STAFF CLASS TO THE PAST!
The Wormholes on the Bus Go Round and Round

Learning Goals: To identify and discuss what makes events in history significant. To make connections between significant events in history. To understand key events and characters from United States history. To transport ourselves back in time to bring history alive for ourselves and younger students.

16 Major Events (chosen by our team in a series of Socratic Seminars): Columbus rediscovers America, Jamestown, the Declaration of Independence, the Mexican-American War, the Civil War, the Industrial Revolution, World War I, the Great Depression, World War II, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, Apollo 11, Martin Luther King Jr.'s “I Have a Dream” Speech, September 11th Terrorist Attacks, BP Oil Spill, and the Repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” Act

What We Will Create Together:
As a class, we will create:

_____ a published book, both educational and entertaining, about traveling back in time and experiencing U.S. history
_____ a movie, using green screen technology, to get younger students excited about history
_____ a display of our writing and images within HTMCV

In groups of four (based on interest in chosen major events), each group will create:

_____ a one-page fact sheet for our book with an overview of your major event
_____ a group photo and video footage showing the group going back in time

Individually, students will create:

_____ a creative vignette and photo about traveling back in time and meeting a historical figure
   _____ Step 1: Research your event
   _____ Step 2: Research the specific person you’ll travel back in time to meet
   _____ Step 3: Write/ Revise multiple drafts of your time traveling vignette
   _____ Step 4: Create a PhotoShopped image of you with your historical figure

** See EXCELLENCY & Extension Options Posted in Class **
“Once confined to fantasy and science fiction, time travel is now simply an engineering problem.”

**Introduction**

It all started as a dream, literally a dream. I dreamt that my students and I traveled back in time and experienced history, rather than just learning about U.S. history from a textbook or an over-planned classroom reenactment. I told my students about the dream. We read and watched videos on wormholes, which I honestly couldn’t wrap my head around.

Somehow, a few of my students really did start to understand the concept of a wormhole. On the day of our fieldtrip, a few enthusiastic 8th graders explained that, in their engineering class, they had created two rings of a man-made wormhole – an entrance and an exit. They then convinced the bus driver to affix the rings to our fieldtrip’s bus tires. Somehow, they created a device that allowed the rings to spin deep within the tires at the speed of light.

I know, this all sounds absurd. And that’s what I thought. When Sam presented me with a gummy worm and told me that by traveling through a wormhole with a gummy worm, the students and I could consume the gummy worm and be led to the exit of the wormhole... well, I laughed, too. But, I’m a teacher, so I’m not supposed to laugh at kids. I’m supposed to support my students and believe in them, even if they're talking about time travel. So, I shoved the gummy worm in my pocket and took a seat on the bus. I was along for the ride. I even took out my example notes on the Declaration of Independence and Thomas Jefferson like Sam told me to. As a class, we had determined what we considered the 14 most significant events in United States history. Every student had notes on one of those fourteen major events and unique notes on the specific historical figure they had chosen to research from that particular moment in time. Sam explained that holding the notes on our specific time, place and person as we entered the entrance of the wormhole, would allow us to be transported to that specific time and place, standing right beside that specific historical figure. I didn’t believe him, of course, but as the bus actually started turning from bus to ball of speeding light, well, whether I believed Sam or not became irrelevant. We were all hurtling back in time. The moment before my body turned from mass to energy, I shouted, “Don’t forget to take a picture and record your experiences as we travel through time...”
Major Events Defined (by student groups):

1. **Columbus RedisCOVERs America** – Christopher Columbus made four voyages reaching America on the third voyage in 1498 thinking he made it to India. Little did he know, it was already inhabited by Native Americans.

2. **Jamestown Settlement** – Jamestown, Virginia was the first colony to be inhabited by Europeans in America beginning on May 14, 1607.

3. **The Declaration of Independence** was the document that officially declared the 13 American Colonies independent from Great Britain (a year after the American Revolution began). It was written by Thomas Jefferson in 1776.

4. **The Mexican-American War** was important because that is how the U.S. gained full control of Texas, New Mexico and California. It was fought from 1846 to 1848 over border disputes between the U.S. and Mexico. Antonio Lopez de Santa Ana was leader of Mexico and James K. Polk was president of the United States.

5. **The Civil War** was fought between the Union (in the North led by General Ulysses S. Grant and President Abraham Lincoln) and the Confederacy (in the South led by General Robert E. Lee and President Jefferson Davis) from 1861-1865. The war began when the South seceded (separated from) the Union. In the end, the Union won, the U.S. reunified as one nation, and slavery was abolished (slaves were freed).

