TPS-MTSU will be partnering with Tennessee History Day to offer a series of workshops over the next few months. These workshops will explore the theme for 2017 and strategies for creating quality projects. Our July workshops will be in Chattanooga on the 15th, Greeneville on the 27th, and Crossville on the 28th. For more information or to register, contact Jennifer Core.

You can now access the materials created for and by teachers at our Labor History workshop and Reconstruction Institute held last summer. These “groups” started as private groups for participants, but have just been made publicly accessible through the TPS Teachers Network. If you haven’t already registered, just fill out some simple information and follow the email prompts.

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

The first colored senator and representatives - in the 41st and 42nd Congress of the United States [1872]  
The 15th Amendment, which enforced the right of black men to vote, resulted in the first African American legislators. For a great new documentary on this subject in Tennessee, click here.

THEME: THE NEW SOUTH

The “New South” period refers to the period after the effective end of Reconstruction in Tennessee (1870s) up to the beginning of the Progressive Era (1890s). This is a period during which history surveys usually focus on western migration across the American continent and the industrialization of the northeast and Midwest. For the South, this period was essential for the creation of new agricultural methods, rebuilding the structure of the economy, the growth of towns and cities, and the nature of the integration of black citizens into society.

This also being the topic of our summer institute, we will be creating a primary source set with more resources for teaching this time period. As a “starter kit” for New South primary sources, look at p. 4 of this issue—we decided to concentrate on maps for the ways they can capture this sense of growth, expansion, industry, and agriculture.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

• June 2 (Memphis) - “Teaching the Memphis Massacre” and “Crossing the Veil: W.E.B. DuBois in Tennessee” sessions at Shelby County Social Studies Institute. Open to Shelby County educators. Session times TBA.

• June 9-10 (Knoxville) - “Excerpting Text Documents” workshop at the East Tennessee History Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST. Attendance is mandatory for both days. To register, email Lisa Oakley.

• June 14-16 (Murfreesboro) - “Tennessee in the New South: Politics and Progressivism” Summer Institute at the Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County. Attendance is mandatory for all three days. For more information or to register, email Kira Duke.

• June 21 (Lebanon) - “Resources and Strategies for 4th and 5th Grade Social Studies” In-service workshop for Wilson County Schools from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

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

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Lesson Idea—The 1870 Constitutional Convention

Reconstruction effectively ended in Tennessee when the state adopted a new constitution in 1870, four years after readmittance to the Union after the Civil War. The 1870 state constitution granted suffrage to both black men and to ex-Confederates, brought about an end to radical Republican control of the state assembly under Governor Brownlow, and became the longest-running state constitution in the nation (existing unchanged until the 1950s). With its checks on the power of the governor, efforts to reduce state debt, and establishment of a poll tax (to bar poor blacks and whites from voting), this document set the stage for the New South period in Tennessee.

The 1870 constitutional convention that resulted in the new constitution stirred strong sentiment among Tennessee partisans of both the Republicans and Democrats. Have your students read two newspaper articles in reaction to the power struggles of the 1870 convention: the Nashville union and American of March 26, 1870, and The Union flag of Jonesborough of April 1, 1870 (excerpts here). Which political side does each article take? Are students surprised at how partisan the articles sound? How do these two articles show different perspectives of the same event? What are the main points of grievance? Can you tell from the tone of the articles which side “won”? Who are the losers here? Students can read the 1870 constitution here and write their own, more objective-sounding newspaper articles about it as an assignment.

This lesson idea meets state curriculum standards for high school U.S. History & Geography (US.2), U.S. Government & Civics (Primary Documents and Supporting Texts to Read), and English Language Arts (Writing).

Lesson Idea—Technology On Display

From May through October 1897, close to two million people visited the Tennessee Centennial Exposition in Nashville. Patterned after the world’s fairs that had become international sensations since London’s Great Exhibition in 1851, the Centennial Exposition highlighted the technological progress and social development that had taken place in Tennessee since its founding in 1796. Organizers clearly wanted to showcase Tennessee as a New South state, while also paying tribute to the state’s history.

Visitors to the exposition could learn more about new technologies at many of the buildings, including those devoted to machinery, agriculture, commerce, minerals and forestry, transportation, and railways. In addition, the amusement park section of the exposition—called “Vanity Fair” but also referred to as the “Midway”—invited visitors of all ages to explore displays featuring such new technologies as electricity and x-rays. (The giant see-saw pictured here was also one of the draws.)

A book published during the exposition, Tennessee Centennial Exposition, Nashville, Open Until November 1, 1897, includes a list of attractions in the “Vanity Fair” section of the exposition (pp. 36-37). Ask students to work in pairs to review the varied shows and displays listed. Each pair of students should try to place the amusements into these categories: Technological, Historical/Cultural, and Mysterious (for use when the students are not sure what the display or attraction is all about!). Next, ask the students to choose which three of the attractions they would most have liked to visit, had they been alive in 1897. Then, ask each pair to develop a set of 3-5 questions that they have about the attractions. Finally, ask each pair to come up with at least three types of attractions that they would display today, if a similar event were held in Nashville. What would they want to highlight about our state in 2016? Would their priorities be similar to those emphasized by Tennesseans during the New South period?

