TEACHING with PRIMARY SOURCES—MTSU
NEWSLETTER: SEPTEMBER 2013

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.

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NEWS

• Join TPS-MTSU at the Tennessee Council for History Education Conference on October 1 in Nashville. We will be presenting two new literacy-based activities. You can find more information about the conference at http://www.tnche.com/Conference.htm.

• It is not too late to register for our upcoming workshop exploring the Civil War in Chattanooga on October 10th at the Chattanooga Convention Center! To register, email kira.duke@mtsu.edu. For more information on other events related to the Tennessee Civil War Sesquicentennial Signature Event, click here.

• TPS-MTSU has updated all of our lesson plans to reflect the new TN social studies standards. Click here to browse.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

• September 13—(Knoxville) “Using Primary Sources to Address Common Core” at the East Tennessee History Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST. To register email oakley@easttnhistory.org.

• September 14—(Collierville) "The Civil War Experience in West Tennessee" Workshop held in partnership with Morton Museum of Collierville at Lucius E. and Elsie C. Burch, Jr. Library in Collierville from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Click here for more information. To register, email museum@ci.collierville.tn.us or call (901) 457-2650.

• September 26—(Murfreesboro) “Primary Sources and Literacy-Based Activities” at the Heritage Center from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Open to middle and high school teachers. To register, email kira.duke@mtsu.edu

• September 28—(Nashville) “Primary Sources, the Library of Congress, the Common Core Language Arts, and YOU: The Geography Connection” Workshop at the Martin Professional Development Center from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Open to members of TN Geographic Alliance—Nashville chapter.

THEME: ECONOMICS

What do Sanborn maps, Crisco, and summer camps have in common? The answer is: economics! In this issue you will see how many different aspects of social, cultural, and political life all overlap with the study of economics. Yes, economics is about supply and demand and fiscal policy, but it’s also about the creativity of advertisers, advances in technology, and the buying habits of average people.

In other words, economics is a truly multidisciplinary subject that can reach across classroom boundaries and make real-world connections for students. For instance, how much do their families spend on food in a given week? How does it compare to this chart from 1877? Or, what kind of product placement do students see around their schools?

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Lesson Idea – Economy in the Landscape

Studying a town or city’s geography reveals important aspects of that community’s economy. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and “birds eye view” maps show spatial patterns, infrastructure, and access to resources. When used together, these sources allow students to explore the relationship between the various sectors of the economy, the importance of transportation, and a community’s connection to the regional, state, or national economy.

In this lesson, students will compare Durham, North Carolina, and Ocilla, Georgia, by using two kinds of maps (Durham: Sanborn and panoramic; Ocilla: Sanborn and panoramic). Divide students into groups of four or five and have them study each map. How is agriculture reflected on town landscapes? What types of transportation appear on the maps (i.e. livery, railroad, etc.)? How does transportation connect Durham and Ocilla to broader economies (general stores, hotels, post offices, etc.)? How does each town’s layout and population reflect different commercial, industrial, and residential districts? Have the groups create an imaginary town and draw a map and write an economic profile for it. Students should pay special attention to the region’s economy, town’s population, and relation to transportation routes.

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for Social Studies grades 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8 and High School U.S. History Era 6: Industrial Development of the United States (1870-1900) (Standard 2: Economics and Standard 3: Geography).

Lesson Idea – The Story of Crisco

Upton Sinclair’s The Jungle profoundly influenced the regulation of food production in this country. The graphic depiction of how meat and meat-related products were produced had a significant impact on how consumers viewed these products. The decline in the use of lard is a great example of how consumers changed their purchasing habits. Proctor and Gamble saw this trend and the need for a new cooking product. The company created Crisco and quickly began marketing it as a way to make food “more digestible.” You can learn more about this from NPR’s story “Who Killed Lard?”

Begin by having students read and discuss the last paragraph of chapter 9 in The Jungle. How might this have affected the market for lard? Next have students read pages 6 and 7 of The Why’s of Cooking. What stands out to them in this section? Why do you think Proctor and Gamble included this information in a cookbook? Have students analyze the picture of the production area on page 6. How do the workers compare with the workers described in The Jungle? How might this image be considered a marketing tool? How would knowing how the product was created be used to increase consumer consumption of the product?

Next have students read pages 2 and 10 of The Story of Crisco. How does this add to our understanding of the marketing of Crisco? How does this add to the argument that Crisco is better for you than lard?

