TEACHING with PRIMARY SOURCES Across TENNESSEE
NEWSLETTER: October 2009

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.
Web site: www.mtsu.edu/tps Contact: sgraham@mtsu.edu or (615) 898-2947

NEWS
- September 15—October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month. See images and exhibits relating to Hispanic culture at the Library’s special site and share with your students.
- October is National Disability Employment Awareness month, too. Read profiles of famous Americans who have not been limited by their disabilities on this special Web page.
- The Library of Congress has just kicked off a fascinating project called “The Exquisite Corpse,” which you can find on the Read.gov Web site. Watch as a story is written, a chapter every two weeks, by well-known children’s book authors and illustrators.

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

Spectators at Pittsburg[sic]-Detroit game, [1909]
What are these men doing and why? Do people today go to such lengths at sporting events?

OCTOBER’S THEME: SPORTS!
The Library of Congress Web site contains thousands of primary sources pertaining to many different kinds of sports through the ages. (See p. 2 for a box of suggested search terms so you can start looking!) Sports is a topic with broad appeal among K-12 students, college students, and, of course, educators themselves, and can be used to teach history, math, culture, literature, and physical education. Among the sports resources on loc.gov, the most by far belong to baseball, due to its status as “America’s pastime.” In fact, October’s issue is dedicated to sports precisely because of the World Series. Who will win this year?

BASEBALL MYSTERY:
The ball game / Thomas A. Edison, Inc. [1898]
Watch this video clip (Note: if you download the clip, you can view it larger). Pay close attention to the players and the direction they are running. Does it appear that they are running the bases clockwise or counterclockwise? What do you think? Let us know!

UPCOMING EVENTS:
- October 1: Webcast through ITSC at MTSU, “Focus on Math, Technology and Engineering,” 3:30—4:30 p.m. Email me for PowerPoint.
- October 13-17 (Nashville) - National Trust for Historic Preservation 2009 conference (learn more)
- October 18 (Knoxville) - “Next Steps” workshop for advanced teachers, East Tennessee Historical Society, 1—4 p.m.
- October 19 (Knoxville) - “Basic” workshop, ETHS, 10 a.m.—1 p.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 IDEAS—SPORTS DESEGREGATION

Throughout the 20th century, different sporting events (as well as the country itself) underwent desegregation. Some great examples of athletes who were in the vanguard of the desegregation movement in America are Jack Johnson, Paul Robeson, Jesse Owens, Althea Gibson, Wilt Chamberlain, Jackie Robinson, and Tennessee’s own Wilma Rudolph (see p. 4). The African American Odyssey exhibition tells the stories of these athletes and their efforts to end discrimination in sports.

Have students search the Library of Congress Web site for more information on these athletes. Students can also find resources in their school and local libraries on these athletes and how they broke color barriers in their fields.

Once students have finished their research, have them write an article for a newspaper as if they were at one of the sporting events, watching these athletes compete.

Students should consider the following questions: What challenges did athletes such as Gibson, Owens, and Robinson face in their respective sports? How did these athletes’ accomplishments relate to the progress of the civil rights movement?

This idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for high school U.S. History (Era 9: Post World War II Era, 1945-1970s).

LESSON IDEAS—MUSIC AND BASEBALL

In honor of the anniversary of the first World Series (first played in 1903!), this lesson idea focuses on the role of baseball in music. After all, most Americans have probably heard “Take Me Out to the Ballgame” at least once in their lives!

That is not the only song written about a baseball game, though. The Library of Congress Web site has even dedicated a Bibliography of Baseball Music page, complete with digital versions of several of the songs (Note: Click on “Page Turner” to see more pages).

Students can read some of the different baseball songs, then write a song about another sport, modeled after one of the baseball songs.

This idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for grades 3-5 English (Standard 3, Writing).

