homer?

2. Summarize *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* in your own words. Why do you think these two works became like a bible to the Greeks?

3. Because Homer's epics existed before writing, they were shared orally by bards. Explain how.

4. Even though Homer did not actually exist, describe his influence on the following:
    a. Literature
    b. Language
    c. Art
    d. Poetry
    e. The Italian Renaissance
    f. Modern archaeology

5. Oral tradition made it easier to remember stories through rhyming. How easily can you recall stories that were told to you as a child?
    a. Try to perform a nursery rhyme or song you remember from childhood.
    b. Attempt to re-tell a fairy tale that you loved as a child.
    c. Go to the library or search the Internet to check your accuracy. How well did you do? Which was easier to remember in detail? Why?

6. A hero of Greek mythology is defined as "a man or woman, often of divine ancestry, who is endowed with great courage and strength, celebrated for his or her bold exploits, and favored by the gods." Research the following Greek heroes and heroines:

    a. Jason

    b. Hercules

    c. Ariadne

    d. Perseus

    e. Helen of Troy

    Which Greek hero would you like to be? Why?

7. The search for Homer's legendary cities led to the discovery of stratigraphy. What is stratigraphy? Pretend that you haven't cleaned your room in over a year. Draw a picture of what you would expect to find if you were to dig straight through the mess. Using stratigraphy, what would you expect to find at the very bottom? What would you find toward the top?

Making Connections:

"Greek epics may start out as historical events with real people and real heroes, but over time, these truths were treated more like LEGO bricks. They were used as the building blocks to create new stories and scenes wherever they were went."

Choose a story from the local newspaper. Using its contents as a jumping off point, rewrite the story as a Greek epic. Choose either a tragedy or a comedy angle.

Chapter 10—Prester John: A Real John Doe

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. Describe Prester John, as presented to the Pope by Bishop Hugh.
2. What happened in 1165 to resurface the legend of Prester John? Describe the Far East, according the letter.
3. Create a colorful travel poster for the Far East, as described by Sir John Mandeville.
4. Prester John was supposedly immortal and rumor of his existence went on for hundreds of years. Create a timeline of Prester John's "whereabouts". Embellish where necessary—medieval people did.
5. To best understand the Crusades, research what the world looked like in the 12th century and create a map. Color Christian nations blue and Islamic nations yellow. Why did the Christians feel the need to fight for the Holy Land?
6. The quest to find Prester John sparked various explorations to the Far East and beyond. In your own words, explain how Prester John's legend started the Age of Exploration and influenced the following explorers:
    a. Ponce de Leon
    b. Francisco Coronado
    c. Marco Polo
    d. Christopher Columbus

The Far East Awaits

Many explorers took to sea in search of Prester John and the riches held in the Far East.

Research the living conditions on these sailing vessels. What perils did they face?

Pretend you are a sailor and create a travel diary complete with pictures, maps and text about your journey.

7. Why were the Europeans so fixated on finding Prester John? Could anything like this happen today? Why or why not?

Making Connections:

If you discovered the Fountain of Youth, would you want to be immortal? Would you want to stay the age you are now or would you want until you were older? How old? Brainstorm a list of pros and cons to being immortal.

Chapter 11—Huangdi: The Yellow Emperor Strikes Back

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. In what ways is Huangdi credited with creating civilization? What are some of his creations that you could not live without?

    a. Research other ancient Chinese inventions. Are you surprised to see so many familiar items?

2. Why was Huangdi's legend referenced often during the Warring States Period?

Long time ago, in a galaxy far, far, away…

As DuMont points out in this chapter, the story of Huangdi holds many similarities to the Star Wars saga.

Find a synopsis of Star Wars on the Internet. Using the legend of Huangdi, rewrite the saga as a mash-up.

3. How did Qin Shi fashion his own life after his hero, Huangdi?

a. Conduct an Internet search for information on and photos of Qin Shi's terracotta warriors. How many warriors are there in all? What about chariots and horses? If you could take anything into the afterlife to help you, what would you bury with you?

4. Huangdi's legend lived on throughout Chinese history, except when Mao was in power. Why did Mao not perpetuate the legend?

