WELCOME!

Teaching with Primary Sources—Middle Tennessee State University, administered by the Center for Historic Preservation, engages learners of all ages in using primary sources to explore major issues and questions in many different disciplines.

Contact: Stacey Graham or Kira Duke at (615) 898-2947 or www.mtsu.edu/tps

NEWS

• Do you teach the Trail of Tears? If so, be sure to check out our new primary source set on this topic. The sources are divided into four categories: Maps of Cherokee Nations and Indian Removal, Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act, The Indian Removal Act and Emigration, and Native American Culture and Resistance.

• Do you teach the Boston Massacre? Or journalism? If so, be sure to check out our latest teacher-produced lesson plan on the Boston Massacre by Chris Long of Baileyton Elementary School in Greene County.

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

I Can’t Believe My Eyes! [1991]

Edmund Valtman was a political cartoonist from Estonia, a former Communist Soviet republic in eastern Europe. What do you think his views on communism are, especially given his identity as an Estonian during the Cold War? See p. 4 for more from this artist.

THEME: COMMUNISM

“Communism” is one of those words that provokes a wide variety of intense responses among Americans. To many people in the western world today, it connotes an oppressive form of government that crushes individual freedoms. However, at its core, it is as much an economic and social concept as a political one.

Communism is often—incorrectly—used interchangeably with the term socialism. Communism can be thought of as an abstract concept in which society is classless and egalitarian. Socialism can be thought of as concrete institutions that aim for a more egalitarian society by striving for the democratization of the workplace and an acceptable standard of living. In the U.S., these institutions include public schools and libraries, as well as programs such as Medicare.

While many countries have enacted various forms and degrees of socialism, none has ever claimed to have fully achieved Communism. That has not stopped other governments from using the threat of Communism to motivate social and military forces against it.

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**Lesson Idea—The Communist Manifesto**

*The Communist Manifesto* was originally published in 1848 as a brief pamphlet by the German philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, in response to the uprisings across Europe in that year. The main idea behind the pamphlet is that society can be explained comprehensively in terms of class struggle, particularly the struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat (see this video clip about conflict theory, from 4:54 to 9:00).

Although it first came out in 1848, it wasn’t until many years later that *The Communist Manifesto* became highly influential among the growing labor movement in the United States. Several newspapers printed excerpts from the work, including *The Chicago Daily Tribune* on December 25, 1873. Fears about the rise of communism and socialism exploded in the early 20th century as immigration issues and the labor movement challenged the idea that capitalism was the best economic structure for America (and the rest of the world).

Start off by collecting students reactions to the words *Communist Manifesto* on a white board. What do they already know/think about Karl Marx? Then show this video clip (from 9:00 to 12:15). Define “manifesto” as a statement of principles of a particular group. What do students now anticipate *The Communist Manifesto* will state? Pass out this excerpt (from *The Chicago Daily Tribune*) and give students plenty of time to read it. Use the attached questions as a basis for discussion. (You may wish to follow up with another video clip, 7:21 to 9:11.)

This lesson idea meets state standards for high school World History & Geography (W.8, Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Consider), Economics (E.9-10), and English Language Arts (Reading: Informational Text).

**Lesson Idea—Korean War**

Often overlooked between World War II and the Vietnam War, the Korean War is significant for its place within the larger context of the Cold War. North Korean forces with the support of the Soviet Union invaded South Korea in June 1950. The United States as part of a larger contingent of United Nations forces came to the aid of South Korea. After quick advancement by the U.S. troops into North Korea, Chinese armies joined the fight to aid the North Koreans. The war would last three years and cost the United States 33,000 battle casualties and 103,000 wounded and missing. The South Koreans suffered 1 million casualties. The North Korean and Chinese casualties were estimated at 1.5 million.

Begin by showing your students a map of the Korean peninsula. Identify North and South Korea, the 38th parallel, and the surrounding nations. How does the Korean peninsula’s geographic location contribute to its importance at the beginning of the Cold War?

As a class, analyze “I’ll Make the Down Payment for You” using the primary source analysis tool. What is the main idea of this cartoon? What role does the USSR play in the image? How does this fit within the larger Cold War narrative? After working through this image, you may choose to have students analyze “Always Glad to Loan My Neighbor a Shovel!” on their own and compare it with the previous image. What argument do these two political cartoons make about China’s role in the Korean War?

Briefly provide a biographical summary of Gene Takahashi. Then play this clip from his oral history interview. Ask students to summarize his experience. Then share these images: Trench at O.P. Esther, O.P. Dagmar in background and Phillips (center) with two South Korean soldiers. Describe the experiences of soldiers who fought in the war.

