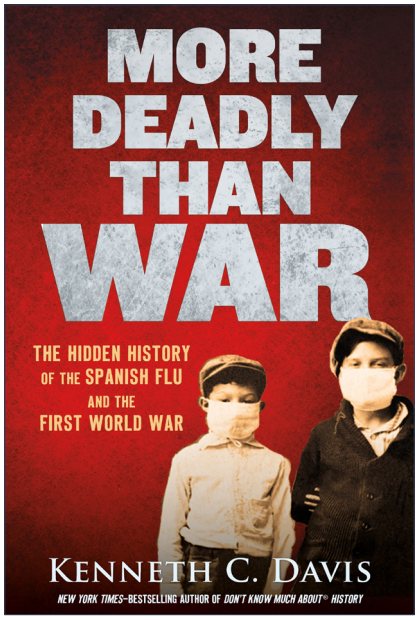
A TEACHER'S GUIDE FOR
MORE DEADLY THAN WAR
THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF THE SPANISH FLU AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

FOR USE WITH COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS



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ABOUT THE BOOK

With 2018 marking the 100th anniversary of the worst disease outbreak in modern history, the story of the Spanish flu is more relevant than ever. This dramatic narrative, told through the stories and voices of the people caught in the deadly maelstrom, explores how this vast, global epidemic was intertwined with the horrors of World War I—and how it could happen again. Complete with photographs, period documents, modern research, and firsthand reports by medical professionals and survivors, this book provides captivating insight into a catastrophe that transformed America in the early twentieth century.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

KENNETH C. DAVIS is the *New York Times*–bestselling author of America's Hidden History and Don't Know Much About® History, which gave rise to the Don't Know Much About® series of books for adults and children. He is also the author of the critically acclaimed *In the Shadow of Liberty,* which was an ALA Notable Book and a finalist for the YALSA Award for Excellence in Nonfiction. A frequent guest on national television and radio, Davis enjoys both in-person and virtual visits with middle- and high-school classrooms to discuss history. He lives in New York City and can be found at dontknowmuch.com.

This guide is intended to support your classroom instruction. The standards listed throughout are aligned with the NCSS C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards and the Common Core State Standards for grades six through eight, but the activities and questions can be applied to multiple grade levels. Please adapt the activities and questions to meet the needs of your students. You know your students better than anyone else!

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BEFORE READING

1. Create an infographic comparing and contrasting epidemics and pandemics. Your infographic should include a definition of both terms, analysis of great outbreaks in history, and primary sources. Canva (canva.com/create/infographics/) and Piktochart (piktochart.com) are free online resources you can use to create your infographic.

CCSS.RH.6-8.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

2. Using Appendix 1, create an interactive time line showcasing the various theories of disease. Myhistro (myhistro.com/personal-business-education/#education) and Sutori (sutori.com/teachers) are free online resources that allow for interactive time line creation. Be sure to include both primary and secondary sources from Davis's book as well as from additional research.

CCSS.W.7.6 Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and link to and cite sources as well as to interact and collaborate with others, including linking to and citing sources.
CCSS.W.7.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

DURING READING

1. Create a chart that shows the number of US deaths from the 1918 influenza outbreak and the number of deaths from World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined. With this chart, explain why Davis used these comparative statistics to prove his point that the influenza outbreak in the United States was a major one.
2. Using evidence from the text, explain how the influenza pandemic become known as the Spanish flu or Spanish Lady.
3. According to Chapter 1, why did the United States shift from a neutral nation to a nation at war in 1917?
4. When describing young men with the flu, Davis states, "They were falling like wheat before the scythe" (p. 43). How does his use of figurative language help convey his point of view?
5. In Chapter 2, Davis explains that many in the United States feared Germany was behind the influenza outbreak. Why did so many Americans believe this to be true?
6. Why was President Wilson reluctant to discuss the influenza outbreak in the United States? Looking back, could Wilson have prevented the spread of the flu by discussing it more openly? Why or why not?
7. What caused the global conflict that became known as World War I? Why does Davis consider the conflict "so perplexing and pointless" (p. 94)?
8. Compare and contrast the US reaction to yellow fever in 1898 to the US reaction to influenza in 1918. Which reaction was more effective in containing the disease?
9. How did the influenza pandemic forever change life in the United States?
10. How did scientists identify the strain of flu from the 1918 pandemic? Why was this particular strain so deadly?
11. Why do scientists fear that global climate change will impact the spread of disease?
12. As Davis explains, "One lesson of the Spanish flu is that information, education, and cooperation are the best antidote to fend off ignorance and propaganda" (p. 221). Why does he argue the United States has not fully grasped this lesson?

CCSS.RH.6-8.5 Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
CCSS.RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.
CCSS.RH.6-8.1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
CCSS.RH.6-8.8: Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.
CCSS.RI.6.1: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
CCSS.RI.6.2: Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
CCSS.RI.6.3: Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
CCSS.RI.6.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.
CCSS.RI.6.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.
CCSS.RI.6.8: Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
CCSS.W.8.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence
D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

D2.Geo.8.6-8. Analyze how relationships between humans and environments extend or contract spatial patterns of settlement and movement.
D2.Geo.9.6-8. Evaluate the influences of long-term human-induced environmental change on spatial patterns of conflict and cooperation.
D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.
D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.
D2.His.16.6-8. Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

AFTER READING

1. Create a map that shows where historians believe the flu originated, and highlight how the disease spread. Label the path of infection as well as death rates in various locations.

D2.Geo.7.6-8. Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.
D2.Geo.1.6-8. Construct maps to represent and explain the spatial patterns of cultural and environmental characteristics.

2. Throughout the book, Davis highlights famous people from history who were impacted by influenza. Choose a person included in the text and predict how our history would be changed if they had succumbed to the disease. Options include (but are not limited to) Walt Disney, Franklin Roosevelt, and Katherine Anne Porter.

CCSS.W.6.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
D2.His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.

3. Using a WWI–era war poster as inspiration, create your own propaganda poster focusing on how the US involvement in the war impacted the spread of influenza, using details from the text. Collections of WWI posters can be found using the National Archives website (archives.gov), the Library of Congress website (loc.gov), or the National World War I Museum and Memorial website (theworldwar.org).

D2.His.15.6-8. Evaluate the relative influence of various causes of events and developments in the past.
CCSS.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

4. As Davis explains, "The anti-German mood of the country—similar to the anti-Irish Catholic intolerance of an earlier age and the anti-Muslim fervor of post-9/11 America—was pushed by propaganda that depicted all Germans as untrustworthy and dangerous" (pp. 145–146). Philosopher George Santayana once said, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." Why does the United States continue to repeat the cycle of intolerance toward various groups? Is there a way to break this cycle, or are we still pushed by propaganda?

CCSS.W.7.1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time

5. Historians have argued that the implications of the Treaty of Versailles impact us globally today. How did influenza affect the treaty? Would the treaty be different if influenza had not been a factor during the discussions?

D2.His.6.6-8. Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.
CCSS.W.7.1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

6. "Another Italian writer, Giovanni Boccaccio, was inspired to write his *Decameron*, a collection of stories told by ten people who take shelter in a villa outside Florence as plague sweeps the city" (pp. 235–236). In the tradition of Boccaccio, write a collection of short stories told by ten people, real or imagined, who are part of the 1918 flu pandemic.

CCSS.W.7.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
CCSS.W.7.3.A Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
CCSS.W.7.3.B Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, and description, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
CCSS.W.7.3.C Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence and signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another.
CCSS.W.7.3.D Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
CCSS.W.7.3.E Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

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