The Library of Congress has revamped their homepage! You will now find links to key digital collections, Webcasts, and other helpful resources right on the homepage. If you have not visited the Web site recently, take a few minutes to explore the new design and refamiliarize yourself with your favorite features.

First announcement for TPS-TN Summer Institute: we will be holding our second annual TPS-TN Summer Institute in July 2011 (for specific dates, stay tuned for upcoming announcements). The theme is “Divided Tennessee,” and will examine the divided loyalties among Tennesseans in all parts of the state during the early years of the Civil War. The institute will take place in Middle Tennessee, and will include three days of learning content, visiting historic sites, and creating classroom activities.

**Upcoming Events:**
- **January 20** (Dyersburg)-TPS-Tennessee History Day joint workshop, Dyersburg State Community College, 9 a.m.—3 p.m. To register, email Kelly Wilkerson.
- **January 25** (Knoxville)-introductory TPS workshop, East Tennessee History Center, 10 a.m.—3 p.m. EST. To register, email Lisa Oakley.
- **January 26** (Knoxville)-“Next steps” TPS workshop, East Tennessee History Center, 10 a.m.—3 p.m. EST. To register, email Lisa Oakley.

**Theme: The Ancient World**

The ancient world captures our fascination through its monumental buildings (that are thousands of years old), its epic literature (which influence most subsequent literature), and its major civilizations that would influence the development of the West and East as they are today. This issue looks at what’s available on the Library of Congress Web site that reveals the legacy of the ancient world—including Egypt, Greece, Rome, and the Middle East.

The history and culture of ancient societies can be used to teach a variety of subjects, particularly 6th grade social studies and other World History courses. For more lesson ideas on world cultures, check out our previous newsletter from September 2009.

**“Awesome” Source of the Month:**

Ancient history / Rea Irvin. [c. 1913]

This magazine cover was created in 1913, but it imitates a style that dates back over 2000 years. The clothing, weapons, and even artistic style depicted are clearly drawn from Greek and Roman sources. Why would women’s rights groups in 1913 want to use Greek and Roman imagery? What was the status of women’s rights in ancient Greece? Is there anything in the picture that belongs more to 1913 than to A.D. CXCIX?
Lesson Idea—Examining Religious Texts & Artifacts

Religion has played a key role in the development of cultures around the globe. While religious beliefs and traditions may vary depending on region or peoples, the centrality of religion provides a common lens that we can use to study early civilizations. The Library of Congress has created several wonderful collections and online exhibitions that house many unique religious artifacts and texts representing a wide range of the world’s religions.

Begin by having students explore the online exhibition World Treasures of the Library of Congress: Beginnings. What major world religions can be identified in this exhibition? Examine the artifacts. What do the artifacts tell you about each religion? Use a primary source analysis guide to record the students’ observations.

Next have students explore Scrolls from the Dead Sea, the Library of Congress Bible Collection, and Selections of Arabic, Persian and Ottoman Calligraphy. What religions do these texts represent? How do these texts compare with religious texts previously identified? What can we deduce about the development of the written word in each of these cultures?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet Tennessee state standards for Social Studies grade 6 (Standard 1—Culture, 5—History).

Lesson Idea—Be An Egyptian Archaeologist!

Numerous examples of ancient Egyptian material culture have survived thousands of years and are still preserved today. The Library of Congress has many photographs of ancient Egyptian buildings, sculptures, artifacts, and hieroglyphics that can help students learn about ancient Egyptian culture.

Have students search the Matson (G. Eric and Edith) Photograph Collection (keyword: Egypt) for photographs of ancient Egyptian material culture, or students can select one of the following images:

- Egypt. Sakkara. The step pyramid with temple excavations in foreground.
- Egypt. Memphis. The Sphinx of Memphis (see photo at right)
- Egypt. Cairo. King Tutankhamun’s coffin
- Abou Simbel
- Interior court, Temple of Medinet Habu, Thebes

Have students pretend they are archaeologists. The photograph that each student selects is the archological site or artifact s/he has discovered. First, have students locate their discoveries on the Egypt and Arabia petraea map. Then have students try to find additional images of their sites or artifacts by searching the Prints & Photographs Online Catalog. Students may also want to search the Internet to find additional information. Then, each student can use the photographs and map to make an illustrated journal entry describing the site or artifact in as much detail as possible. Where was it? What does it look like? What was it used for? Are there any hieroglyphics? Have students get into groups and share their journal entries with each other.

As an additional activity, students can work in groups and try to decipher hieroglyphics, such as the ones featured in the images shown here, here, and here. Try using helpful Web sites, such as hieroglyphs.net or the chart shown here. Students can even use the name translator on hieroglyphs.net to see their name spelled in hieroglyphics. Have students print out the translations of their names. See if other students can decipher them!