This lesson idea meets state curriculum standards for 5th grade Social Studies (5.27, 5.37, and 5.38).
HENRY GRADY: THE FATHER OF THE NEW SOUTH

Henry Grady was a journalist from Atlanta who served as the managing editor of the Atlanta Constitution in the 1880s. He is also known as a spokesman for the “New South.” This movement sought to encourage northern investment in the southern economy to increase industrialization in the region while also promoting diversified farming and returning the region to white Democratic control. Grady traveled throughout the south and northeast speaking about the New South, encouraging investment in the southern economy in order to boost recovery after the devastation of the Civil War.

To begin, ask your students to describe the southern economy prior to the Civil War. How did the war and Reconstruction impact the economy? What was the political climate in the region during Reconstruction?

Then divide your class into four groups. Each group will read an excerpt from Grady’s articles published in The New South: group 1 — Old vs. New South from last sentence on p. 144 to first lines of p. 147; group 2 — Industry Grows pp. 206-207; group 3 — Diversification in Agriculture p. 219 last paragraph to top of p. 222; group 4 — Political Power/Black Voting pp. 241-244. Have the students analyze these excerpts and discuss Grady’s position on these four themes. How do his positions seek to address some of the issues facing the region at that time? How do you think northern and southern audiences responded to his ideas? (Note: You may want to address the overt racism in the text prior to assigning the readings.)

Next have your students analyze the Harper’s Weekly illustration Queen of Industry. How does the imagery connect the economy of the Old South with that of the New South? What connections can be drawn between this illustration and Grady’s writings about the New South?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet curriculum standards for 8th grade Social Studies (8.91) and high school U.S. History & Geography (US.1 and US.3), as well as English Language Arts (Reading: Informational Text).

FEATURED FEATURE— DuBois in Rural Middle Tennessee

For most of the last year, TPS-MTSU has been working with Barbara Marks (Watertown High School) and Taylor McDaniel (Whitwell Middle School) to create a lesson plan exploring W.E.B. DuBois and his time in middle Tennessee while a student at Fisk University in Nashville. What started out as some very vague brainstorming during the 2015 summer institute has turned into a two-day lesson plan, two conference presentations, and a lot of very interesting conversations! Our 2016 summer institute participants will be visiting some of the key sites related to this lesson plan.

“Crossing the Veil: A Young W.E.B. DuBois in Rural Tennessee” focuses primarily on DuBois’s experience teaching at Wheeler School, a rural seasonal school just outside of Alexandria. Our investigative question for this lesson is, “According to DuBois, how did the ‘Veil’ hinder ‘Progress’ for African Americans?” DuBois speaks of the “Veil” and “Progress” extensively in Souls of Black Folk, which serves as the key primary source text in this lesson.

To help students understand the context for DuBois’s time in the area, we start the lesson with a primary source analysis and comparison of three sources that touch on major themes of the New South period. These sources include an excerpt of a speech given by Henry Grady, a political cartoon, and a photograph. Next students examine the state of rural education in the area. This first day builds a strong foundation for students to critically examine the points that DuBois makes about life and education in the South on the second day of the lesson.

To begin day two, teachers discuss DuBois’s life and experiences up to his time in Alexandria using this PowerPoint. Students take notes, as part of their later assignment is to compare his experiences in the three communities that he has lived in up to this point in his life. Next students read an excerpt from Souls of Black Folk, as well as excerpts from his “Niagara Movement” speech and the “Talented Tenth” essay. After reading these, students respond to a series of questions and discuss those in class. For homework, students write an essay responding to the investigative question. This lesson plan also has two extensions to further explore the early work of DuBois.
GROWTH OF A CITY

Perspective map of the city of Memphis, Tenn. 1887.
Memphis was profoundly impacted by yellow fever in 1873 and 1878 which led to the city charter being revoked in 1879. Have students examine this map and think about what conclusions we can draw about how the city recovered from those epidemics. What was the purpose of this map? You might also have students compare this map with an earlier perspective map from 1870.

AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATIONS

A preliminary agricultural map of Tennessee based on the distribution of geological formations. [1896, detail]
The first agricultural experiment station was established at UT-Knoxville in 1882 to research agricultural methods and educate farmers on best practices. One year later, the Hatch Act established such stations across the nation. Charles Dabney, Jr., became president of the UT station in 1887, and was later appointed assistant secretary of agriculture to President Cleveland. A staunch proponent of “New South” ideals, he advocated scientific education for economic advancement.

TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS

New enlarged scale railroad and county map of Tennessee showing every railroad station and post office in the state, 1888. [detail]
Have students locate their home county on this map. What towns are shown? Where is the post office located? What conclusions can we draw about the importance of the railroad at this time? How have county boundaries changed?

INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Perspective map of the city of Chattanooga, Tenn. 1886. [detail]
The New South was one of industry, fueled by northern investments and intense development of railroads. Cities like Chattanooga grew exponentially as a result. Have the students examine this perspective map of Chattanooga. Have the students identify three or more factors within this map that could affect industrial growth. How would this industrial growth affect the population of Chattanooga?