After discussing each excerpt, ask students what surprises them most about these sources and their discussion. Why would Proctor and Gamble create cookbooks to market Crisco? What other strategies might they have employed to increase consumption of Crisco? What other products can students think of that share a similar history?

The lesson can be adapted to meet curriculum standards for high school Economics (Supply and Demand; Market Structures) and middle and high school English/Language Arts Common Core (Reading Informational Texts; Speaking and Listening).
Lesson Idea—The Summer Camp Store

Did any of your students attend summer camp? If so, ask them where they went to camp and what they did. If they went to overnight camp, they may well have brought some spending money with them to use at the camp store, or “trading post.” What kinds of items are for sale at camp stores?

Back in 1920, when the Girl Scouts was less than a decade old, the organization’s national headquarters published a guide outlining how to establish and run summer camps for Girl Scouts. Campward Ho! A Manual for Girls Scout Camps contained detailed information about all aspects of Girl Scout camp. The chapter about “Records and Accounts” included a sample daily and monthly account for a camp store, or “canteen.”

Print copies of “The Camp Canteen” page for all of your students. First ask them what four items were for sale at the canteen, according to the monthly wholesale account, which lists the items that the canteen director stocked for the store. Then ask your students which two items were listed in the daily account. How much did an apple cost? What about a chocolate bar? Which item sold better during the week of July 6-11? Which item brought in more money during that week? Under the “Notes” section, how did the canteen director describe the chocolate bars? Do you think she would buy that kind again?

Finally, although computerized today, similar accounts of what is bought and sold are always kept by stores big and small. Why?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for grades 3-5 Social Studies (Economics) and Common Core State Standards for grades 3-5 English/Language Arts (Reading: Informational Text).

Featured Feature—Transition to a Consumer Society

The 1920s were called the “Roaring 20s” for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the notable growth in consumer spending. The explosion of consumer goods cranked out by the manufacturing sector provided cars, home appliances, new fashions, and other household goods on an unprecedented scale. Advances in technology changed how goods were made, marketed, and sold. New businesses and organizations were created to help boost entrepreneurship and consumerism, as well as to advocate for consumer safety and frugality.

This economic, social, and political climate comes to life through the Prosperity and Thrift: The Coolidge Era and the Consumer Economy, 1921-1929 collection. Explore photographs, letters, trade publications, magazines, advertisements, films, and more—like “Feminine Instincts and Buying Psychology,” the theater commercial “Buy an Electric Refrigerator,” this early automobile service station, “Growth of Motor Demand,” or “Ten Financial Commandments.” Teachers and older students can learn about the Coolidge Era through a compact online presentation, “Introduction to Prosperity and Thrift,” which has sections such as “Merchandising and Advertising,” “African Americans and Consumerism,” and “Poverty in the 1920s.” The collection also contains a “Guide to People, Organizations, and Topics in Prosperity and Thrift,” a glossary with brief readable entries that supports content knowledge and primary source understanding. And don’t forget the wealth of resources for teachers, covering topics from labor to presidential image to the “Playground Movement,” in the Collection Connections for this collection.
**Wealth of Nations**

Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* was first published in 1776 and several additional editions were later published during his lifetime. How does this work inform our understanding of modern-day economic systems? What does this work tell us about labor, wages, and productivity? Do you think his theories still apply today?

**Bank Notes**

Before 1860, American banks printed their own currencies, resulting in 8,000 different kinds of money. As bank notes traveled throughout the country, their values altered. Because there was no standard currency, commercial transactions were difficult. What do the images and typography tell you about the city and state the bill was printed in? What does the iconography (pictures and symbols) say about the region’s economy? Learn more from the NPR story “The Birth of the Dollar Bill.”

**Maxwell House Coffee Plants**

This map shows the six plants that produced Maxwell House coffee in 1925. What parts of the country did not have a Maxwell House plant? Which plants do you think supplied those regions? Did you know that Maxwell House coffee originated in Nashville in 1892?

**Gilded Age Boom & Bust**

After the Civil War, the U.S. experienced expansion in railroads, banking, and other corporations. A collapse in the railroad sector and the depressing of silver coinage led in part to the Panic of 1873, which caused a lengthy depression. In the cartoon, what exactly is being busted? Why does the clocktower say, “Moral: I told you so?”