



Living History

Michelle Nho, Grace D'Antuono
8th Grade, Humanities
High Tech Middle Chula Vista

For this project, students explored two essential questions: Whose story gets remembered? How am I a part of San Diego history? In collaboration with the San Diego History Center, our 8th graders grappled with the hard history of America's Finest City by interviewing people living within the community. Taking on their own approach to oral history, students developed a capacity for curiosity and compassion as they each uncovered new truths. Students made their thinking visible by creating a megatimeline that lived in our classroom—San Diego from the time of the land's first people, the Kumeyaay, to the modern-day. Informed by the work of critical thinkers like Howard Zinn, these brilliant minds interrogated what and who was important to the megatimeline (and more interestingly, why). As a way to process their new learning, students confronted two controversial figures in a mock trial, Father Junipero Serra and John D. Spreckels. Students were invested in serving as conduits to the past, uplifting the legacies of groups less heard about in popular history. After a memorable day taking the Old Town Trolley Tour, students applied their new expertise by designing a tour experience that was dynamic, inclusive, and representative of the real San Diego.

Teacher Reflection

I learned that shared experiential moments are a powerful tool for bringing history to life. Being new to San Diego myself, I enjoyed my preparation for this project and felt like a true learning partner. Our collaboration with the San Diego History Center was invaluable to our students' understanding of their role in history. In a future version of Living History, I would love for students to experience more of San Diego through the self-guided walk in Kumeyaay Period in Mission Trails Regional Park.

—Michelle

Student Reflection

I have grown so much during this project. I have learned how to deeper dive into research and how to find important and useful sources that I can rely on. I will be using this in the future and taking this away to high school or other places when this becomes necessary. I exhibited many skills that included projection in my voice and clarity. I spoke at a good pace and practiced so much.

—Abby R