WELCOME!

Teaching with Primary Sources across Tennessee, administered by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University, 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

- World history teachers, are you having a hard time finding primary sources on the Library of Congress Web site? We have a great new tool to help you find primary sources, teaching materials, videos, and much more. The new World History Links Guide is a three-page PDF full of suggestions of places to start your search.

- The Teaching with Primary Sources Across Tennessee Web site has a new look! If you have not visited our site lately, check it out and let us know what you think.

- Remember if you have suggestions for future newsletter themes, lesson plans, or tools you would like to see from us, let us know. Suggestions can be posted on our Facebook page or emailed to us. Let us know what resources you need!

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

**Historic Electric City sign, restored in 2008, shines again. Scranton, Pennsylvania [2008 May 27]**

Why was Scranton called the electric city? What other cities might you call electric cities?

THEME: ELECTRICITY

This month’s newsletter explores a variety of fascinating primary sources related to electricity. Electricity plays a vital role in our everyday lives. Few of us can imagine a world without electricity to power our lights, appliances, and, for some, automobiles. The ability to understand and harness this energy to power our homes, communities, and cities has had a profound impact on humankind.

The Library of Congress collections contain a wide variety of sources that can be used to explore electricity. These sources can be used to challenge students to think about how electrical energy is generated and used, the cultural implications of how this affected individual lives, and the evolution of electricity and its effects on historical events.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **November 2**—(Nashville) Tennessee Council for History Education conference at Scarritt Bennett Center. Sessions at 8:45 a.m. and 11:05 a.m.

- **November 3**—(Murfreesboro) “Teaching Murfreesboro History Using Primary Sources from the Library of Congress” Workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, contact Kira Duke.

- **November 7**—(Maynardville) “Introduction to Teaching with Primary Sources” Workshop from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. EST for Union County educators.

- **November 12**—(Murfreesboro) Tennessee Science Teachers Association conference. Session at 8 a.m.

- **December 1**—(Nashville) Tennessee Education Technology Conference. Session at 8 a.m.

Teaching with Primary Sources is a program of the Library of Congress, and is administered in Tennessee by the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University.
LESSON IDEA—TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY – HYDROELECTRIC POWER

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is the largest public power company in the United States. A creation of the New Deal, the Tennessee Valley Authority Act was signed by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on May 18, 1933, and transformed the Tennessee Valley by providing electricity and jobs to one of the more economically disadvantaged areas in the country.

Introduce the subject of hydroelectricity to the class. Discuss how electricity is produced using water power and its advantages (renewable resource) and disadvantages (only used in areas with a water source). Then as a class come up with a small group of questions about how TVA produces hydroelectricity to explore further. Have the children read the Web site “America’s Story from America’s Library - Tennessee Valley” and look at Tennessee Valley Area - a pictorial map. (Click here for a PDF of the map.)

Show the class the following materials to demonstrate how hydroelectric dams work: 1) Douglas Dam Construction, Tennessee, Tennessee Valley Authority, 2) Wheeler Dam, Alabama - Generator, Tennessee Valley Authority, 3) Wheeler Dam, Alabama (Tennessee Valley Authority) - Lock. Ask students how the elements in each image plays a role in the production of hydroelectricity.

This lesson can be adapted to meet curriculum standards for Grades 4 and 5 Science (Embedded Technology and Engineering, Energy), Grades 5 and 6 Science (Standards 10, 11, 12).

LESSON IDEA—ELECTRICITY AND CULTURE

Since first harnessed for use in American households in the late 19th century, electricity has been depicted in American culture in various ways: as a vessel of liberation uniting the world, a means of professional improvement through technical education, a critical war resource that must be conserved during WWII, or a way to enhance one's life through labor-saving appliances. These depictions both reflected and shaped public perception of the role of electricity in modern life.

Have students take a look at the following images: Electricity and Electrical Appliances from 1892, Enlist in the Signal Corps, Electrical Advertisers, and "Reddy" Making Electricity. Ask the student to choose the image they find the most compelling. Ask students to consider the following: When was the image created? How many details or elements can be seen? What do these elements represent? What message is being conveyed? Who is the intended audience? What does the image say about the people of the time period in which it was created? Is the image effective as a means of persuasion? How did the use of electricity, as represented in the selected image, change things? Then, have students, working either individually or in groups, put themselves into the role of the person who created the poster, display, advertisement, or illustration in order to "pitch" their image to a fictional advertising agency boss. This exercise could take the form of a skit, poster, computer presentation, or short essay. Once completed, have students share their projects with the class.