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for Social Studies grade 6 (Standard 1 - Culture, 3 - Geography, and 5 - History).
Lesson Idea– The Parthenon and Neo-Classical Architecture

The architectural style pioneered by the Greeks and continued by the Romans is called “classical” today. When the U.S. was created, Thomas Jefferson and other Founding Fathers were inspired by Greek and Roman ideals of democracy and citizenship. This inspiration spilled over into a new building type, called "neo-classical," that adopts several elements from ancient buildings and incorporates them into a dignified, monumental style. Jefferson built his own house, Monticello, in this style. Both the U.S. Capitol and the Tennessee State Capitol are beautiful examples of neo-classical buildings.

Tennesseans have a proud classical heritage. Think of your county courthouse or your local bank or post office. Do they have large, round columns on the front? Do they have pediments in the shape of a wide isosceles triangle? Do they have domes on top? If so, the architect(s) were undoubtedly inspired by the neo-classical style. This style is often used for government and university buildings because of its formal, impressive look and association with classical learning. However, neo-classical elements are also a common part of residential architecture. For example, The Hermitage, the home of Andrew Jackson, and the Driver-Hunt-Phelan House in Memphis were both built in the Greek Revival style, which was popular in the decades before the Civil War. What are the neo-classical buildings in your community? Identify neo-classical elements in local architecture by using the Classical/Colonial visual survey form.

Perhaps the most famous neo-classical building in Tennessee is the Parthenon, located in Centennial Park in Nashville. The Parthenon is a full-scale replica of a classical building—i.e., the Parthenon that has stood on the Acropolis in Athens, Greece for almost 2500 years. If you live near Nashville, consider taking students to the Parthenon for an unforgettable experience. If you cannot see it in person, show students the images from the Parthenon’s Web site, as well as here and here. Also, search “Parthenon” in Prints and Photographs and American Memory for more images of both Parthenons. Have students identify the elements of classical architecture, using the visual survey form and this guide (made for the U.S. Capitol but filled with helpful diagrams for any neo-classical building). For more Greek and Roman architecture, refer to our primary source set.

These ideas meet curriculum standards for grade 6 World History (era 3) and grades 6-8 Visual Art (standards 4.0 and 5.0). For more ideas, select one of the lesson plans on the Educational Resources page, or use the lesson plan below.

Featured Feature– Lesson Plan on the Minerva Mosaic

The Minerva Mosaic is a grand mosaic in the Great Hall of the Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. The American artist Elihu Vedder created it for the Library in 1896, as well as several smaller murals—all of them meant to portray certain virtues through symbolism. You can view them by taking the Library’s virtual tour; see the Great Hall East side for the mosaic and the Bibles Gallery for the murals.

MyLOC.gov has created a lesson plan that focuses on the mosaic of Minerva, Roman goddess of wisdom and learning, called “The Minerva Mosaic of the Library of Congress: Taking a Closer Look.” This lesson combines a detailed primary source examination with a discussion of symbolism and what larger themes the mosaic is portraying. It includes a Teachers Guide that lists all the symbols and their various meanings.

The lesson plan is geared towards 4th—8th graders, and can be adapted to meet the following Tennessee curriculum standards: grade 6 Social Studies (6.3.spi.17). You can extend the lesson by reading myths about Minerva and the Gorgons (such as this one).
Temple Carved into Rock

El Khazne, Petra [between 1932 and 1946]
In the movie Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade, the Holy Grail is found in this temple, which is actually a real site called Petra in modern Jordan. Search “Petra” in the Prints and Photographs Online Catalog for plenty more stunning views of this fascinating site. How does it illustrate a blending of eastern and western cultures?

Earliest Form of Writing

Cuneiform tablet [2039 B.C.; detail]
Cuneiform is an ancient form of writing in which a reed is pressed into soft clay. This particular tablet is from ancient Sumeria and records wages. What are the dominant shapes written onto the tablet? Why were these shapes used? Compared to Egyptian hieroglyphics, which were written on walls, what are the benefits of writing on clay tablets? For more teaching ideas, see cuneiform collection connections.

Ancient Astronomy

Planetary systems of Ptolemy, the Egyptians, Tycho Brahe, and Copernicus/ G. Heck, dirt. ; Henry Winkles sculp. [1851; detail]
Ptolemy was a Roman-Egyptian astronomer who lived in the 2nd century A.D. His calculations of planetary positions and spherical orbits dominated western astronomy until Copernicus in the 16th century, who was the first to place the sun at the center of the solar system. Download the TIFF version of this image (so you can read the words) and decide which models are heliocentric and which are geocentric.

What Have the Romans Ever Done for Us?

Roman bridge over the Gard, constructed by Agrippa, Nîmes, France [between ca. 1890 and ca. 1900]
In answer to the question, “What have the Romans ever done for us?” the first answer that comes to mind is “the aqueduct.” (To see this Monty Python clip, click here.) What is the purpose of an aqueduct? This particular aqueduct, better known as the Pont du Gard, has been standing near Nîmes, France, since the 1st century A.D.