

**Standard 4(e) Rationale: Connects students' prior knowledge, life experiences, and interests in the instructional process.**

To fulfill this criterion, I selected the Myth Busters: Thanksgiving Edition project I use in my 7<sup>th</sup> grade U.S. History class. For this assignment, the students study primary sources from the original Thanksgiving. Then they read secondary sources about the evolution of holiday observances and traditions surrounding the holiday of Thanksgiving. Then students get into groups and select one of six common Thanksgiving Myths to bust. They work in groups to research their myth. They must find out what is true about it, what is false about it, then offer a reasonable theory for why the myth exists. Groups present to the class in the form using a PowerPoint presentation. This is a great example of connecting students' prior knowledge to the instruction process, because we study the original Thanksgiving in depth, so students go into this project feeling very knowledgeable about the original Thanksgiving. This project also taps their life experiences because they must compare how they celebrate a national holiday to how it was originally celebrated. Students really get into this assignment because they get to present their information in a ridiculous format of a popular TV show, complete with applause, a cheesy host, camera operators, and the chalkboard to start and stop their episode.