

The Effect of Experiential Teaching Approaches on Youth Interest in Learning American Frontier History



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Youth Interest in History

➤ Descriptors

Boring

Not Relevant

Memorization

People are Emotionless

Not Important to Life

➤ Formal Teaching Methods

Lecture

Reading the Textbook



➤ National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)

Student at proficiency or higher:

20% - fourth-graders

17% - eighth-graders

12% - High School Seniors

Enhancing Youth Interest in History

Experiential learning activities:

- Allow for student involvement
- Support group work
- Foster creativity
- Utilize role-playing
- Expose relevance
- Facilitate self-directed learning*

* All factors related to creating higher interest



History Exam and Clothing Interview



Education Activities



Educational Activities



Purpose

Investigate changes in interest toward learning history among youth engaged in PLH for at least one year through the Western Heritage Project





Research Questions

After participating in a PLH approach to learning history for at least one year;

- 1. Do youth report changes in interest in history?
- 2. What elements of PLH do youth identify as most relevant to their interest in history?



What elements of PLH do youth identify as most relevant

Statement	<i>n</i>	<i>Missing</i>	Mean	<i>Median</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>sd</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>
1.It is important to me to pick my own topics to learn more about.	61	1	5.72	6	6	.933	3	4	7
2.I learn from the activities in the project.	62	0	6.39	7	7	.754	3	4	7
3.My friends in the project help me learn.	59	3	5.59	6	6	1.233	5	2	7
4. I can use my creativity when studying history in the project.	62	0	6.06	6	6	.855	3	4	7
5. Playing the role of a historical character helps me learn history.	62	0	5.94	6	7	1.240	5	2	7
6. Wearing old-fashioned clothes helps me learn history	62	0	5.95	6	7	1.273	5	2	7
7. My 4-H leader in the project inspires me to learn history	62	0	6.31	7	7	1.065	5	2	7

What Makes History “Real”

Authenticity

Shooting Period Correct Firearms

Authentic Dress

Historic Sites

Artifacts

Hands-on Activities

Family History

FUN

Stage Props

Do Youth Report Changes in Interest in History?

Statement		St. Disagree	Disagree	Sl. Disagree	Neither A/D	Sl. Agree	Agree	St. Agree
8. History is important to me.	Before	4	5	7	12	9	7	18
	After	0	1	0	2	6	19	34
9. History is "real" to me.	Before	1	3	7	11	13	6	21
	After	0	0	1	0	6	14	41
10. I have a favorite history topic I want to look into.	Before	4	3	6	17	11	9	11
	After	0	0	0	8	12	19	22
11. I can see a connection between the past and today.	Before	0	3	6	10	19	16	8
	After	0	0	0	3	8	17	34

Do Youth Report Changes in Interest in History?

Statement		St. Disagree	Disagree	Sl. Disagree	Neither A/D	Sl. Agree	Agree	St. Agree
12. My family history is important to me	Before	2	4	5	12	12	11	16
	After	0	2	0	4	5	22	29
13. I have in-depth conversations with adults in my life.	Before	5	3	2	13	12	10	17
	After	1	2	1	5	15	15	23
14. I feel I can learn history.	Before	1	3	6	6	16	11	19
	After	0	0	0	1	3	18	40
15. I can relate to Old West lifestyles.	Before	4	6	4	9	17	13	9
	After	1	0	0	2	8	14	37

