



Michelle Higgins

Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Michelle Higgins

SCHOOL: Walla Walla High School

Position: Social Studies Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 10 years

Q. What are freshmen in your Modern World History class studying?

A. We are working on ideas that came from the Enlightenment Period during the 1700's. Enlightened thinkers and philosophers impacted countries throughout Europe, and especially our founding fathers, with their ideas of equality, freedom and religious tolerance.

Q. Why is it important to understand the Enlightenment Period?

A. In today's culture, people throughout the world are dealing with these same issues. The information from this era provides a foundation for students to apply to their own lives and situations.

Q. How do you link current issues to the Enlightenment Period?

A. Recently we talked about Adam Smith who was an economist from Scotland and the concept of Laissez-faire which calls for limited government involvement. Smith was not a huge advocate for government control and collecting taxes. I asked students if Adam Smith were alive today, how would he feel about taxes and funding public works? If he were alive today, he might see some things differently. For example, funding roads and canals were big issues in the 1700's. Today we have municipal airports, bridges, an interstate highway system, etc. Our government manages and funds these projects which are far too expensive for individuals to personally fund.

Q. Why is it important for students to have a strong understanding of our history?

A. History is our story and students should understand those who came before them. They are able to learn what others have experienced and apply it to their lives. We talk a lot about listening to your elders in this class. They have so much to offer and share.

Over



MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM
MICHELLE'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM MICHELLE.

We just completed portrait biographies. They selected a scientist or a philosopher from the Enlightenment; they did research, looked at portraits and then created an actual portrait drawing of that person. Students included quotes, symbols and other information.

I grew up in a log house in the mountains outside of Colville. My parents are both retired teachers. I received my undergraduate and master's degrees from EWU.



We have two boys; Ken (7) and Luke (4). I love to read, travel and spend time with my family. We feel blessed to live in Walla Walla and are surrounded by wonderful friends and colleagues.