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for Grade 5 social studies (Standard 1: Culture and Standard 5: History), high school U.S. History (Standard 5: History), and Grades 6-8 English/Language Arts (Standard 7: Media).
Lesson Idea – Consuming Electricity

Electricity revolutionized the American home. It freed women, who have traditionally done most of the housework, from hours of backbreaking work. While women ultimately welcomed the labor-saving aspects of electricity, they initially had some reservations. They were concerned about both safety and cost. Also, while thrilled to be rid of the worst aspects of household manual labor (such as washing clothes), many still felt a sense of loss when electricity replaced hands-on work in which they had taken pride. (The illustration at left shows how manufacturers sought to appeal to women through elegant images of women using electrical devices.) Katie Persons (b. 1846) of Palestine, Texas, hinted at some of these concerns when she recalled the transition from kerosene lamps to electric lights. “We housekeepers took great pride in keeping our [kerosene] lamps filled and burning,” she commented during the Great Depression. “Now we only have to push a button and there is your light, with no work—but extra cost,” she added. In her book Selling Mrs. Consumer (1929), home economist Christine Frederick strongly advocated the use of electrical appliances and instructed manufacturers on how they could better meet the needs of women. Have students read and discuss the sections on “The Cost of Appliance Per Use – Unit” and “Equipment in Relation to Household Budgets” (click on “Next Image” to turn pages). How did Frederick counter women’s claims that electrical devices were too expensive? Next, have students read the sections on “Education in the Effective Use of the Appliance” and “Adaptation from Hand to Power” (click on “Next Image” to turn pages). How might manufacturers help women make the transition from hand work to machine work, according to Frederick?

Have students work in pairs to list all of the electrical appliances in their homes. What is the cost of operating these devices? (Have students bring in their household’s electric bill or research online the average amount a Tennessee family spends on electricity per month.) Next to each type of equipment, have students write down which family member uses the item the most. Finally, have them indicate which is the newest device or appliance in their household. Was it expensive? What did it replace?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for high school U.S. History – Era 7: Emergence of Modern America (1890-1930), Consumer Economics, and Personal Finance.

Featured Feature – Edison’s Films and Sound Recordings

Have you ever wondered how Thomas Edison spent a day (including a trip to the incandescent light factory)? Or what President McKinley’s funeral procession looked like? Or want to hear a version of “The Three Bears,” as performed by Edna Bailey? Thanks to the man who brought us the electric light bulb, we can also see and hear recordings from the turn of the century through the Inventing Entertainment: The Early Motion Pictures and Sound Recordings of the Edison Companies collection. These recordings can be downloaded in several formats for use in the classroom. When the motion picture recordings are downloaded to a computer and played outside of a Web browser (such as QuickTime or Windows Media Player), they can be maximized to view the video clips easier in the classroom.

This collection home page contains a biography of Thomas Alva Edison, a timeline of Edison’s life and his motion picture and sound recording companies, and special description pages for the motion pictures and recorded sound collections. Be sure to check out Collection Connections for several multi-curricular suggestions (History, Critical Thinking, Arts & Humanities) on how you can incorporate these wonderful recordings into your classroom.
BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE

The electric light in houses—laying the electrical tubes / drawn by W.P. Snyder. [1882]

What elements of electric infrastructure do you see in this drawing? What are electric tubes? Do we have electric tubes today? How did these elements work to carry electricity to multiple homes and businesses? Ask students to look around their homes. What electrical infrastructure do they see?

ADVERTISING NEW TECHNOLOGY

Truth is mighty and must prevail - electricity [From Duke University]

With the popularity of electricity comes a variety of new products to advertise. Do we still have similar items today? How do we entice consumers to use new technologies today? Do these items still look the same today?

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

President Coolidge illuminating the community Christmas tree, which has been erected on the Monument Grounds, south of the White House [1923]

In this image of the first National Christmas Tree, President Coolidge illuminated 3000 electric lights. How did he do that? How do the lights look compared to modern lights? How many lights do you think will be on the 2011 tree? To learn more, see the feature “Who invented electric Christmas lights?” in Everyday Mysteries: Fun Science Facts from the Library of Congress.

FIRST BATTERY

[Diagram of the first battery, which was made of alternating metal layers and saline-soaked leather pads, and proved electricity is caused by contact with dissimilar metals] [published 1800]

How did this battery work? How might this type of battery been used in the nineteenth century? How does this battery compare with batteries today? How do modern batteries conduct electricity? Ask students to create a diagram of modern batteries and compare the two.