

Make a S.P.E.E.C.H

When teaching a unit or a particular event, have the students make a “SPEECH”. Students should take a wide-ranging view of every unit and should always investigate each major issue or event comprehensively. “SPEECH” allows and trains students to look at events from various angles, as historians do. It greatly increases their understanding of the event.

While SPEECH allows students to get a general understanding of what has taken place, they can then investigate each topic or sub-topics more thoroughly from this structure. Students can explore the nuances once they get the gist of the particular period, event or movement. They can also comprehend sub-issues or sub-topics more systematically when examining an issue.

When introducing a unit, ask the students to make a “SPEECH.” Once they have finished a unit, ask them to again make a “SPEECH,” to see if their perceptions have changed.

S.P.E.E.C.H.

Have students identify and examine the

SOCIAL

POLITICAL

ECONOMIC

ENVIRONMENTAL (geographic)

and

CULTURAL

aspects of

HISTORY

Unit Example

1920s (General)

SPEECH gives a general, though comprehensive, overview of the time period. Of course, there are many other things going on during the 1920s, such as crime, machine politics, suffrage, etc., but these movements, or phenomena, are going on at other times and some are even more prominent in the society at other times. The “general” gives the student an overview of what was prevalent during the time period.

Social:	Growing Middle Class, Upward mobility
Other:	Shrinking farms, new immigrants, new African-American settlements in northern cities, KKK, etc.
Political:	Republican Small Government--- Reaction to Wilson’s wartime nationalization and progressivism
Other:	Progressivism is still a force. Small socialist minority, City Machines, etc.
Economic:	Prosperous Laissez-Faire economy Most prosperous economy to date.
Other:	Labor unrests, high tariffs, credit inflation, etc
Environmental	Most major events are taking place in the cities, especially New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Cities are growing.
Other:	Shrinking Farmlands, etc.
Cultural	Religious Revival, Temperance, Popular Sports and Music
Other:	Speakeasies, Harlem Renaissance, etc.

Sub-Unit Example

Colonial Pennsylvania 1663-1720

Social:	Quaker Middle Class
Other:	Arriving Ulster Presbyterians, Irish Catholic servants, German agrarians, indentured servants, slaves.
Political:	Propriety colony controlled by the Penn Family
Other:	Elected Assembly
Economic:	Prosperous commercial middle-class. Shippers, nearby farms
Other:	Artisans, indenture servant-market
Environmental	Mid-Atlantic colony, near the Atlantic seaboard, but a fresh water port.
Other:	Market for nearby farms
Cultural	Quaker culture, Inner-light
Other:	Presbyterian churches, small Catholic (Irish servants) minority.