



RAFTing Through History

The RAFT Strategy gives students an opportunity to express their understanding in non-traditional, non-essay formats. It can be adapted to almost any subject or situation. Ideally, the RAFT strategy encourages students to truly process information, rather than merely write out answers to questions. By encouraging unorthodox methods of explaining or summarizing, it may even help them remember some of it. (Hey, we can dream, can't we?) RAFT stands for:

R—Role of the writer: Who's writing? Is it a person? A thing? A concept?

A—Audience: Who's reading or receiving? What's their relationship to the writer?

F—Format: What sort of writing is appropriate? Is it a letter? An email? A text message? A diary? A poem?

T—Topic: What is the subject of this writing?

Some possible RAFT assignments may be fairly orthodox:

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
Thomas Jefferson	The Current President	Formal Letter	Advice on Domestic Affairs
Woman traveling on the Oregon Trail	Self	Diary	Experiences on the Oregon Trail
Dead Union Soldier	President Lincoln	Haunting Dream / Monologue	Honest thoughts on the leadership of the army
Joseph Stalin	George Orwell	Personal Letter	Reactions to <i>Animal Farm</i>

Other choices may be less obvious but potentially more effective:

Role	Audience	Format	Topic
2 Soldiers – Cousins, opposite sides, Civil War	Each other	Text messages being sent on their cell phones	Why they signed up vs. experiences in the field
The Colorado River	Potential Visitors	Snapchat series	Why you should visit me and not other options
Ben Franklin	T.V. Psychologist (Dr. Phil, etc.)	Letter / Email	My son likes the British / I'm for independence
A sword, a musket, and an atomic bomb	Each other	Emails	Posturing about value & coolness in warfare
Tea in the 1770s	Sugar in the 1770s	Argument building to potential violence	Debating who's had it roughest during the strife between the American colonies & England
North America	Other Continents	Twitter	Live Tweeting Family Reunion #Pangea
King George	The World	Blog (online)	Those Amer. Colonies!
Napoleon Bonaparte	The World	MySpace / Facebook Page	Everything Napoleon
The First Amendment	The Fifth Amendment	HS Girls Notes (passed back and forth at school)	Criticizing some of the other Amendments—(Especially the Third!)
The Constitution	The Declaration of Independence	Fatherly Lecture	Idealism vs. Being Practical / Realistic