

DISCIPLINES – WHO KNOWS WHAT?

Preparation

- Download the Disciplines Chart

Purpose

In this activity, students will start to explore how examining the same event from different perspectives can result in drawing varied conclusions surrounding that event. This will help them understand why Big History is interdisciplinary, and how they can work to use a variety of disciplines to help them understand the Big History story.

Process

Post a significant event that has meaning for or is personally relevant to your students for them to think about as they come into the room. A recent natural disaster might be a good option, but there are likely a number of other current events that you could explore with your students.

Let students know that in this opening activity they are going to examine an event through the eyes of different people— even through the eyes of different versions of themselves. Have them write down the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the questions a historian would ask about what happened?
2. What would the kindergarten version of you ask about the event?
3. What would the fifth grade version of you ask about the event?
4. What would a doctor, a lawyer, a police officer, or a politician ask about this event? (Have them pick two and feel free to add other professions that you think they know about.)

Once students have had the opportunity to respond to the questions, show them the Disciplines Chart, which summarizes the focus of each of the disciplines included in BHP content. Tell them that Big History is chock full of different topics and subjects, and to help us better understand them, we can use the chart as a resource . They will also use the chart as part of a series of activities where they will be asked to put together the best interdisciplinary team to solve a particular problem. (Note: These are the What Do You Know? What Do You Ask? activities, the first of which appears later in this lesson.)

Make sure to touch on the idea that when you put lots of different perspectives together to create a narrative, that story will be a combination of all the perspectives. In some ways, we may think of it as the most accurate version of the story, given the variety of inputs. In fact, this is the way Big History put together its own story.

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Purpose

In this activity, you'll start to explore how examining the same event from different perspectives can result in drawing varied conclusions surrounding that event. This should help you better understand what it means to use interdisciplinary perspectives and how you can use a variety of disciplines to help you understand the Big History story.

Process

Think about the event your teacher presents to you. Your job is to examine this event through the eyes of different people, and even through the eyes of different versions of yourself. Write down answers to the following questions:

1. What are the questions a historian would ask about what happened?
2. What would the kindergarten version of you ask about the event?
3. What would the fifth grade version of you ask about the event?
4. What would a doctor, a lawyer, a police officer, or a politician ask about this event?

You'll discuss your answers with the class when you're done. Then, you'll take a look at the Disciplines Chart, which you can use as a resource throughout the course. Be sure to consider the idea that when you put all of these different perspectives together to create a narrative, that story will be a combination of all the perspectives. In fact, this is how Big History put together its own story.