

Design a Lesson Around an Instructional Anchor

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Goal: Design a coherent, standards-aligned lesson organized around a high-leverage instructional anchor for a USHC Standard 2 indicator. Throughout the process, you will align historical thinking, content, evidence, assessment, and differentiation, while explaining why your selected anchor supports the reasoning required by the indicator.

Task Steps

1. Choose an Indicator & Anchor

Select one USHC Standard 2 indicator and a high-leverage instructional anchor. Your anchor might be a turning point, historical development, recurring theme, compelling question, constitutional issue, historical problem, or another organizing concept appropriate to the indicator. In 1-2 sentences, explain why the anchor supports coherent instruction and the historical thinking required by the indicator.

What is “Why It Works”?

Briefly explain why your selected instructional anchor is an effective organizing concept for the indicator. Your 1-2 sentence justification should address:

1. **Standards Alignment** - How it reflects the indicator’s key concepts and aligned content.
2. **Historical Thinking Skill (HTS)** - How it supports the historical thinking required by the indicator.
3. **Appropriate Rigor** - How it supports the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and Performance Level Descriptor (PLD) expectations.
4. **Instructional Leverage** - How it helps students connect content, evidence, and historical reasoning to build understanding beyond a single lesson.

Example 1 - Instructional Anchor: The Missouri Compromise (1820)

This turning point is a strong anchor for USHC.2.CE because it reveals how legislative compromises sought to manage the cause-and-effect relationship between westward expansion and the spread of slavery. Key Themes: Sectionalism, Federal Authority, Expansion of Slavery. Students can analyze congressional debates, maps of free/slave state divisions, and political cartoons to explain how the compromise temporarily preserved the Union, meeting DOK 3 reasoning and PLD Meets → Exceeds expectations.

Example 2 - Instructional Anchor: The 13th Amendment (1865)

This event is a strong anchor for USHC.2.CC because it marks a fundamental change in the nation's constitutional framework by abolishing slavery while also reflecting continuities in racial inequality during Reconstruction. Key Themes: Natural Rights, Federal Authority, Reconstruction Reform. Students can analyze legislative text, speeches, and Freedmen's Bureau reports to evaluate the amendment's immediate and long-term effects, aligning to DOK 3 analysis and PLD Meets → Exceeds performance.

2. Identify the Historical Thinking

Identify the Historical Thinking Skill (HTS) embedded in the selected indicator and the appropriate DOK expectation. Describe how students will practice and apply that historical thinking through the lesson.

3. Map Key Content

Identify relevant content from the SC Alignment Guide that supports the indicator and instructional anchor. Organize the content to show meaningful relationships among the anchor, related historical developments, and the targeted historical thinking.

4. Select Aligned Sources

Select primary and/or secondary sources that provide students with the evidence needed to practice the targeted historical thinking. Briefly explain the purpose of each source within the learning experience.

5. Design an Evidence-Centered Task

Write one rigorous prompt that requires all students to apply the targeted historical thinking using evidence. Use the PLDs to identify expectations and instructional supports for students demonstrating performance at the Minimally Meets, Meets, and Exceeds levels.

Lesson Design Checklist

- Indicator and Instructional Anchor with “Why It Works” justification
- HTS and DOK alignment
- Key aligned content
- Primary and/or secondary sources with identified purposes
- Common evidence-centered task
- PLD-informed expectations and instructional supports

End Product

By completing this task, you will produce a coherent, standards-aligned lesson organized around a high-leverage instructional anchor for USHC Standard 2.

Your lesson will:

- Align the selected indicator, historical thinking, content, and appropriate DOK.
- Use an instructional anchor to organize related historical content into a coherent learning experience.
- Incorporate primary and/or secondary sources that provide evidence for historical reasoning.
- Include a common evidence-centered task with PLD-informed expectations and instructional supports.
- Provide students with opportunities to construct and support historical claims using evidence.

The completed lesson can be used in the classroom, adapted for future instruction, or shared with other educators.