

What Happened Was...

The episode used a play written about a difficult event to help listeners understand what occurred and what the event revealed about the world in which it took place. This activity asks students to learn about a historical event and present the facts surrounding it in a creative way. This exercise will be most effective for students in grades five and up.

- 1.) Ask students to choose an event from the last 100 years that they find fascinating. This could include a presidential election, an important speech, a significant protest, or another local or global event of their choosing.
- 2.) Give students a week to research this event and bring in information about it. This could include transcripts from the event itself, articles about what occurred that might have influenced the event, details about what took place after the event happened, photos, etc.
- 3.) Now, invite the students to share with each other what they discovered. They can talk about what excited them, what confused them, and what surprised them.
- 4.) Next, offer the students three options for what they wish to create:
 - a.) A visual art collage, which includes text, photos, etc.
 - b.) An essay or piece of narrative writing that tells the story of the event, incorporating elements of what they found
 - c.) A poem that captures the spirit of the event and incorporates elements of their research
- 5.) Before they begin, encourage the students to write down a question they have about the event. Then, ask them to write down what they think is most important to communicate about what occurred.
- 6.) The students can then, once given any necessary materials (pen, paper, scissors, etc.), create their pieces. They can use what they just wrote down (the question and the important piece of communication) to guide what they make.
- 7.) Once the pieces are complete, the students can present their work to the group. Invite the group to ask each presenter questions about what they made in order to learn more.
- 8.) If you decide that it makes sense to do so, you can display the work throughout a classroom, as a way to encourage ongoing conversations.