Teaching with Primary Sources—MTSU

WHO’S AFRAID OF THE BIG BAD WOLF?
A COMPARISON IN AMERICAN CULTURE

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Grade: 5th—8th
Subject: Reading/Language Arts, Social Studies
Time required: 1 to 2 class periods (50–60 min.)

Materials Used

Library of Congress primary sources:
- *The Three Little Pigs*, L. Leslie Brooke, illustrator (see image at right)
  https://www.loc.gov/item/84181093/
- Progressive Era to New Era 1900-1929 overview
  http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/progress/progress.html
- Assassination of President McKinley
  https://www.loc.gov/item/96521677/
- The Titanic
  http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2001704326/
- President Roosevelt speaking from his train at Colorado Springs, Col.
  https://www.loc.gov/item/2010649009/
- Typical Night Scene in an Indiana Glass Works
  https://www.loc.gov/item/2018673719/
- Great Falls of the Yellowstone River
  https://www.loc.gov/item/95514172/

Overview
This lesson analyzes how contemporary values and attitudes are reflected in literature.

Goal
Students will understand how contemporary culture is reflected in children’s literature.

Objectives
Students analyze an early 20th century version of the *Three Little Pigs* to determine how contemporary culture and values affect a story.

Investigative Question
What does a book tell us about the people who wrote it and the people who read it?
Materials Used CONTINUED

- Theodore Roosevelt and John Muir on Glacier Point, Yosemite Valley, California, in 1903. https://www.loc.gov/item/93503130/
- USS Maine, Havana https://www.loc.gov/item/2014689652/
- This little girl like many others... (see below right) https://www.loc.gov/item/2018676167/
- Gutter toy merchant, New York City, A. https://www.loc.gov/item/2016798927/
- Italian bread peddlers, Mulberry St., New York. https://www.loc.gov/item/2016800317/
- Family in an attic home with drying laundry https://www.loc.gov/item/2016816402/
- Suffragists Mrs. Stanley McCormick and Mrs. Charles Parker, April 22, 1913. https://www.loc.gov/item/93510737/
- Landing at Ellis Island https://www.loc.gov/item/97501086/

Optional Resources

- Several contemporary versions of The Three Little Pigs

Curriculum Standards

Grades 5-8 Reading

- 5.RL.KID.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in a text
- 6.RL.IKI.9 Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.
- 4.RL.CS.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that refer to significant characters and situations found in literature and history.

Grade 5 Social Studies

- 5.09 Analyze the major goals, struggles, and achievements of the Progressive Era, including: Prohibition (18th Amendment), women’s suffrage (19th Amendment), and the lack of child labor laws.
**PROCEDURE**

**Step 1** Before the lesson print one copy of Progressive to New Era overview for each student. Divide students into groups of 3 or four. Either print one copy of L. Leslie Brooke’s *Three Little Pigs* for each group or arrange for each group to have access to a computer to read the book online. Print one copy of each of the other resources (3-15) and its corresponding bibliographic entry.

**Step 2 Connect** Randomly distribute the primary sources and bibliographic entries to the students. Instruct the students to walk around and find the document that corresponds to their own.

**Step 3 Construct** Ask each pair to describe their primary source to the class using details in the picture as well as the bibliographic information. Encourage other students to add additional information if possible.

**Step 4 Investigate** Give each student a copy of Progressive Era to New Era overview. Have each pair discuss how their primary source relates the ideals of the Progressive Era.

**Step 5 Construct** Allow each pair to share and discuss their responses with the class. Create a web of concepts and ideas related to Progressivism on the board based on the discussion.

**Step 6 Investigate** Divide students into groups and distribute one copy of L. Leslie Brooke’s *Three Little Pigs* to each group. Ask them to carefully read and discuss both the text and illustrations. Students should identify ways in which the story does or does not reflect the concepts of Progressivism.

**Step 7 Construct** Have students share their observations in class discussion. Possible observations include:

- Value of hard work (Pig who build with brick is successful)
- Death and injury commonplace (Pigs and wolf die)
- Value creativity and problem solving (Pig outsmarts the wolf)
- Good guys win (The wolf is ultimately defeated)
- Realism is valued (See illustrations)

**Step 8 Construct** Ask students to describe what they value. Create web of concepts and ideas.

(Continued)
PROCEDURE, cont.

Step 9 Express  Instruct each group to create a modern “teen” version of the *Three Little Pigs* that expresses some of the concepts and ideas they value. Encourage creativity with both the text and illustrations of the story. Allow students to share and discuss their stories when complete.

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**EVALUATION**

Students will be evaluated on their participation in group work and class discussion using the following rubric:

- Participates in class discussion: 25 possible points
- Shares ideas with group: 15 possible points
- Listens to group members: 15 possible points
- Compromises appropriately: 20 possible points
- Completes work on time: 25 possible points
- Exceptional finally product: 15 bonus points

**EXTENSIONS**

Give each group a copy of a contemporary version of *The Three Little Pigs*. Ask them to compare and contrast the values portrayed with those in L. Leslie Brooke’s version.

Show students *The Children’s Object Book*, published in the 1880s, available at [http://read.gov/books/object-book.html](http://read.gov/books/object-book.html). Discuss the changes in technology that have occurred in the past 130 years. Assign each student a page and challenge them to create a similar illustration for the objects of today.