CCS Standards

Reading—Informational Text

RL.5.1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

RI.5.3. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

RI.5.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

RI.5.7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

RI.5.9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Writing

W.5.9. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Speaking and Listening

SL.5.1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 5 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.5.4. Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

Language

L.5.4. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 5 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Objective: use census data to determine connections among the members of one [or two] related historic Geneva households.

Materials
Census Documents related to specific families buried in plots at Washington Street Cemetery. Two sheets for each family:
1. Johnson: 1850 & 1860 census sheets
2. Thompson: 1850 & 1860 census sheets
3. Whitwell/Tims: 1850 & 1860 census sheets
4. Dorchester: 1860 & 1880 census sheets
5. Hayward: 1850 & 1860 census sheets

Thought Questions
Graphic Organizer
Vocabulary List

Background
How do we learn about the past? Cemeteries and census documents are great resources for learning about the history of ordinary people in a community. Close reading of these documents can reveal the types of people who have lived in a community, where they came from, how they related to one another, made their living, and organized their families. Through close reading, analysis and interpretation of a selection of primary documents, as well as a visit to Washington Street Cemetery, students will learn how to gather and interpret the history of ordinary people in their community's past.

Each of these census sheets contains information about one or two Geneva households as recorded on a 19th-century U. S. Census. The federal population census has been taken every ten years since 1790 to determine representation in Congress. The earliest censuses recorded only the name of the head of household (almost always a man) and the number of males and females living in the household. Beginning in 1850, more information was included in the census. While the questions varied every year, the person's name, sex, race, age, and state or country of birth were usually included. Sometimes information was included about occupation, value of property and education. This information can tell researchers a lot about individual families that make up a community's history.

Note about included census sheets: each sheet has at the top a reproduction of the actual census information. *The lower table is a transcription of the same data* to help students who have difficulty reading the historic handwriting. The sheets for the Johnson, Thompson, and Dorchester families feature *one* household. Some sheets for the Whitwell/Timms and Hayward families include *two* related households.

Procedure
Divide your students into five groups. Give each group the earlier of their two census sheets. Have them read the across the top row and look at the categories. You may want to discuss the categories to be sure students understand what they mean. Have the students use the thought

questions to analyze the information on their sheet. Once they have finished with the earlier sheet, distribute the second census sheet for each group and have them go through the same questions to compare and contrast the families ten or twenty years later. Students can write notes on the census sheets or use the graphic organizer to track their findings.

Thought Questions
  ▪ **Name**
    Look at the first and last names of all those listed for your household. Are they all the same? What can you infer about those who have the same last name? If one or more names are different, what can you infer about them? Are there any clues in the rest of the categories to help tell you who they are and why they are living in the house?
  ▪ **Age**
    Look at the ages of those in the household. Can their ages and names help you infer the possible connections between members of the household?
  ▪ **Occupation and Real Estate**
    Do any of the members of your household have an occupation listed? Do any have any real estate? What, if anything does this tell you about the family?
  ▪ **Place of Birth**
    Were all members of the household born in the same state? The same country? What can you infer about the members of the household from their place of birth?
  ▪ **Second Census**
    What has changed in the years between censuses? Are there new members of the household? Are some previous members missing? What inferences can you make based on the information you have? What questions do you have?

Have each group share one or two conclusions they have come to about their households, and one question they would like to find out the answer to. **Students should bring their findings to the cemetery to continue their research.**

Additional Exploration
Have students chart the value of real estate for each family to see how they compare to one another. [Note: to be valid, students should only compare families from the same census year]. Who is the richest, who is the poorest? Does this change between censuses? Why?