



Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Andrew "AJ" Blumel

SCHOOL: Walla Walla High School

Position: Social Studies Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 2 years

Q. What are freshmen in your Pacific Northwest History class working on?

A. We are studying Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest. They are learning about the region's first inhabitants. I want them to know they had a myriad of cultures and peoples that were living here with a rich tradition for thousands of years before the Europeans ever showed up.

Q. What are some of the discoveries your students make during this unit?

A. They soon learn their images, visuals and ideas of Native Americans are largely stereotypical. I want to teach them that these misconceptions are not true and that there are diverse groups of Native Americans, especially in the Pacific Northwest.

Q. Why do you have your students draw their perceptions of Native Americans?

A. Many of their perceptions are straight from Hollywood. This really comes out in their drawings as we begin the unit. As we get into the materials, they see how far from the truth it really is.

Q. Why do you put so much emphasis on the process of learning?

A. I realize my students will forget some of the content from the material we are learning. What I try to focus on is the process, rather than the product. I want to prepare them for any situation they may face, whether it's another high school class, college or work.

I'm focused on teaching my students critical thinking skills and analysis. These are skills they will need throughout their lives, especially as they become conscientious and politically aware citizens.

Over

MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM
ANDREW "AJ" BLUMEL'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM "AJ" ...

It has been a phenomenal start to my career in Walla Walla. I could not imagine a better place to work. We have a collaborative staff who are focused on students.

We have an amazing administration at Wa-Hi and throughout the district. They have been so supportive.



Everyone goes to great lengths to help me be successful. They will share materials, stop to check and see how I'm doing and provide the encouragement I need. It's a great place to work.