Our new Reconstruction Primary Source Set delves into that complicated period of U.S. History immediately following the Civil War and stretching into the late 19th century, during which the issue of citizenship was fundamentally challenged and revised.

Once again, we will be partnering with the Tennessee Historical Society to offer Tennessee History Day workshops. Explore the 2016 theme (“Exploration, Encounter, Exchange”), find primary sources, and develop good research questions and strategies. The workshops will take place in selected locations across the state in July; stay tuned for further details.

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

It's OK, by Eddie Hamilton [2001, detail]
In the days after 9-11, a 3rd-grade class from Knoxville sent the Library of Congress some drawings for the American Folklife Center’s September 11, 2001 Documentary Project. See more heartbreaking images from these 3rd graders.

THEME: USING PRIMARY SOURCES AT THE ELEMENTARY LEVEL

We admit it: the Library of Congress Teachers Page has more resources that are geared towards grades 6-12 than it does for grades K-5. TPS-MTSU has heard from elementary educators across the state that you need more materials that focus on using primary sources with younger students. Please visit our site for lesson plans for grades K-2 & 3-5, for starters.

The Library of Congress also has plenty of ideas and resources for K-5 teachers, even if they're not as easy to find. There is a number of lesson plans for grades 3-8, for instance. There are also plenty of blog entries dealing directly with this topic—please see the six we listed in the “Important Links” box on p. 2. TPS-MTSU can also boast of a blog on this topic: “Exploring ‘The Star Spangled Banner’ with Fourth Graders—and Having a Teacher Evaluation at the Same Time” was written by elementary school librarian Suzanne Costner from Blount County.

Content created and featured in partnership with the TPS program does not indicate an endorsement by the Library of Congress.
LESSON IDEA—HEALTHY LIVING

An active lifestyle is an important component of building one’s overall health. It is also important to allow the body enough time to rest to recover from the day’s activity and to perform at its highest potential. Striking a good balance between getting enough activity in one’s day along with the correct amount of rest, most importantly sleep, is often difficult in today’s world.

To begin this activity, ask your class to define what physical activity means to them. What is rest? Show your class the image to the left. What are the children doing in this image? Are they being activity or are they resting? Next, have them answer those same questions about each of these images: baseball, running, walking the dog, swimming, reading, sunbathing, sleeping, family dinner, and watching television. How do each of these activities contribute to a healthy lifestyle? Do any of them present challenges to living a healthy lifestyle? (For example, you might discuss how sunbathing might lead to sunburns and greater chances of developing skin cancer.)

Next, ask your students to select three to four images that would represent a good balance of physical activity and rest to represent a healthy lifestyle. Individually, have each of your students write down all of their activities for the day before including how much time they spent doing each. How does their day compare to the balance represented in the images selected by the class?

This lesson idea meets Tennessee state standards for health education in grades K-5 (Standard 4).

LESSON IDEA—TELLING TIME WITH ANALOG CLOCKS

We tell time every day, whether it is by looking at our cell phones or a clock on the wall. In the 1940s, before cell phones and the popularity of digital clocks, Americans used analog clocks like the ones on the top left to tell time.

Show your students the photograph on the left. Explain how millions of these clocks were produced in the 1940s. Tell your students that these clocks needed to be wound up, and ask if they have ever had to do that with their clocks at home. Are these clocks showing the same time? How can you tell? Look at the clock on the left. Where is the minute hand pointing? Where is the hour hand pointing? Is there a second hand? What time is shown on this clock? Which clock shows a later time?

Now show your students the image on the bottom right. What is missing from this picture? How many numbers do you see? How many numbers are missing? Are you still able to tell what time it is without the other numbers? Why or why not? Is there anything missing in this picture besides numbers? If so, what is missing? Look for the full lesson plan on analog clocks, coming soon to the TPS-MTSU Web site.

This lesson idea meets Tennessee state standards for 2nd grade math (Measurement and Data 7) and 3rd grade math (Measurement and Data 1).
LESSON IDEA– HOW TO TACKLE TEXT EXCERPTS

Looking at the required primary source texts listed in the Tennessee state Social Studies curriculum standards, teachers sometimes say to us, “My students can’t read that!” These texts are indeed challenging, both in the complexity of their content and the difficulty of their language. Since the standardized tests will pull their text excerpts from these required readings, however, teachers must find a way to prepare young readers in recognizing these texts.