This lesson idea meets state curriculum standards for 5th grade Social Studies (5.63) and high school U.S History & Geography (US.77).
**Lesson Idea— The Palmer Raids & The Red Scare**

In 1919, the U.S. Department of Justice and Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer conducted mass raids and deportations of suspected radicals and communists known as the Palmer Raids. The Palmer Raids and America’s attack on communism are a product of the 1920s Red Scare. The Red Scare refers to the time in America when members of the government and citizens feared that communism would take over the United States and radicals would overthrow the existing political structure. A portion of this hysteria developed after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia in 1917. Many immigrants, intellectuals, and people who spoke out against the government were targeted, deported, and often falsely accused of crimes.

Introduce students to the Red Scare using this [PowerPoint](#) and discuss the historical context of the events that took place. Students will also examine political cartoons of the Red Scare within the PowerPoint. What are the differences between communism and capitalism? How did the Russian Revolution effect America’s view of “radicals” and “communists”? What were some of the cultural and economic factors that led to the fear of communism in America after WWI?

After covering the Red Scare, have students explore newspaper clippings from the early twentieth century covering the Palmer Raids and communism. Depending on ability, in groups of three or more have students fill out the Thinking Like a Historian Checklist to analyze at least two newspaper articles. Bring the class together and each group will present their findings and answers to the checklist. For further review of the historical context of the Palmer Raids students can create a timeline using events that took place during the Red Scare. The timeline should span from the end of WWI until 1920 and include events such as the May Day riots, the Bolshevik Revolution, and labor strikes. Discuss how these events led to the Red Scare and the use of arrests and deportation. Also check out the [formal lesson plan](#) on the Palmer Raids, created by TPS-MTSU graduate assistant Ashli Burton.

This lesson idea meets state standards for high school U.S. History & Geography (US.36) and English and Language Arts (Reading: Information Texts).

**Featured Feature—Vietnam Primary Source Set & Links Guide**

America’s fear surrounding the spread of communism prompted its increased involvement in Vietnam. America hoped to stop the spread of communism in Southeast Asia and defeat North Vietnam and the Viet Cong. The increased involvement in the war effort stemmed from America’s deeply rooted fear that communism threatened democracy and would spread like wildfire—also known as the “domino theory.” High casualties during the war and social unrest at home caused many to protest the war effort.

Covering the Vietnam War and the controversies surrounding it can be difficult to teach or comprehend. The [Vietnam Primary Source Set and Links Guide](#) covers the Vietnam War from the beginning to the end using primary sources such as maps, oral histories, and images. The Vietnam Primary Source Set provides tools for students to use in order to analyze the war and its impact from the perspective of the United States, North and South Vietnam, and Cambodia. It includes maps to give students a visual of the division and location of Vietnam.

Teachers and students can explore the complicated and unique experience of Vietnam War veterans from the [Veterans History Project](#). Also included within the source set are lesson ideas for teachers and students.
Bayard Rustin’s Army

Bayard Rustin, deputy director, and Cleveland Robinson, chairman of Administrative Committee, March on Washington, Orlando Fernandez [1963]

Bayard Rustin spent his life fighting for the equal rights of all people. He helped organize the 1963 March on Washington and worked for decades with other activists to bring about social change for minorities through non-violent protest. As a young adult he took part in the Youth Communist League and eventually became chairman of the Socialist Democratic Party. How does Rustin’s career contrast with the way communists are presented in America? What reasons might Rustin and other minorities have for joining such organizations? Click here for more on Rustin and his supporters.

U.S. Communists & Labor Revolt


The above article outlines the aims of the Chicago Communist Party in 1920. Like many U.S. Communist Parties, members supported the overthrow of the American government and the end of privatized business. Industrial and agricultural workers in the early 20th century often joined or organized Communist parties to bring about fair treatment and wages in industry. Have students read and compare the content of the article with the title. According to the article, what are the aims of the Chicago Communist Party? Is it to “conquer & destroy” or are their actual issues in labor and industry that the U.S. government could address or rectify?

Victims of Communism

The Victims of Communism Memorial in Washington D.C., dedicated in 2007 by President George W. Bush, was initially passed for development under President Clinton in 1993. The statue was unveiled on the 20th anniversary of the tearing down of the Berlin Wall. The statue itself depicts the “goddess of democracy” and serves to honor all those who suffered under communist regimes. Have students investigate the memorial's Web site. What about the site stands out most? Does the site have any apparent bias regarding communism? What significance do the dates of development and unveiling have?

Cuban & American Relations

"What you need, man, is a revolution like mine" [1961]

The fight against Communism continued during the Cold War as tensions between the U.S., Soviet Union, and Cuba developed into a nuclear race. Award-winning political cartoonist for the Hartford Times Edmund S. Valtman, used his first-hand experience and political knowledge to depict and often scrutinize both the American government and communist regimes with a focus on Cuba’s relation to the rest of the world. Students can explore the various cartoons created by Valtman here.