New lesson plans! Two new lesson plans are now available from our Web site, both with original handouts to help students read and analyze primary sources that are complex texts. One of them examines Andrew Carnegie’s “Gospel of Wealth,” while the other looks at the “Retrospective” of Sam Watkins’ Co. Aytch.

Looking ahead: It’s two months away, but make your plans now! The kick-off symposium to commemorate the 100-year anniversary of women’s suffrage in America is scheduled for March 18, 2018, at the East Tennessee History Center in Knoxville. Several major statewide partners are creating a program that explores Tennessee’s role in this struggle and the passage of the 19th amendment. Join TPS-MTSU on March 17 for a teacher workshop on the subject—stay tuned for more details!

“Awesome” Source of the Month:

[Advertisement for Star toboggans, showing people sledding in daylight] / Phoenix Litho. Co., Chicago, [1886]

This image is currently trending on the Library of Congress Web site. Can you guess why? Stay warm out there, everybody!

Theme: Historical Thinking, Vol. IV

Fall semester 2017 was the 5th time I taught MTSU’s History 3011: Teaching Historical Thinking course, which aims at preparing future K-12 history teachers. As usual, one of their assignments was to create the material for a newsletter issue, based on various historical thinking skills they had learned over the course of the semester. These skills are in bold-face within the lesson ideas and p. 4 captions: author’s purpose and chronological thinking on p. 2, the inquiry process and multiple perspectives on p. 3, and continuity and change, supporting evidence, contextualization, and main idea on p. 4.

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Lessons Idea—Lincoln’s Stance on Slavery

When Abraham Lincoln became president in 1861, it was apparent to the American people that he had taken a stance against slavery. What the people were not aware of was how his stance evolved, leading up to the Emancipation Proclamation. This lesson will examine the historical thinking skill of author’s purpose by analyzing the draft of a bill written by Lincoln in 1849 to get rid of slavery in the District of Columbia.

Start the lesson by asking the students what they already know about Lincoln’s part in freeing the slaves. Share with the students that Lincoln had taken an anti-slavery stance in when campaigning in the North, but was much more wishy-washy in the South. Because of sectional differences, full emancipation could not happen overnight; instead, it would be an uphill battle that would take years.

Ask students what would be the purpose of only getting rid of slavery in the District of Columbia. Then introduce to students Lincoln’s 1849 draft, A Bill to Abolish Slavery in the District of Columbia (use the PDF version). Let the students know that it was written well before he was the president, and was trying to find a way to unite the members of his political party while he was a junior Congressman in Illinois. It was not written as a means to an end, but as an idea to base his future work upon. It was small-scale, starting with just D.C. Before they read the primary source, have them read footnote 1 (on p. 1, under the black bar) with a partner. What was Lincoln’s purpose in writing the draft in the first place? Was he planning to propose this bill as a test for the nation? You can also compare this draft to the wording of the final Emancipation Proclamation.

This lesson idea meets state standards for 8th grade Social Studies (8.76).

Lessons Idea—Turn Up the Heat: The Cold War

After World War II ended in 1945, tensions grew between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. There were many factors that fueled the fire between the two superpowers. The threat of communism was a lingering fear for Americans; that fear helped shaped the events that led to the Cold War. America was very concerned about the spread of communism, which led the U.S. to the initial plan of using the strategy of containment. In 1947, President Truman created the Truman Doctrine to further expand on the idea of containment. In the same year, the Marshall Plan was announced, which helped the European nations recover economically from the war. In the eyes of the Soviet Union, however, it was America’s way of interfering with and controlling international affairs. After the war, Germany was split up into different zones: a Soviet zone, a U.S. zone, a British zone, and a French zone. The Soviets decided to block off their zone in 1948. This left the residents with no way to get food and other necessities from any outside source. The U.S. and the Allies went over the Soviets’ heads, literally, and sent supplies and food from the sky. This became known as the Berlin Airlift.

Chronological thinking is the process historians use to determine the order of historical events. Many people see chronological order as events taking place in a specific order based on dates, but it is important to realize that determining the order of events happens because of cause and effect. To exercise this skill, begin by printing out these four primary sources: the Truman Doctrine, the Marshall Plan, discussion about the Berlin Airlift, and a Berlin Airlift cartoon. Be sure to obscure the dates on them before spreading them out for examination. Then ask students to work together as a whole and place the sources in chronological order that they believe is correct. After they have the timeline completed, ask students why they put them in that certain order and their reasoning behind it. Reveal to them if any sources are out of order. This activity turns the basic timeline exercise into a new way for students to look at chronological thinking.

This lesson idea meets state standards for high school U.S. History & Geography (US.74, 75, 79).
LESSON IDEA— EFFECTS OF THE ATOMIC BOMB

The decision to use nuclear weapons against Japan at the end of World War II marked a new era in warfare and international politics. Although most lessons on the use of the atomic bombs focus on the military and presidential decision to use nuclear weapons (extensively documented in the Harry S. Truman Presidential Library), few note the lasting humanitarian, cultural, and ecological impacts of their use. As part of an international investigative team formed by the newly-formed United Nations, students will examine the effects of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki using the student-driven inquiry process, and present their findings to the United Nations.

To begin the lesson, display the General panoramic view of Hiroshima after the bomb and View of a Hiroshima bridge 4,400 feet east of X photographs, then encourage students to discuss their observations, questions, and hypotheses together. Ensure that students recognize the general devastation of the cities, now only sparsely dotted with blown-out concrete structures.

