

Grades 6-8

History Detectives – Duke Ellington Plates

HISTORY DETECTIVES host Elyse Luray pilots an airplane to relive the memory of one of America's first, and youngest, barnstormers. Pilot "Cromwell Dixon" lost his life at 19 when his airplane crashed. Then, details in "Bartlett's Sketchbook" suggest the scenes illustrate the first ever US-Mexican border survey. Host Eduardo Pagan wonders whether the sketchbook made that journey, and if it belonged to Bartlett? Finally, a dumpster find may be a jazz history treasure. In the encore segment, Tukufu Zuberi sets out to find whether these metal "Duke Ellington Plates" printed the first copy of the Ellington hit, Take the A Train.

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

Question Box 1

- Cite evidence from the video that demonstrates features/characteristics of the historical figures.
- What did you learn after watching this program?
- What is the program's purpose? How do you know?
- What is a barnstormer?
- Describe the details found in "Bartlett's Sketchbook."
- How did Eduardo Pagan use the details to solve the mystery?
- Who was Duke Ellington?
- How was he important to jazz music?
- How were the metal plates used to print the music referred to in the segment?

Question Box 2

- How would you have responded to a situation from the video differently than historical figures?
- What was one part of the video that stood out for you and why?
- What was your favorite historical story and why?
- What was most challenging or least interesting about this program?
- What about the show stood out to you?
- What are your thoughts on barnstormers being young in age like Cromwell Dixon?
- Do you think 19 years old was too young to be a pilot? Why or why not?
- Do you enjoy jazz music? Why or why not?

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Box 3 (Tasks)

- Cromwell Dickson made a bicycle powered dirigible at 14. What is a bicycle powered dirigible? What is that? Use materials at home to either make one or make a model of one.
- Trace the history of one of your favorite songs and its impact on the genre of music.

Box 4 (Enrichment)

- Research the life of Cromwell Dixon and Amelia Earhart. Why is Amelia's name a household name and why is Cromwell Dixon's name relatively unknown?
- Take some time and investigate your community. Draw a historic building in your community.
- Draw some native flora, fauna and a scene of nature.

Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)

- Watch this video about the history of printing.
 1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=31&v=DTsAxwwlG4s&feature=emb_logo
- What surprised you about the printing process?
- Brainstorm a list of jobs that would require printing.
- Would you consider any of the jobs? Why or why not?