TEACHING with PRIMARY SOURCES—MTSU
NEWSLETTER: DECEMBER 2018

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

• Analyzing primary sources, historical thinking, and geographic awareness are all included in the social studies practice standards that will be part of the state’s social studies curriculum standards next year. TPS-MTSU will be offering a workshop in Murfreesboro on Thursday, January 17th focused on activities and approaches for embedding these practices in your teaching. This workshop will be open to all educators for grades 4 and up. For more information, contact Kira Duke.

• TPS-MTSU has been working this semester to update our lesson plans to align with the new social studies standards. We anticipate having the updates completed by the end of 2018. During this process, we are also checking for pesky broken links. Remember if you run across a broken link in any of our materials, please let us know.

“Awesome” Source of the Month:

This source can be found in the Teachers Page’s new Primary Source Set on Alexander Hamilton, which was created to go with the newly digitized Alexander Hamilton Papers collection at the Library.

THEME: AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The era of the American Revolution, approximately 1763 to 1783, truly was “the world turned upside down” (to quote the musical Hamilton). The creation of the United States may seem a given to your students (and most citizens), but it certainly didn’t seem that way in the 1770s when Thomas Jefferson (and committee) drafted the Declaration of Independence.

The Library of Congress, established only seven years after the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, holds dozens of collections of primary sources essential to the understanding of this early period of our history. To get a sense of what’s available, I recommend starting with the American Revolution Web Guide.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

• December 7 (Knoxville) - “Era of the American Revolution” workshop, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET, at East Tennessee History Center. To register, email Lisa Oakley.

• January 17 (Murfreesboro) - “Addressing Social Studies Practice Standards through Inquiry” workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Heritage Center of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County. To register, email Kira Duke.

• February 22 (Gallatin) - “The Story of Tennessee” workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Volunteer State Community College. To register, email Kira Duke.

• March 9 (Clinton) - “Beginnings of a Movement” workshop in partnership with East Tennessee Historical Society at the Green McAdoo Cultural Center from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. ET. To register, email Lisa Oakley.

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The Battle of King’s Mountain was the most important Revolutionary War battle that was fought in what was then considered “the west.” On October 7, 1780, about 1400 Patriot soldiers under the command of William Campbell, Isaac Shelby, et al., soundly defeated a force of Loyalist soldiers under Major Patrick Ferguson (who was killed in action). This battle is significant to Tennessee history as well. Before the battle, patriot forces mustered out of Sycamore Shoals, part of the Watauga Association in territory that would become Tennessee sixteen years later. John Sevier led the “Overmountain Men” (so-called because they lived over the mountains that formed the western boundary of the American colonies) to victory, and later became Tennessee’s first governor.

On a projector, locate Kings Mountain National Military Park in Google Maps. What is the terrain like? What rivers and towns are nearby? Have students find Kings Mountain (labeled “Kings Mn”) on this 1785 map. How is this map different? Where is Tennessee? Back in Google Maps, zoom in on S. Railroad Ave. in Kings Mountain, NC. Find the building depicted in this 2017 photograph? What does the mural depict? What is it across the street from?

George Washington was in Totowa, NJ, when word reached him later that month about King’s Mountain. Have students read his reaction to the battle here. How does he think this victory will impact the war? Now read Thomas Jefferson’s evaluation of the battle, written thirty-two years later. What was the significance of the battle according to Jefferson (who was governor of Virginia in 1780)?

This lesson idea meets Tennessee curriculum standards for 5th and 8th grade Social Studies (5.32 and 8.20).

The American Revolution is most often presented from the perspective of the Patriots, the Continental Congress, and leaders such as George Washington; yet not all colonists sided with them. In fact, roughly 15 to 20% of white men were Loyalists, with the highest percentage residing in the middle colonies. Most often Loyalists were older with established businesses and conservative viewpoints. There was also a significant number of Black Loyalists, who fought for a chance at freedom.

Begin by having your students analyze the image The Tory’s day of judgement. If you were sympathetic to the British Crown, how would stories of tarring and feathering make you feel? Would it persuade you to side with the Patriots? Next have students analyze passages from The Tory Act. How is the Tory perspective presented here? How are Patriots encouraged to interact with Loyalists? Be sure to have students note the date on this document. What document would be issued months later that laid out the Patriot perspective?