6. **The Industrial Revolution** began in Britain and spread throughout the world in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the U.S., the Industrial Revolution caused the population to shift from farms to factories. It led to great advancements in technology, the shift of the population to cities, and developments like assembly lines and the first automobiles. The population and income grew exponentially because of these changes.

7. **World War I** (1914-1918) started when Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated on June 28, 1914 by a Serbian Nationalist. Russia, France, Britain and the U.S. were bound to Serbia and Germany had a treaty with
A world war started over a relatively small conflict. Germany turned out to be the biggest loser in the conflict, which led to the conditions that would allow Hitler to rise to power.

7. **The Great Depression** took place from 1929 to the late 1930’s or early 1940’s. It began on Black Tuesday when the Stock Market crashed. Countries destroyed by World War I couldn’t recover, especially Germany, which set the stage for the rise of Hitler.

8. **World War II** was a global war that took place from 1939-1945. The Holocaust, the Attack on Pearl Harbor and the explosion of the two atomic bombs in Japan ordered by the United States took place during this war.

9. **The Cold War** took place between 1945-1991. It was a continuous conflict and competition between the Communist world (mainly the Soviet Union) and the capitalist world (mainly the U.S.).

   Cold War 1945-1991 continuous conflict between Communists (Russia) and Capitalists (U.S.)

10. **The Vietnam War** took place from 1955 through 1975 in the jungles of Vietnam. It was fought between the Communist North Vietnam (with Russian allies) and the anti-Community South Vietnam (supported by the U.S.). In 1975, South Vietnam fell to North Vietnam and American troops withdrew.

11. **Apollo 11** was the first United States manned mission to the moon. It began on July 20, 1969 under the presidency of John F. Kennedy. The astronauts were Neil Armstrong, Edwin Aldrin Jr., and Michael Collins.

12. **Martin Luther King Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” Speech** was the great speech given at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963. Over 200,000 Civil Rights supporters were there to hear his call for the end of discrimination.

13. **September 11th Terrorist Attacks** was when four planes were hijacked by al-Qaeda terrorists. Two planes crashed into the Twin Towers in New York. Another plane crashed into the Pentagon and the last plane crashed into an empty field in Pennsylvania when the passengers of the plane interfered with the terrorists. This attack killed just under 3,000 people not including all the severe injuries that people still have today.

14. **BP Oil Spill** was an oil spill in the Gulf Coast in 2010. This was one of the largest oil spills in history. It was a long, extensive spill that brought the nation’s attention to environmental issues and human impact on our environment and animals.

15. **Repeal of Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Act** – The Don’t Ask Don’t Tell Act started in December 1993 and was repealed in September 2011. Homosexual, bisexual and transgender people serving the military had to hide their sexual orientation when Don’t Ask Don’t Tell was in effect. Now, with the repeal, they can be open about their sexual orientation without the threat of being discharged from the military.

16. **chronological** – in order of occurrence in time; timeline or sequence of events

**EXAMPLES OF TIME TRAVEL VIGNETTES AND A FACT PAGE:**
Gracie at the Signing of the Declaration of Independence

Arf. When I first arrived on the scene, I was surprised to find myself dressed like a person and able to speak English. I had my notes on Thomas Jefferson and I recognized him instantly, standing over the document he had written. I wished Buzzy, Jefferson’s large Briard herding dog was at the signing, but I knew he would not come into the picture until closer to Jefferson’s presidency from 1801-1809. At the moment I arrived, it was only July of 1776. I wanted to talk to Jefferson and ask him what his favorite line of the Declaration of Independence was, but I knew if a talking dog came up to him at this moment in history... well, let’s just say, talking dogs in history might really change things.

Ms. Staff Visits King George III

I clutched my gummy worm as I approached King George III, remembering that he was prone to bouts of madness due to the blood disease, porphyria. I knew that King George III would not be happy since he had just read a copy of the Declaration of Independence. He was not yet known as “The King Who Lost America”, but it was now only a matter of time. I could tell by his stance that the confidence he gained from winning the Seven Years' War Against France had not worn off. He felt the colonial rebels were simply an annoyance challenging his power. Yet, I could tell by his clenched fists that he wanted to squash this war of inconvenience. He resented the fact it had come to this.

“Once vigorous measures appear to be the only means left of bringing the Americans to a due submission to the mother country, the colonies will submit,” King George II shouted in my direction. I could see when our eyes met that he was starting to question why I was in his chambers. “A traitor is everyone who does not agree with me,” he continued and signaled a guard over to deal with me.

That was my cue to eat the gummy worm...
THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

JULY 1776

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

The Declaration of Independence was a document written both to rally revolutionary support from colonists during the American Revolution and to explain to King George III of England why the United States was declaring independence from the throne. If not for the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution, the United States would not be the independent nation it is, today. The Declaration of Independence was truly a revolutionary document!