

Name: _____

The Point of Studying History

Instructions: Read the excerpt of the article below. Prepare to discuss the excerpt with your classmates.

Daniel Immerwahr, "History isn't Just for Patriots" *The Washington Post*, December 23, 2020.

Daniel Immerwahr is a professor of history at Northwestern University. The following is an excerpt. The full article is available at <<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/12/23/teach-history-american-patriotism/>>

The point of history is not to list all the good things or bad things that have happened, nor to strike some desired balance between them. It's to understand origins, persistence and change. We teach it because we hope that knowing how slavery ended or the Second World War began will equip students to think intelligently about the present. History helps them to see why and by whom their

world was built. It shows them how visions have had consequences—sometimes far-reaching, sometimes unintended. It gives them the intellectual tools to act on their society: a complex, dynamic place that is theirs to change or conserve.

The aim of history class isn't to get students to love or loathe their country. It's to prepare them to live in it.

Discussion Prompt:

What do you believe Professor Immerwahr means when he says, "The aim of history class isn't to get students to love or loathe their country. It's to prepare them to live in it"?