Early elementary teachers, we have a new lesson plan for you! Check out Trains and Travel—Then and Now by Suzanne Costner (Blount County Schools). This lesson plan uses children’s literature and Library of Congress photographs to examine how train travel has changed in the past century. Students in grades K-2 will learn about the importance of the Pullman Porters to train travel in the early 20th century.

Join us at the Tennessee Council for History Education conference in Nashville on October 1st. Registration is only $75 and includes a year’s membership to the National Council for History Education. TPS-MTSU will be presenting two sessions, one examining the legacy of the 14th Amendment, and another looking at Einstein’s Theory of Relativity (the theory of general relativity will be 100 years old in 2016!).

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

A scene on the frontiers as practiced by the “humane” British and their “worthy” allies / Wm. Charles, del et sculp. [1812, detail]

What is this cartoon accusing the British of doing? Why would these Indians be in league with the British?

THEME: WAR OF 1812 (VOL. II)

Three years ago, Tennessee kicked off its War of 1812 Bicentennial commemorations, and TPS-MTSU issued a newsletter on the topic that March. This year, the state continues its War of 1812-themed events, and so do we. Don’t forget: 2015 marks the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans (actually fought after the signing of the Treaty of Ghent)!

In this issue, we examine the story of how Tennessee came to be called “The Volunteer State,” the issue of British impressment of American seamen, and artistic representations of the burning of Washington. We also highlight a teacher-created lesson plan on “The Star-Spangled Banner” for 2nd and 4th graders.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- September 12 (Cookeville) - TN History Day and TPS Intermediate workshop at Tennessee Tech University. Workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email Jennifer Core.

- September 14 (Cleveland) - “Primary Source Strategies for the Primary Grades” workshop with Museum Center at Five Points from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET. To register, email Joy Key.

- September 15 (Knoxville) - “Citizenship in Action” workshop at the East Tennessee History Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET. To register, email Lisa Oakley.

- September 17 (Germantown) - TN History Day and TPS Intermediate workshop at St. George’s Independent School. Workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email Jennifer Core.

- September 18 (Collierville) - “Exploring the War of 1812” Open to Collierville Special School District. To register, contact the Morton Museum of Collierville.

- September 25 (Collierville) - “Tennessee and the War of 1812” in partnership with TN State Library & Archives from 8:30 to 3:30. To register, email Stacey Graham.
LESSON IDEA– THE CAPITAL IN FLAMES!

When the War of 1812 comes up in conversation, most Americans will mention British forces’ burning of the White House. It’s so ingrained in popular memory that President Barack Obama brought it up in a 2012 conversation with British Prime Minister David Cameron. Ask your students why this humiliating defeat looms so large in our national memory. What do they know about the burning of the White House (click here for another picture)? Was it the only building burned? Some artists depicted the whole town in flames. Even British artists depicted widespread destruction (click here for another picture). In truth, the British burned most of the government buildings in town, including the U.S. Capitol Building, and left the privately-owned buildings alone. The British attack was retaliation for the American torching of York, the capital of British Upper Canada. It may surprise your students to know that American forces set fire to government property as well, burning the Washington Navy Yard to prevent the British from confiscating American ships. What was burned and why can seem confusing. Maybe this confusion comes from illustrations of the event. Have your students analyze the pictures referenced in this article. What years were they painted? Were they created by eyewitnesses? What was the artists’ purpose in creating the art? Are there differences in the paintings? Why? Which ones match what your students remember about the event? This lesson idea meets TN curriculum standards for 8th grade Social Studies (8.43) and grade 6-8 Visual Art (3.1, 4.1, and 4.4).

[...burning of the Washington Navy Yard, 1814 [...]] [1815, detail]

LESSON IDEA– ARE YOU IMPRESSED?

Imagine you are a young American sailor on board an American merchant vessel, sailing the high seas. Officers from a British navy ship board your vessel and accuse you of being a deserter from a British ship. They drag you aboard their ship and lock you up in chains, and you’re forced to serve in the British navy for the next five years. I’m sorry to say that you are definitely impressed.

This issue of British naval officers forcibly removing American seamen from American vessels under the pretense of rounding up British deserters—known as impressment—was a sore one between the U.S. and Great Britain in the years after the American Revolution. Britain was absorbed in fighting the Napoleonic Wars with France and needed more men than it could supply. It had a long history of impressing British sailors from merchant ships into military duty. In a time when Brits and Americans looked and sounded extremely similar and citizenship was hard to prove, how was an American sailor to prove he was not a British deserter? Thomas Jefferson and James Madison spent both their presidencies denouncing this British practice of impressment (as it impacted American sailors). This became one of the boiling point issues that launched the U.S. into the War of 1812. Read an excerpt from Madison’s outraged letter to James Monroe concerning an impressment incident on board the American ship Chesapeake, which to him justified a consequent U.S. embargo (in 1807) against Great Britain.

