



Legislator Journal

Day 1

Grade Levels 7-9

This lesson is based on the Women of the Oklahoma Legislature Oral History Project. It is provided courtesy of the Oklahoma Oral History Research Program (OOHRP) at the Oklahoma State University Library with generous support from the Women's Archives at OSU and the Oklahoma Commission on the Status of Women.

Formally established in 2007, the OOHRP has collected and preserved firsthand accounts from individuals who have witnessed historic moments. The Program explores the lives and contributions of Oklahomans from all walks of life.

The Women of the Oklahoma Legislature is of one of many projects undertaken by the OOHRP. This oral history project captures and records information about female Oklahoma legislators in their own voices and provides an opportunity to reflect on their individual paths to the Capitol. It also documents more completely the presence of these women in state government.

The OOHRP invites you to explore the website (www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/wotol/) and meet the women who have played an important role in Oklahoma politics.



Oklahoma PASS Objectives

- Language Arts, Reading/Literature 4:2c Organize and convert information into different forms such as charts, graphs and drawings to create multiple formats to interpret information for multiple audiences and purposes, and cite sources completely. (Grade 9)
- Language Arts, Reading/Literature 5:2a Record, organize, and display relevant information from multiple sources in systematic ways (e.g., outlines, graphic organizers, or note cards). (Grades 7 and 8)
- Language Arts, Writing 1:1c organize and reorganize drafts and refine style to suit occasion, audience and purpose. (Grade 9)
- Language Arts, Writing 1:2 Use details, examples, reasons, and evidence to develop an idea. (Grades 7 and 8)
- Language Arts, Writing 1:4 Use precise word choices, including figurative language, that convey specific meaning and tone. (Grades 7 and 8)
- Language Arts, Writing 1:5 Use a variety of sentence structures, types, and lengths to contribute to fluency and interest. (Grades 7 and 8)

Lesson Objective

The students will be able to collect research information about their legislator by reading a PDF file and taking specific notes. The students will then create a “Legislator Journal” about the life of one of the women who has served in the Oklahoma Legislature. This can be either a state senator or a state representative.

Lesson

How many of you keep a journal? (Allow class time for students to respond.) Is a journal different from a diary? If so, how? (Allow time for class discussion.) Today we are going to begin a study of the women who have served in the Oklahoma Legislature. Your lesson today will be to read parts of a legislator’s interview transcript and collect research information. Tomorrow we will begin a project to create a “Legislator Journal”.

In this lesson, students write a journal from the point of view of a woman who has served in the Oklahoma Legislature.

Who can tell the class about “point of view”? (Allow time for students to discuss this.) Sometimes we see a story on television in which several witnesses tell the audience what they saw. As we watch this, we notice that each person has a different description. That is because they are telling the story from their own point of view. We see “point of view” in stories and books that we read. The character is telling what happened from his/her point of view. (If you have one of the books from the Literature List, you can show this to the students as an example.) When we hear their descriptions, they state them in “first person”. This means that the individual says, “I saw ...” They use “I” or “me” to tell the story.

Here is a chart that will give you more information:

- I (first-person **singular**)
- you (second-person **singular**)
- he, she (third-person **singular**)
- we (first-person **plural**)
- you (second-person **plural**)
- they (third-person **plural**)

(Have this information ready to show on a Smart Board or computer and projector. You may also choose to have this written on the board in advance. Another choice would be to create transparencies for use with an overhead projector.) We know that singular means ONE. Plural means MORE THAN ONE. If you are writing in first person, you will write as if you are the person who has served in the Oklahoma Legislature. You will use **I** or **me** in your writings.

Today we are going to gather information about our legislator. Tomorrow you will create a journal from the point of view of a woman who has served in the Oklahoma Legislature. For example, we know that all the women being studied for this project campaigned for political office. In your journal, you will write about the campaign using **I. I campaigned for the Oklahoma Senate. I was elected in 1964. I am a Republican.** You will tell the story from the point of view of the woman you select.

There are different types of journals. There are response journals where students can share thoughts, feelings, and opinions as they read a book. Character journals allow the student to write in the “voice” of the character. In our lesson, you will write in the voice of the woman who has supplied the information for the interview. This woman is telling her life story and including information about serving in the Oklahoma Legislature. We will call our journals “**Legislator Journals**”, because our journals will focus on women who have been state legislators.

