As the new school year kicks off, we are gearing up for a variety of new workshops exploring a range of topics from world history to civil rights to the early republic. Be sure to check out our Upcoming Workshops page for our full schedule with locations, dates, and registration information.

Over the summer, Suzanne Costner, our 2014 Educator-in-Residence, has been hard at work developing new resources for the elementary level. Be sure to check out her lesson plans on the Gettysburg Address (fifth grade) and the Star-Spangled Banner (second and fourth grades). She has also developed resource guides aligned with the new state social studies standards for Kindergarten, first, second, and third grades. These will be posted to the Web site in the coming weeks.

“AWSOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

El mosquito Americano, Posada. [1910-1913]
Here students can read about malaria in the United States, as well as explore other music sheets about ‘that horrid mosquito.’ What other diseases can mosquitoes carry?

THEME: HISTORIC EPIDEMICS

In the 21st century, most Americans and other first-world citizens rarely have to worry about infectious diseases, thanks to modern medicine and sanitation. However, only a few short decades ago, epidemics of measles, polio, scarlet fever, and other now-rare diseases claimed the lives of thousands of Americans. One statistic from the Civil War claims that two out of every three soldiers who died during the war were struck down by disease. These diseases, which may seem old-fashioned today, are not gone from the world, or even from the U.S. Measles are making a comeback, and apparently there are some plague-carrying rodents in the Southwest to contend with. Learning about how disease has affected world medical knowledge, economics, religious customs, political policies, and humanitarian efforts will help arm us against the epidemics to come.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **August 19 (Dyersburg) & August 20 (Jackson)** — “Building a National History Day Project Using the Library of Congress” Workshop in partnership with Tennessee History Day from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email Jennifer Core.

- **September 11 (Murfreesboro)** — After-school Workshop Series “Teaching Strategies for Using Primary Sources in the K-5 Classroom” at the Heritage Center from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. To register, email Kira Duke.

- **September 16 (Memphis)** — “Citizenship and the Civil Rights Movement” at the National Civil Rights Museum from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email Lisa Oakley.

- **September 19 (Knoxville)** — “Teaching World History Using the Library of Congress” at the East Tennessee History Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST. To register, email Kira Duke.

- **September 25 (Cleveland)** — “Exploring TVA and Its Impact” at the Museum Center at Five Points from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST. To register, email Kira Duke.
Lesson Idea– The Spanish Flu

Most flu today only causes a miserable week, but at the end of WWI one awful strain of influenza spread throughout the world in a pandemic that may have killed between 30 and 50 million people, including hundreds of thousands in the U.S. Soldiers in training camps were particularly vulnerable.

The Stars and Stripes, the newspaper published for American troops in France during 1918 and 1919, makes several mentions of the influenza epidemic, including these articles comparing death rates in France and at home (pg. 1, 3rd column), describing efforts to prevent spreading the disease on troopships (pg. 1, 5th column), and giving directions for preventing contagion (pg. 7, 2nd column). Compare these articles with some from Chronicling America’s themed guide to discover how the flu was seen on the home front and abroad.

Have the class read the advice given on this notice from the Treasury Dept., one produced by the Washington D.C. health department, and in the Stars and Stripes article linked above.

Then read James Hughes’s description of the methods he saw used to avoid the flu. Were Hughes’s neighbors following government directions? How do these methods compare to what we know about avoiding infection today?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for high school U.S. History (U.S. 30), and CCSS standards in English/Language Arts (Reading: Informational Text).

Lesson Idea– The Black Death

The Black Death was the most deadly plague in human history. From 1346 to 1353, it wiped out one-third of Europe’s population, about 20 million people, and greatly affected the social and economic situations of medieval Europeans. Today, we can say that this plague was caused by the Yersinia pestis bacterium, carried by fleas infesting the rats on cargo ships from the eastern Mediterranean. Medieval people, however, were unaware of germ theory and had to develop their own explanations and even alter their world views in the face of such devastation.

Students can get an overview of the Black Death (also called the Bubonic Plague) here. Have students observe this map that shows the areas most affected by the Black Death. What do they notice about the geography of the places the plague spread? Are there any patterns in the way it spread across Europe? According to the map, where did the plague originate?

Next, have students look through this medieval block book to analyze illustrations of death. They may use the Primary Source Analysis Tool to record their observations about the drawings. As a final activity, students can ponder modern diseases and epidemics that affect large groups of people. How does a disease like AIDS affect certain populations? What are the economic effects on a person with cancer? Have them identify those diseases or viruses and challenge them to create their own illustrations representing those diseases.