5. How does Huangdi's legend live on today?

Making Connections:

"Stories reflect the period of times in which they were written—not the actual time they describe."

Look closely at the superheroes or action heroes of our culture (ie. Superman, Wonder Woman, Jim Kirk from Star Trek, Chuck Norris, Sylvester Stallone, etc.) When did they first come on the scene? How do their stories reflect the time period in which they appear?

Chapter 12—The Turk: Practically the Terminator

CCSS: RI.5.1,2,3; W.5.3a-e,4; SL.5.4,5; L.5.1,2,3
RI.6.1,2,3; W.6.3a-e,4; SL.6.5; L.6.1,2,3
RI.7.1,2,3; W.7.3a-e,4; SL.7.5; L.7.1,2,3
RI.8.1,2,3; W.8.3a-e,4; SL.8.5; L.8.1,2,3; RH.6-8.1,2
RI.9-10.1,2,8; W.9-10.3a-e,4; SL.9-10.4,5; L.9-10.1,2; RH.9-10.1,2

1. In your own words, what is the story of Kempelen and the Turk?
2. Automata became prevalent in the 18th and 19th centuries. In small groups, research the following 18th century automata and present your findings to the class:
    a. The Writer by Jaquet Droz (inspiration for the movie *Hugo*)
    b. La Joueuse de Tympanon
    c. The Boy Artist by Henri Maillardet
    d. The Silver Swan
3. Maelzel purchased the Turk after Kempelen's death. How did he reignite interest in the Turk?
4. How did the Turk influence the following:
    a. The Industrial Revolution
    b. P.T. Barnum's circus
    c. The modern-day computer
5. How did the Turk really work?
6. Although the Turk was created for entertainment, computers today serve to entertain and work. List the computers in your own house. Which ones are for work and which ones are for entertainment? If you had to give up one of these modern day computers, which would you choose? Why?

Behind the Smoke and Mirrors

There are countless videos on YouTube which show a magic trick and then reveal how the illusion is done.

Watch one of these tricks. Try to predict how it is done. Then watch the reveal. Were you right?

Making Connections:

Today inventions do so many things we take for granted.

If you could invent something, what would it be?

Design your invention and create an infomercial demonstrating what it can do and convincing others to buy it.

Present your commercial to the class.

After You Read…

You've read *Famous Phonies.* Well done! Now, next time you are sitting in a dark theater about to see a play by William Shakespeare, or your Math teacher mentions the Pythagorean Theorem, or you eat a cherry pie on George Washington's birthday remember this: **You shouldn't believe everything you hear and read—even in history books or from an eyewitness!**

You see, everything that we read or hear is filtered through the person who is writing or speaking about it. This person will be writing or speaking from their own point of view or opinion. **This is called bias.** And basically, *everything* has some degree of bias. For example, a report on Pope Joan will be very different depending on whether the report is written by a 21st century feminist or a follower of Martin Luther in the 16th century**. The reports might be accurate, but the information is filtered through the writer's own beliefs and opinions.** Both reports will be biased.

Does this mean we shouldn't trust any information? Absolutely not. It means that we need to be thoughtful and careful when we do our research. **Here are some tips to help you reduce bias and find reliable sources so that your information is as accurate as possible.**

1. Ask yourself if the topic is controversial? If so, we need to be very careful. Controversial topics often come with strong biases attached.

2. Find a wide variety of sources by checking the information with other websites or print sources. Is there widespread agreement? Do the experts disagree?

3. Who created the source/site? Who is the author? What are their credentials? Are they an expert in their field?

4. Make note of the copyright of the source? Especially for websites, it's important to note when it was last updated.

5. What is the intention of the piece? What point is the piece trying to make?

6. Who is the intended audience of the piece?

Choose one of the topics below. You will find there are many viewpoints and opinions on these topics. Conduct an Internet search for different three reports and scrutinize the information with the six tips above.

Gun Control	The Common Core State Standards	Banning bottled water
Climate Change	The Affordable Care Act	

BONUS: Write a 500 word essay on how bias impacts the reliability of a source. Cite specifics examples from your above Internet research.