Today we have interview transcripts of several women who have served in the Oklahoma Legislature. Each woman shares personal information about her early life and school experiences. Some women had full careers and had retired before ever running for office. Others adapted their careers to pursue public office. They also have stories about their campaigns and lives as Oklahoma legislators. As you read the interview transcript, please be looking for specific information. I have a sheet for you to use as you read the transcript. (Pass out the Legislature Student Journal Sheet. Take time to go over every component of that sheet so that all questions are answered. Point out where the photo of the woman will be placed on the sheet. This will give the students an idea of who the woman really is even before they read the transcript.)

We are going to randomly draw a photo and information from the bag or box. You are going to draw your legislator. (Allow time for every student to draw a photo and name from the bag or box.) Look specifically at the years in which she served in the Oklahoma Legislature. Also look at the information. How many of you will research a woman who served in the House of Representatives? (Allow time for students to raise their hands and count them.) How many of you will research a woman who served in the Senate? (Again, give time and count hands.) Remember that the representatives serve for TWO year terms. They are elected in November of an odd numbered year. They take office in January of an even numbered year. Senators serve for FOUR years. Long ago they had senate elections every four years. Now these elections are staggered so

half the districts have elections and then two years later the other half of the districts have elections. Today (in 2009) we have 101 Representatives and 48 Senators. (This may be the reason that more students raised their hands that they will be researching a representative rather than a senator.)

You now have your legislator for our project. (Explain if the computers have PDF files downloaded or if the students must go online. If it is the latter, tell them if it is bookmarked or if they need the URL, which is <http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/wotol/legislators.htm>.) You have your sheet to use to take notes as you read the transcript. We will take the remainder of our class time to read the interview transcripts and take notes.

Today we have gathered information for a special journal, which we are calling a Legislator Journal. We learned about writing in a specific point of view. We also learned about writing in the voice of first person. We took time to read the interview transcript of our research subject and took notes about specific events in their lives. Tomorrow we will begin to construct our Legislator Journals.

Evaluation

If you wish to take a grade on today's lesson, there were six research components. You could assign a specific number to each component, then multiply that number by SIX. For example, if you wish to assign 7 points to each component, the maximum grade would be SEVEN times SIX for 42 points.

Materials

Students

- A copy of the Legislator Journal Student Sheet for each student
- Small photo and information of each woman to be researched. The teacher will find this information in the Resource Addendum or at : <http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/wotol/legislators.htm>
*** Please use names from the website that have live links, which indicate that they have transcripts. To get to the transcripts, have students click on the woman they will be researching, then click on the link to her transcript.
- Glue stick or glue to paste down the photo
- Computer access for each student. Teacher may wish to bookmark the URL (<http://www.library.okstate.edu/oralhistory/wotol/legislators.htm>) to be used for research. A second option is for the teacher to save each intended file in a PDF format onto the student computers. This will not require the students to be on-line while working on this project.

Literature List of books written in journal format:

- *Letters from Rifka* (Hess, 192)
- *Rachel's Journal* (Moss, 1998)
- *Rose's Journal* (Moss, 2001)
- *Hannah's Journal* (Moss, 2000)
- *Emma's Journal* (Moss, 1994)

Enrichment

Social Studies/Language Arts

- Select an event or era in history. Create a character journal about this historical event or era.
- Ask the students to create a journal of their weekend, school field trip, or a school break, if one is close. Study the style of Marissa Moss (at marissamoss.com). The students may wish to add illustrations to their journal like author/illustrator Moss.

Visual Arts

- Covers for journals can be as elaborate or simple as your budget and resources allow. Students can design the front and back covers for their journals. These can be laminated or covered with clear contact paper. Many schools have the comb binding machines to bind journals. Some class may wish to use the traditional stapler to bind journals.

Technology

- Set up a free account at www.mypodcast.com. You will need live Internet access and a microphone (generally costs between \$8.00 and \$12.00). The students can read a page from their journal or even read the entire journal. This information can be posted on the podcast site. Send the URL information home so parents, family, and friends can listen. You will need to visit with your administrator about this to be sure you have the correct parental/guardian permission forms signed before this recording.

Resource Addendum

Legislator Journal Student Sheet

Name of Legislator _____

Served in the Oklahoma _____

Years served _____

***Paste the photo of the woman you are researching in the upper right corner of your paper. Fill in the blanks with information about this woman.**

Today you will be reading an interview transcript of one of the women who has served in the Oklahoma Legislature. As you read the information, please take notes about specific areas of her life. Below you will see the various categories to be included in your Legislator Journal. You may find more than one piece of information you wish to include in your journal. You may use the back of the page to write additional information. When you get ready to put the journal together, you will have extra pages if you wish to include additional information.