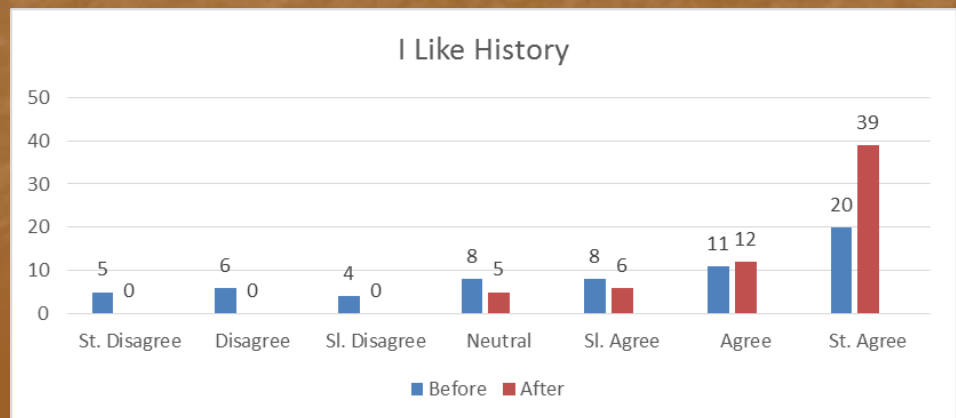
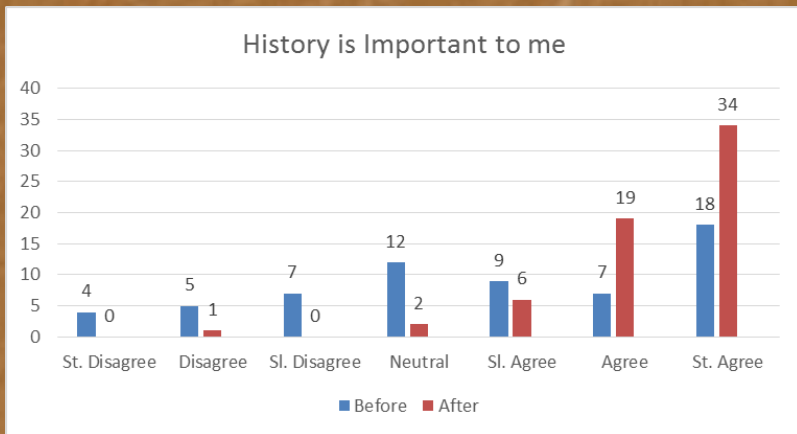
Do Youth Report Changes in Interest in History?

Statement		St. Disagree	Disagree	Sl. Disagree	Neither A/D	Sl. Agree	Agree	St. Agree
16. I understand issues between racial groups such as whites, Native Am., African Am., Mexican Am., or Chinese in the frontier American West.	Before	3	3	9	10	22	9	4
	After	0	0	1	6	5	30	18
17. I can relate to the roles of women and minority of groups such as Native Am., African Am., Mexican Am., Chinese, or women in the frontier American West.	Before	5	7	8	13	20	5	2
	After	2	0	5	9	10	18	16
18. I like visiting museums and historic sites.	Before	5	2	3	4	14	13	21
	After	1	1	1	1	5	17	36
19. I use the internet to find information about historic subjects I like.	Before	8	3	5	13	14	7	12
	After	1	1	2	7	9	17	25

Do Youth Report Changes in Interest in History?

Statement		St. Disagree	Disagree	St. Disagree	Neither A/D	St. Agree	Agree	St. Agree
20. I read books and magazines about history.	Before	8	4	9	19	10	5	7
	After	1	3	4	9	16	13	16
21. I watch television shows about history topics.	Before	6	5	4	9	10	8	19
	After	4	2	1	2	10	11	31
22. There is something new to learn about history.	Before	3	2	4	9	13	11	20
	After	0	1	0	3	5	12	41
23. I like history.	Before	5	6	4	8	8	11	20
	After	0	0	0	5	6	12	39

Do Youth Report Changes in Interest in History?



Effect Sizes

Significant Differences Between All Before/After means ($p < .0001$)

Effect Size – Small below .20, moderate between .25 and .75, large .80 or more (Cohens *d*)

Moderate Effect Sizes

My family history is important to me.	.768
I have in-depth conversations with adults in my life.	.455
I like visiting museums and historic sites.	.622
I use the internet to find information about historic subjects I like.	.788
I read books and magazines about history.	.754
I watch television shows about history topics.	.491

Conclusions

Data analysis did not exclude 4-H members with high priori interest in history or perceptions that history was important and reported no change. Nevertheless, significant results of increased interest were calculated along with moderate to high effect sizes.

PLH methodologies have powerful effect on interest in history.

Youth identify experiential/PLH approaches to learning as relevant.

Period dress and role playing can push some youth beyond their comfort zone and make them uncomfortable.

Some youth do not like museums or historic sites and never will.

Implications for 4-H, living history programs, history camps, museum educational programs, and possibly the formal classroom.



Questions?



Thank You for Attending!