Now, display the Bird's-eye view of Nagasaki and Port of Nagasaki, Japan photographs, which contextualize the devastation found in the previous photos. Again, ask students to discuss their observations, questions, and hypotheses; guide students to connect to the photographs as before pictures, and wonder about the causes of the drastic change. Students may comment on destroyed infrastructure such as hospitals, police stations, and universities, then wonder about the immediate and lasting effects of their destruction on the community and nation. Similarly, examine the aerial shots of Hiroshima before and after the bombing, and Nagasaki, Japan after [the] atomic bombing. Students may contrast the aerial shots with the ground-level perspectives, and relate how the contrasting perspectives add or remove context. These observations and investigations should lead students to construct new understandings of the atomic bombs’ effects on the cities, and more directly, the affected population.

To facilitate a new “wonder” phase regarding those personally subjected to the bombings, listen to excerpts of an interview with Kaleria Palchikoff, an English-speaking survivor of the Hiroshima bombing, who describes her experiences getting medical care for the injured. Students should relate the account to their prior observations and hypothesis, then construct new conclusions. Using these new conclusions, students can present their findings to the UN via an oral or written report. As part of the report, students should communicate new questions for a follow-up UN study, describe the scope of their continued work, and introduce the applicable resources needed for the study (for example, students may present a commission to study the Health Risks of Atomic Bomb Exposure).

This lesson idea meets state standards for high school U.S. History & Geography (US.69) and World History & Geography (W.51).

LESSON IDEA— MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE VIETNAM WAR

Using primary sources that represent multiple perspectives is an important skill for understanding complex events and issues in history. When studying the Vietnam War, for instance, it is just as important to read sources from the Vietnamese point of view as from the American one. This is especially true when considering the question of why people fought in/supported the war and why people did not.

Divide the class in half and give half the students “Story #1” from the Multiple Perspectives on the Vietnam War handout and the other half “Story #2.” Students should analyze the oral histories using this analysis sheet. After discussion, each group should send a representative to the white board to write an answer to the question of why the person in their primary source fought in the war. How were the reasons of the Vietnamese and American soldiers the same? different?

Now give the half of the class that read “Story #1” this photograph (the one of the Vietnamese family), which they can analyze using this analysis sheet, while the other half should analyze this photograph. How do these photographs add to the Vietnamese and American perspectives on the war? After discussing as a group, students should share their photos with the other half of the class and write their findings on the white board. Lastly, show the whole class this political cartoon by Herblock. What perspective does Herblock reveal in this cartoon? Which of the four previous sources does this cartoon seem sympathetic to? How does it convey the sense that there were many different perspectives on the Vietnam War?

[Anti-Vietnam war protest and demonstration in front of the White House in support of singer Eartha Kitt]. [WKL or TOT], [1968] This lesson idea meets state standards for high school U.S. history & Geography (US.80).
**The Legacy of the Trail of Tears**

“Gary Tomahsah, a Comanche from Apache, Oklahoma, prepares for Men’s Traditional dance competition at 1999 Powwow.” Photo by Midge Durbin, for “Trail of Tears Powwow,” a Kentucky Local Legacies project

In the fall and winter of 1838-1839, 15,000 Cherokees were forced out of their ancestral lands to make room for the white settlers. They were forced to move to what is now Oklahoma, a journey of 1,200 miles. Looking at the way the Trail of Tears is commemorated by different groups of people can be a lesson in continuity and change. Every September, there is a gathering of Native American Powwows in the Trail of Tears Commemorative Park. What keeps these descendants commemorating their ancestors? How does their story about the Trail of Tears demonstrate continuity? How does the way that white Americans have told the story demonstrate change over time?

**Executive Order 9066**


President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed executive order 9066 on February 19, 1942, allowing for Japanese-American internment camps during World War II. What is the justification for implementing this executive order? Does FDR point to any supporting evidence that helps justify this order?  Order 9066 leads to the establishment of such internment camps as Manzanar, CA, and Heart Mountain, WY. The order stipulates basic services for these camps, but what were living conditions really like? For evidence about actual living conditions, read through the newspapers created and published by people who lived at these camps. (See last month’s newsletter for more on this topic.)

**Emancipation in the Border States**

Abraham Lincoln papers: Series 1. General Correspondence. 1833-1916: Abraham Lincoln, Saturday, July 12, 1862 (Address to Border State Representatives) [detail]

Lincoln’s address to border state representatives, part of the long process of implementing emancipation, starts to make sense once students know that Lincoln did not free all slaves at once or in all places. To fully understand this address, they need more information: What are the border states? What is colonization? Who is Gen. Hunter? What is the military situation on July 12, 1862? This process of filling in the information around a primary source to help it make sense is called contextualization. (For more context, read this essay.)

**Salem Witch Trials**

Petition for bail from accused witches, ca. 1692. [detail]

Hand-written primary sources from centuries ago are not only hard to read due to their handwriting, but also because of differences in vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. This makes figuring out the main idea of the text of particular importance for students, so they don’t get lost in the details. See how much they can read of this short letter written by several accused (so-called) witches, waiting for trial in a cold jail in 1692. What is the main thing the accused people are requesting? For context on the Salem Witch Trials to go with the letter, have students read this Today in History article.