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This idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for grades 3-5 English (Standard 3, Writing).
Copyright issues can be confusing, but the Library of Congress is working to make it easier to understand. One of the Library’s featured presentations is “Taking the Mystery Out of Copyright,” which provides basic information on the copyright holder’s rights, the history of copyright, and a few brief examples of copyright fine print. This presentation is recommended for middle and high school students.

Most of what teachers use to teach in the classroom will probably fall under what is called “Fair Use,” since they are for educational purposes. Furthermore, since most of the sources found by searching American Memory on the Library of Congress Web site fall within the public domain, teachers needn’t worry about getting permission. However, some sources will require some familiarity with the definition and limits of “Fair Use.” You can spot these protected sources because they were created in more recent decades, and because, for many of them, the thumbnail image on the bibliographic page does not blow up into a good-sized jpeg.

You can read about this at the “Copyright and Fair Use” segment on the Teachers Page. It provides examples of copyright issues that can and will occur for teachers. You can also read about Fair Use on the Web site of the U.S. Copyright Office.

LESSON IDEAS— USING BASEBALL STATISTICS TO TEACH MATH

Selected Historic Players:
- John B. McLean (Cincinnati)
- Michael Mitchell (Cincinnati—see image on right)
- Richard Hoblitzell (Cincinnati)
- Edward Sweeney (New York)
- Jack Knight (New York)
- Charles Hemphill (New York)
- Oscar Stanage (Detroit)
- James Delahanty (Detroit)
- Charles O’Leary (Detroit)
- George Paskert (Philadelphia)
- Daniel Murphy (Philadelphia)
- Briscoe Lord (Philadelphia)
- Roger Bresnahan (St. Louis)
- Rebel Oakes (St. Louis)
- Frank LaPorte (St. Louis)

Because sports are so full of scores, averages, dates, times, counts, and records, they lend themselves very well to math lesson ideas. This idea uses baseball cards in the Baseball Cards, 1887-1914 collection. See the list in the left-hand box for baseball cards with statistical information on the backs.*

Using the worksheet provided, have students add together the batting averages for the years shown on the card for each player, then get the player’s three-year average. (If a player’s card has more than three years, use information from the last three years).

Once students have completed that step, choose a current major league player for students to research. If your classroom is low on computers, you may want to provide the statistics; if you do have enough computers, students can search for the statistics themselves. The Major League Baseball official Web site has a “Historical Player” search option, which can provide statistics on current or former players’ past seasons.

Once they have done all the math, students should then think about what has changed in baseball since the early 1900s. Have batting averages, on the whole, gotten better or worse? What could play a factor in increased batting averages? Do today’s baseball cards have the same kinds of statistics?

This idea can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for 4th grade math (Standard 5—Data, Probability, and Statistics).

*You can also find all sorts of baseball statistics over the years at the Spalding Base Ball Guides, 1889-1939 collection.

FEATURED FEATURE!— TAKING THE MYSTERY OUT OF COPYRIGHT

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Key:
G = Games
B = Batting
F = Fielding
Conversation with 11 year old black female, Washington, DC. [detail of transcription; audio also available]

Can your students describe the rules of the games that they play? Why do you think they are asking this girl about different games? Why is this important?

Note: This comes from the newest American Memory collection, American English Dialect Recordings: The Center for Applied Linguistics Collection. Be sure to check it out!

Field day—WPA recreation project, Dist. No. 2 / Beard.

What are people doing in this image? Why would the Works Progress Administration have a recreation project? What was the purpose of such a poster? How does the government encourage sports and recreation today?

Horse jumping over a hurdle on a field at Onwentsia Hunt Club, [1929]

What is happening in this photograph? Is this leisure or competition? What clues provide evidence for your answer? How high do you believe these barriers are?

Wilma Rudolph at the finish line during 50 yard dash at track meet in Madison Square Garden, [1961]

Rudolph, a Clarksville, TN, native, had polio as a child and still went on to be the first American woman to win three Olympic gold medals. How fast do you think she ran? What in this photograph indicates speed?