

Compare and Contrast: Churchill v. Garraty

- I. The writings of Winston S. Churchill will be compared and contrasted with the textbook writing of Dr. Garraty. The focus will be on the differing interpretations of events relative to the Civil War. Reading, cooperative learning, discussion and writing will all serve as parts of the lesson.
- II. Why do varying interpretations of events affect understanding?
- III. The lesson will focus on the following objectives.
Which issues (events) do the authors emphasize and why?
How do the authors view the personalities involved?
How could the perspectives of the writers be different?
- IV. **The American Nation** is a survey textbook written by John Garraty, which in content covers the American Civil War. Winston S. Churchill very much enjoyed history, especially that of the Civil War. In the book **The Great Republic**, a collection of his writings about America, six of twenty-one chapters are devoted to the Civil War.

Also note Churchill begins the work with the following comment:

This book does not seek to rival the works of professional historians. It aims rather to present a personal view on the processes whereby America has achieved distinctive position and character. I write about the things that appear significant to me and I do so as one not without some experience of historical and violent events in our own time.

- V. **TEXTS: The Great Republic** (Chapters 17-18-19) **The American Nation** (Chapters 14-15)
- VI. Students will be assigned the above mentioned chapters one week in advance. On the first day, students will meet in cooperative learning groups of three. They will be assigned a person (Robert E. Lee) and event (Gettysburg) a theme (U.S. foreign policy during the war). All groups will not work on the same topics. The groups will then begin their discussion on comparing and contrasting the work of Churchill and Garraty. One student will record responses and report to the whole class. All students will be allowed to use 3x5 notecards to write down examples that they deem valuable.
- VII. Following the above mentioned activity, the following essay prompt will be given as the activity assessment. Discuss the similarities and differences in the writing of the Civil War by Winston Churchill and John Garraty. How/why are differing viewpoints of similar events of importance to historians and the telling of history? Essays will be written in class, the day following discussion activity.

- VIII. The lesson can be extended by considering such issues as.
1. Why did Churchill have such interest in the American Civil War?
 2. How and why would Churchill's perspective be valuable?
- Note: Consider this discussion with the class as a whole on the day the essays are returned to the students.
- IX. Grade Levels: (9-12)
Subject Areas: United States History
Time required: Two in class periods
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