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CHRONOLOGICAL VERSUS THEMATIC: A METHODOLOGICAL BATTLE IN THE AMERICAN HISTORY CLASSROOM

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A debate has emerged regarding the best method by which to teach American history at the secondary level: chronologically or thematically. Previous studies have focused on explaining the two methodologies rather than comparing their effectiveness in the American history classroom. Research was conducted in American history classrooms at two comparative public high schools in Central Illinois. Teachers who taught history chronologically or thematically as well as students taught by either method were surveyed. The purpose was to find the advantages and disadvantages in both teaching methodologies as well as teachers' and students' preference regarding the two methods. The study aims to help American history curriculum planners implement the most effective method, chronological or thematic, depending on students' needs.