Please write your notes here.

1. Early life

2. School experiences

3. Life before the Legislature

4. Campaign stories—Include something about their campaigns. For example, the amount of money they spent or the number of volunteers they had or the number of votes they were ahead in the election.

5. Life as a Legislator—Were they a Democrat or Republican? Were they in the Senate or in the House of Representatives? Include information about the committees they worked on or the bills they helped to pass.

6. Life after the Legislature

Resource Addendum

WOMEN OF THE OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE

Between the years of 1907 and 2008 only 77 women have been elected to the Oklahoma Legislature. As of February 2009, 46 of these remarkable women have shared their stories as part of the Women of the Oklahoma Legislature Oral History Project. Gathering oral histories provides opportunity to pursue answers to questions left silent in what little archival materials exist for these women. Taken individually, these interviews reflect the careers and interests of the legislators; taken collectively they constitute a narrative of the role of women in the Oklahoma Legislature over time.



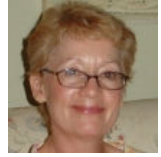
1. Arnold, Helen



8. Chiles, Dorothy Conaghan



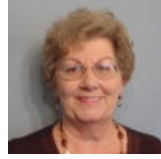
2. Askins, Jari



9. Coleman, Carolyn



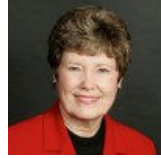
3. Atkins, Hannah



10. Collins, Jan



4. Billy, Lisa Johnson



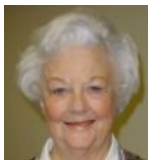
11. Coody, Ann



5. Blackburn, Debbie



12. Dank, Odilia



6. Boyd, Betty



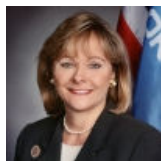
13. Denney, Lee



7. Boyd, Laura



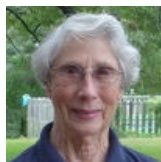
14. Looney, Lamar



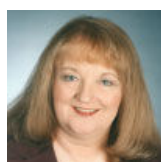
15. Fallin, Mary



24. Lawler, Daisy



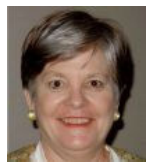
16. Floyd, Billie Jean



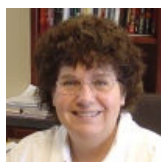
25. Leftwich, Debbie



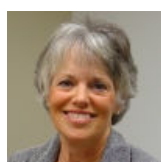
17. Gray, Twyla Mason



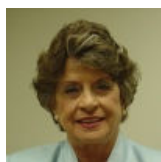
26. Lewis, Nancy Virtue



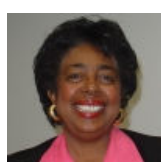
18. Hamilton, Rebecca



27. McDaniel, Jeannie



19. Hastings, Joan



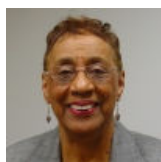
28. McIntyre, Judy Eason



20. Hibdon, Mina



29. McNiel, Skye



21. Horner, Maxine



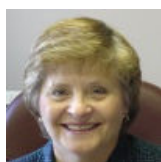
30. Miles-LaGrange, Vicki



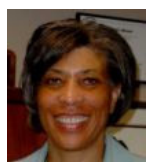
22. Johnson, Constance



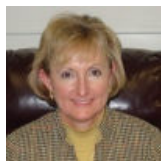
31. Mitchell, Cleta Deatherage



23. Kern, Sally



32. Monson, Angela



33. Paddock, Susan



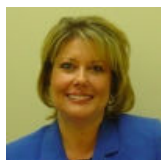
42. Wiedemann, Anna Belle



34. Peltier, Wanda Jo



43. Wilcoxson, Kathleen



35. Peterson, Pam



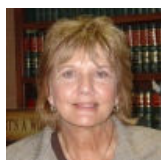
44. Winchester, Susan



36. Pittman, Anastasia



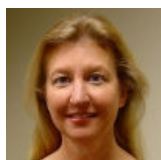
37. Riley, Nancy



38. Shedrick, Bernice



39. Staggs, Barbara



40. Taylor, Carolyn Thompson



41. Weedn, Trish