Of course, many U.S. citizens were not convinced that Madison’s case was a cause for more war. Some in the northeast U.S. were opposed to the president’s embargo, ostensibly to punish the British, but economically more damaging to U.S. shipping. Read this broadside from Salem, Massachusetts. What is it trying to accomplish? It is also worth noting that Americans also engaged in impressment of British seamen, perhaps out of revenge. Have students debate whether impressment was justified from the point of view of the U.S. government, U.S. merchant sailors, the British government, and anti-war parties in the U.S.

This lesson idea meets TN curriculum standards for 8th grade Social Studies (8.43), CCSS for ELA (Reading: Informational Text).
Lesson Idea— Andrew Jackson and the Volunteer State

Tennessee earned its nickname “The Volunteer State” during the War of 1812 when men from across the state heeded the call from Governor William Blount to support the war efforts under the leadership of Major General Andrew Jackson. The Tennessee volunteers followed Jackson south to wage war against the “Red Sticks,” a faction of the Creek Indians. After the successful conclusion of the Creek Wars, Jackson led his troops further south to New Orleans. Jackson’s overwhelming victory against the British during the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, catapulted him on the national stage and would eventually lead him to the White House.

Begin by having your class analyze General Orders…[1812]. You may wish to divide your class into five or six groups and assign each group a small section of this document. What are the volunteers being asked to do? What should they bring with them? Where are they being sent? How does this compare with how troops are called up today? Next have your students read General Orders from 1814. How does this list of orders compare with the one from 1812? What conclusions can we draw about the actions of the militia in those two years? What modern-day comparisons can students draw from this document? You may wish to have students research the Creek Wars and complete a timeline of actions between the two sets of orders.

Finally, have students analyze The Hero of New Orleans and Gold Metal Presented to Jackson. Who is honoring Jackson? Why is Jackson being honored? Have students do some additional research to learn about the Battle of New Orleans. Why was this battle significant? What role did Jackson play in the battle?

This lesson idea meets TN curriculum standards for 4th & 8th grade Social Studies (4.49, 4.51, 8.43) and CCSS for ELA (Reading: Informational Text).

Featured Feature— Star Spangled Banner Lesson Plan

In the summer of 2014, our TPS-MTSU Educator-in-Residence, Blount County librarian Suzanne Costner, took on the task of writing a lesson plan for second and fourth grade that focused on our national anthem. In this lesson, students analyze a historical document and draw conclusions about what this document was for, who created it, and why. Students study the lyrics of the song and analyze the words and phrases for meaning and thematic elements. By the conclusion of the lesson, students are asked to explain the importance and significance of this song.

The lesson plan begins with students analyzing the manuscript copy of the poem written by Francis Scott Key. This will be challenging for many students, as it is written in cursive. Press your students to make observations about the document even if they can’t read the writing. Next, students examine a broadside of the poem that will be easier for them to read. After discussing the words to the poem, the teacher guides the students through a discussion of the historical context in which it was written. Day one concludes with students choosing their favorite phrases from the poem.

On the second day, students listen to three different performances of the song. They compare the versions and discuss how the differences impact the mood of the song. Students are challenged to think about where they hear the national anthem played and why it is played on those occasions. Extension activities are included for music and art classes.

Costner wrote about how the students at her school responded to this lesson plan in an article on the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation’s Southern Rambles blog last year: “Exploring “The Star Spangled Banner” with Fourth Graders—and Having a Teacher Evaluation at the Same Time.”
The Anti-War Movement

Plain calculations. When the people of a free country, who are not slaves of any [...] [1812, detail]

In this broadside, American farmers, mechanics, and laborers claim that the War of 1812 is an attempt to capture Canada. They claim the war will cost too many lives, taxes will be increased, and the government will hire French mercenaries. Why do you think this worried the laborers? Do you think they have a reasonable complaint? For more on the anti-war movement, take a look at this site.

The Fall of Washington

The fall of Washington—or Maddy in full flight [1814]

This political cartoon was published in London after the burning of the capital. Without reading the captions, have your students try to identify the people represented. How is James Madison represented here? Have the students describe what they think is happening in the scene.

Dolley Madison

Mrs. James Madison, (Dolly Payne) / from an original picture by Gilbert Stuart, in possession of Richard Cutts, Esq. M.D. Washington. [between 1804 and 1855]

Dolley Madison was the outgoing wife of the fourth U.S. president, but had actually started serving as White House hostess earlier (after Thomas Jefferson’s wife died). She visited each new member of Congress upon his arrival in Washington, D.C. During the War of 1812, Mrs. Madison endeared herself to the American people even more by grabbing the portrait of George Washington when the British invaded the capital city, and bringing the iconic painting to safety.

The Treaty of Ghent

Peace of Ghent 1814 and triumph of America / Mme. Plan- tou, Citizen of the United States pinxit ; Chataigner, sculpit. [1815, detail]

What is going on in this picture? This can’t be an actual representation of the signing of the Treaty of Ghent. The treaty, signed in Belgium in December 1814, ended the War of 1812. How might Americans’ belief in their victory have influenced this artwork? How might the outcome of the Battle of New Orleans have influenced this engraving? Check out this lesson idea about how news of the end of the war spread in the U.S.