

Knowledge and the Knower: Personal Memory vs Shared Memory

Lesson 2: Fact-Finding Task

Focus: *How do real-world cases highlight the tensions between memory and history?*

Objective	Analyze real-world examples where personal memory and shared historical records conflict or align, examining reliability, power, and bias. Explore how different societies remember the same events differently.
Homework Preparation Task	Case Study Task <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Divide students into small groups and assign each group a case study relating to memory and history. There are suggestions listed below.• Groups explore their assigned case using provided resources (articles, videos, or curated primary sources).• Students prepare a short (5–10 min) presentation in response to the following questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ What is the memory or history being examined?◦ Who controls the dominant narrative, and why?◦ What platforms and systems have been developed to record these narratives?◦ How do power structures, cultural values, or political goals shape the knowledge in this case?◦ Is one perspective (memory or history) more reliable than the other in this instance? Why? Case Study Options: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Partition of India (1947):<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus: Personal memories of displacement and trauma vs. official historical narratives in textbooks from India and Pakistan.• Task: Analyze how political agendas shape historical narratives and whose memories are prioritized.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Home - 1947 partition archive◦ Looking Back at the 1947 Partition Through Personal Stories • The Lakshmi Mittal and Family South Asia Institute◦ The Story of the 1947 Partition as Told by the People Who Were There National Endowment for the Humanities◦ The Bloody Legacy of Indian Partition The New Yorker2. Holocaust Denial and Memory Preservation:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus: Survivor testimonies vs. historical revisionism (e.g., denial movements).• Task: Assess how firsthand memories serve as evidence to counteract biased historical revisionism.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ United States Holocaust Memorial Museum◦ Holocaust Denial and Distortion - United States Holocaust Memorial Museum◦ Debunking Holocaust Denial Claims ADL3. Removal of Confederate Statues in the U.S.:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus: Public memory and heritage vs. the erasure or reinterpretation of history.• Task: Debate whether removing statues erases history or reclaims collective memory.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Nearly 100 Confederate Monuments Removed In 2020, Report Says: More Than 700 Remain : NPR◦ The Legal, Ethical, and Practical Dimensions of Removing Confederate Monuments - Center for Art Law◦ Why Confederate monuments are coming down now Stanford Report4. Australia's "Stolen Generations":<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus: Indigenous personal testimonies vs. government records.• Task: Explore how memory and history are used to demand justice and reconciliation.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Denial of genocides of Indigenous peoples - Wikipedia◦ Stolen Generations' Testimonies Foundation Stolen Generations testimonies◦ Written Testimonies Bringing Them Home◦ Telling their truth: the Queensland Indigenous community defying a government with healing voices Queensland The Guardian

	<p>5. Mandela Effect (False Collective Memory):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus: Cases of shared false memories (e.g., Nelson Mandela's "death" in the 1980s). • Task: Investigate how and why collective false memories emerge and their implications for shared knowledge. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The Psychology Behind the Mandela Effect Psychology Today ◦ What Is the Mandela Effect? 20 Examples & Explanations ◦ New Research Shows Consistency in What We Misremember The University of Chicago Division of the Social Sciences
Activities	<p>1. Introduction (5 mins): Recap and Frame the Task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recap the key points from the debate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What makes memory reliable or unreliable? ◦ How do power structures influence history? <p>2. Bridge to Lesson 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that students will use their case studies on examples of contested memories and histories to deepen their understanding of reliability and bias. <p>3. Presentations (30 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students present their case studies to the class. • Students should take note of any useful points from other groups' presentations to use in the Kialo discussion. <p>4. Recording Findings in a Kialo Discussion (20 mins):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students use their case study and their peers' presentations to update and substantiate their arguments in their Kialo discussion: Which is more reliable: personal memory or official history? from the previous session, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The conflict or alignment between memory and history. ◦ Examples of power and bias at play. ◦ Key takeaways about reliability and justification. • Students can use the sunburst view on Kialo to identify and address any gaps in knowledge.
Reflection Questions	<p>Class Discussion and Reflection (10 mins): Discuss the following reflection questions in open discussion or exit ticket format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How does this case shape your understanding of the reliability of memory and history?</i> • <i>Are certain types of knowledge (e.g., personal memory or official history) always more trustworthy?</i> • <i>How should societies handle conflicting narratives?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Connect the cases to TOK concepts: bias, power, perspectives, justification, and responsibility.
Resources	<p>Lesson Slides Kialo discussions from previous lesson</p>
TOK Concepts	<p>Perspectives: What factors contribute to the differing interpretations and memories of the same historical event among various societies?</p> <p>Bias: How do cultural, political, or ideological biases impact the formation and preservation of both personal and collective memories?</p> <p>Power: How do dominant groups shape history through textbooks, laws, and media representations?</p> <p>Justification: Should all historical narratives be preserved in their entirety, or are there some that warrant reconsideration and potential revision?</p>
Critical Thinking Concepts	<p>1. Confronting Biases and Assumptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying Historical Bias: Students evaluate how personal and collective memories may be influenced by cultural, political, or ideological biases. • Challenging the Objectivity of History: Students analyze how historical records are curated, edited, or omitted by those in power. • Recognizing Survivor Bias: Students reflect on how memory preservation (e.g., Holocaust testimonies) differs from revisionist efforts to manipulate narratives. <p>2. Exploring Contexts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power and Historical Narratives: Students examine how dominant groups shape history through textbooks, laws, and media representations.

- **Analyzing Source Credibility:** Students compare personal testimonies, archival records, and academic histories to assess reliability.
- **Cross-Cultural Perspectives:** Students explore how different societies remember the same event differently (e.g., Partition of India in Indian vs. Pakistani textbooks).

3. Responsiveness and Flexibility of Thought:

- **Refining Arguments with New Evidence:** Students adjust their claims as they uncover differing viewpoints within their case studies.
- **Comparing Conflicting Narratives:** Students critically evaluate how memory and history diverge in contested events.
- **Recognizing Emotional vs. Rational Appeals:** Students assess when personal memories evoke emotional connections but lack objective verification.

4. Extrapolation & Reapplication of Principles:

- **Applying Historical Thinking to Modern Debates:** Students connect historical revisionism to contemporary issues (e.g., Confederate monument removals, Holocaust denial laws).
- **Developing Ethical Perspectives:** Students debate whether all histories should be preserved or whether some narratives (e.g., colonial justifications) should be reconsidered.
- **Building Media Literacy:** Students learn how misinformation and historical distortions spread in digital spaces and how to counteract them.