Uncle Tom’s Cabin is a required text for 5th-graders, yet it is also a book with forty-five chapters and over 200 pages. Start off by discussing who wrote Uncle Tom’s Cabin. When was it written? What was going on in the nation at the time the book was published? Next, tell your students what this book is about, based on a summary from an internet site of your choosing. Who are the characters? What is the main theme? If students are prepared upfront with this vital information, they can spend more time paying attention to what the book says, and less time keeping track of characters and decoding flowery language. Once students have an idea what to expect and what to look for, then dig in.

One particularly dramatic episode (see play poster, at right) in the book is the escape of the slave Eliza and her young son Henry. The Library of Congress has a special classic book edition of Uncle Tom’s Cabin for Children, from which you can read these six excerpts. Divide your class into six groups and have each group read, then reread, then summarize its excerpt (or read it) out loud to the whole class. Then, have the students read the same excerpts from the original written version. In what ways is the original text difficult? Underline strange words and supply synonyms. Discuss how Stowe uses dramatic language to raise the suspense and make readers sympathetic towards Eliza. How would this affect a 19th-century person’s views of slavery?

This lesson idea meets Tennessee state standards for grade 5 Social Studies (Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read) and CCSS for English/Language Arts (Reading: Literature and Foundational Skills).

LESSON IDEA– SPACE TECHNOLOGY

With every advance of technology, we learn more about space. Just look at how telescopes have changed over the years: 1637, eighteenth century, 1889, 1924, and (courtesy of Wikimedia Commons) 2010. How have these advances helped us explore planets in our solar system, the stars, and the universe? What can you do with a telescope in 2010 that you could not do with one in 1637? As an example, show your students this constellation chart from 1776. Take a look at the constellations in this picture from 2015 (Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons). What are the differences?

Carl Sagan, world renowned astronomer, drew this picture after studying about space in the fifth grade. He imagines massive advances in science. In 1959, he predicts that astronauts will land on the moon. By 1966, Sagan believes that astronauts will explore Pluto. Some of Sagan’s predictions would not come to pass. Astronauts have yet to reach Pluto (we don’t even consider it a full planet anymore!). Yet, some of his predictions did come true. Americans did land on the moon, though this happened in 1969. Sagan made these predictions because he read about technological developments. Ask your students, knowing what they know about technology, what they think will happen in the next twenty years. Maybe, like Sagan’s, some of their predictions will come true. Show your student pictures of rocket engines, engines in assembly, a rocket ready for lift off, a lunar module, and a space shuttle to encourage discussion.

This lesson idea meets Tennessee state standards for grade 5 Science (Embedded Technology & Engineering and Earth & Space Science).
**Beef—It’s What’s for Dinner!**

*Cow and her calves* [between 1980 and 2006]

Beef makes up a significant portion of the typical American’s diet. What do cows need to live? What is their primary food source? What environmental needs do they have? What foods do your students eat that contain beef? Have them watch this classic commercial and discuss what foods are represented here. What other products do we get from cows?

**Johnny Clem: Civil War Hero**

* Sgt. Johnny Clem / Schwing & Rudd, photographers, Army of the Cumberland. [1863, detail]

When we think of soldiers in the American Civil War, we often think of adults. We seldom consider the hundreds of children that were drawn onto the battlefield. One such child, twelve-year old Johnny Clem, stood his ground at the Battle of Chickamauga, in Tennessee, when all the adult soldiers ran away. Clem was hailed a Union hero and appointed a sergeant. Talk to your students: what would you have done in Clem’s situation? In what other ways did children serve in the Civil War (read more about it here and here)?

**Adding with Rectangular Arrays**

*6 + 8* [ca. 1936-1942]

Use addition to find the total number of penguins shown above, arranged in rectangular arrays with three rows and two columns. What equation can you write to show these arrays? How many total penguins are there? How could it be useful to count using groups of objects instead of one-by-one? This idea may be adapted to meet the standards for 2nd grade math (Operations and Algebraic Thinking 4).

**Rambles through Our Country**

*Rambles through our country - an instructive geographical game for the young* [1890]

In this board game, first published in 1881, players took a “grand tour” of the U.S., stopping to see specific sites in each state (or territory—see Oklahoma). Can you recognize any of the sites depicted? Why would the artist depict Indians watching a train? Why are the rivers so prominent? Read the entire instruction booklet to see what sites you get to visit!