For an account of the Black Death in Italy, have students read excerpts from Boccaccio’s The Decameron, first by highlighting and defining words that are unfamiliar to them. Students can find synonyms to replace those words before reading the entire account. Have students consider the following questions: How were family members affected by the death of their loved ones to the Black Death? List examples from the text. Why was the plague called “The Black Death”? What were some of the ways that people tried to protect themselves from the plague?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for grade 7 Social Studies (7.40) and CCSS in English/Language Arts: Literacy in Social Studies (RH 6-8.4 and 6-8.7).
LESSON IDEA—YELLOW FEVER

Named for the jaundice that affects many patients, yellow fever is a disease that is transmitted by infected mosquitoes. This disease has had a global impact, including the yellow fever epidemic of 1878 in New Orleans and Memphis. In the Mississippi Valley during that period, there were more than 120,000 cases of yellow fever and 30,000 deaths. Share the statistics of those affected in Tennessee with your students, and emphasize the panic of the quarantine that drove more than half of the citizens of Memphis away from the city. Share this 1873 newspaper obituary section from Memphis. Allow students to identify those who died from yellow fever and their ages, ranging from infants to the elderly. Students can explore the yellow fever timeline in America, which traces the history of yellow fever in America between 1495 and 2003. Students can also view a map of the outbreaks of the disease in America between 1793 and 1905. While vaccines have been successfully developed for this disease, yellow fever is still responsible for approximately 30,000 deaths per year, most occurring in Africa. Discuss the geographical significance of these outbreaks with your students. Why does yellow fever affect more people in tropical climates? If there is a vaccine available, why are there still tens of thousands of deaths caused by the disease every year? Why are vaccines so important? This lesson can be adapted to meet curriculum standards for grade 8 social studies (8.90) and United States History and Government (US.2).

FEATURED FEATURE—CHRONICLING AMERICA

Chronicling America is a partnership project between the Library of Congress and the National Endowment for the Humanities to make portions of America’s newspapers available digitally. This database includes newspapers from all fifty states spanning the period from 1836 to 1922. Currently, more than 7.9 million newspaper pages have been digitized, with more being added regularly. You can find Tennessee newspapers from Knoxville, Memphis, Bolivar, Nashville, Athens, and several other towns. Most of the Tennessee newspapers selected thus far run from the early 1860s through the 1880s. This database is very user-friendly with multiple search features. You can execute a broad search from the database’s home page, or you can choose from a variety of advanced searching features to narrow your search. Using the advanced search page is recommended by the TPS-MTSU staff to save time and to find the most pertinent items. After you have entered your search term, the database will highlight in red where your term appears on the newspaper pages that show up in your results list. You can easily zoom in to read the text. If you want to print an item, zoom in and then click on the small scissors in the top of the navigation box. This will clip the section you selected and allow you to print or download that section. If you are printing an item that takes up a good deal of vertical space, you may need to clip multiple images and piece the item back together for printing purposes. Chronicling America also offers a newspaper directory that includes most papers printed in the United States since 1690. This directory can help you identify which library or archive holds copies of the paper and is a wonderful research guide.
Iron Lung

Iron lung (c. 1933) used to "breathe" for polio patients until 1955 when polio vaccine became available is located in the Mobile Medical Museum, Mobile, Alabama [2010]

Originally developed to treat coal gas poisoning, the iron lung was first used clinically in Boston in 1928 to save a young girl suffering from polio. Its use escalated during the polio outbreaks of the 1940s and 1950s.

Typhus Vaccine

Packing typhus vaccine for shipment. Here is enough vaccine to inoculate a town of 15,000 population. USPHS (United States Public Health Service) Rocky Mountain Laboratory, Hamilton, Montana [1942]

Typhus is a disease caused by bacteria and spread to humans by lice. While this disease has been responsible for the deaths of millions of people since the 15th century, it is now treatable with both a vaccine and antibiotics. The contents shown on the table in this photograph provide enough medication to vaccinate 15,000 people for typhus.

Unmentionable Diseases

We've fought in the open - bubonic plague, yellow fever, tuberculosis--now venereal diseases / H. Dewitt Welsh, [1918]

Soldiers during the Great War contracted sexually transmitted diseases, in addition to the Spanish flu. Have students examine this poster and identify the representations of each disease listed. Who is this poster addressing and why? What might the female and the vulture represent?

The End of Smallpox

Is your child vaccinated Vaccination prevents smallpox - Chicago Department of Health, [Between 1936 and 1941]

Have your students heard of smallpox? Can they describe the symptoms? The World Health Organization declared smallpox the first disease to be completely eradicated on May 8, 1980. This was accomplished by intensive world-wide vaccination program starting in the 1950s. People who received the vaccine developed a small scar at the injection site. Do any of your students know a grandparent or great grandparent who was vaccinated?