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U.S. History Project

Quilt Codes of the Underground Railroad Project Reflection

For my project, I chose to do Underground Railroad code quilts. I chose this project mostly because I love to quilt and wanted to know more about quilting in general, but discovered the quilt codes and thought it would make a more interesting project than simply doing quilt history.

I am really proud of my completed visual. I spent approximately 20 hours working on it. I originally planned on making an entire quilt, but decided to do the individual blocks instead. It took longer than I would have liked just because I had to work a little bit at a time instead of just doing it in one big chunk of time.

The most important thing that I learned doing this project was the fact that the quilt codes and Underground Railroad quilts never really existed. I discovered that they were made up to basically sell quilts and have no basis in fact. There are several children’s books based on the quilt code and also a major novel written about them, but now I feel like I shouldn’t read these books because it is teaching children and adults a false history.

I enjoyed doing this project very much. It took much more time than I originally thought it would take. My visual was the most time consuming part, but doing the research took a lot of time as well. I learned that to do a good job takes a lot of effort. I also learned that a history that I thought was true was basically a lie.

This project helped me as a student/teacher because I could see how long each step actually took to complete. I think this will not only allow me to better judge deadlines for my students, but also by completing a sample project, I can show students what I expect out of them.

What I liked best about completing this project was making my visual and learning how the entire premise of code quilts was false. I found it interesting how easily a “historical” period or event can be so easily adopted into fact. It is actually a little scary seeing how easily it can happen. It makes me wonder what other “historical” events really are not real. I did not particularly enjoy writing the research paper. After I competed the research it was hard to get it into a paper, but in the end I am happy with both my research paper and my presentation.