The most famous person to side with the Crown is Benedict Arnold. This is largely due to his betrayal of his role in George Washington’s Continental Army. After his changing loyalties were discovered, he published a broadside to his former brothers-in-arms to persuade them to join him in supporting the Crown. What reasons does he lay out to persuade others to join him?

Finally, have your students consider how Loyalists might have contributed to the war effort. Divide up sections of the Article of the Associated Loyalist. What actions are outlined in this document? How does this benefit the British Army? How do the Loyalists benefit from the actions outlined here? What conclusions can we draw about the Loyalists’ motivations? To wrap up, what conclusions can we draw about the perspective of the Loyalists from these sources? How does this add to our understanding of life during the American Revolution?

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet Tennessee curriculum standards for 4th and 8th grade Social Studies (4.08 and 8.19).
There are very few figures in American history that are as recognizable, or widely celebrated, as George Washington. A soldier during The French & Indian War, a general during the Revolutionary War, the first President of the United States, and the owner of a vast plantation and enslaved population, Washington the man encompassed many different layers of early American history. Despite the many roles he played, representations of Washington tend to focus on one aspect of his career over the other. By comparing his policies and actions as both a politician and a general, we can see how his leadership style changed as he transitioned from war to peace.

Begin the class by having your students analyze these two pictures of George Washington. Distribute a Primary Source Analysis Tool to guide their investigation of the images. How is George Washington represented in the piece by G. Stuart? By Cosmos Pictures Co.? What is the symbolism used in each portrait? How do the paintings depict Washington as a leader, both as a politician and a general?

After your students have analyzed the images, hand out these two letters from the George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress. Please note that all of the letters in this lesson idea are transcribed and you can access those transcriptions by clicking on the “Show Text” button located above the document viewing window or by choosing the PDF option beneath the image window (see article below). Also note that many letters will be more than one page and the teacher will have to click the “next page” button to ensure they print out the entirety of the materials. Once again, have your students analyze these documents using the Primary Source Analysis Tool (the version for manuscripts). Next, hand out two more letters from the George Washington Papers and have your students analyze them as well.

How would you characterize Washington’s leadership and priorities as a military commander? As the President? Additionally, encourage your students to think about how Washington’s career as a military leader first and then president afterwards has shaped the way we view the presidency. How many other leaders followed Washington’s example?

This lesson idea meets Tennessee curriculum standards for 8th grade Social Studies (8.22).

### Featured Feature—How to Transcribe a Manuscript

One of the challenges of using documents from the era of the American Revolution is that they are almost entirely hand-written (manuscript). We certainly don’t expect 4th- or 5th-graders, or even 8th-graders, to be able to read all the writing in these primary sources. But don’t worry—the Library of Congress keeps adding new features to make these sources more accessible for you and your students.

As mentioned in the lesson plan above, there is a feature in the George Washington Papers and many other collections that allows you to view the text of the document in easy-to-read html type (the transcription) right beside the original manuscript. Simply click on the page of the manuscript you want to read, and then click on “Show Text” to the upper left of the page image (see example at right).

Another option is to choose PDF from the Download options provided below the image. This will take you to an easy-to-read, easy-to-print transcription. Please note, however, that it will be a transcription of the entire document, not the individual page. So you would need to search the PDF to get to the exact transcription of the manuscript page you need (use Ctrl-F).

There is one final option — transcribe the document yourself! The Library is actually encouraging people to participate in the transcribing of manuscript pages from some of its collections. This would make a fun class project for a budding palaeographer (student who likes old handwriting)!
Allies

The allies - par nobile fratrum! [1780 Feb. 3]

Many Native American tribes sided with the British during the Revolution. This was a strategic decision in the hopes that the British army was more likely to respect their claims to land and to stop the land-hungry colonists. This satirical cartoon links American fear of religious oppression to the British alliance with the various tribes. What is the message that the artist is trying to portray?

Song of Liberty

The new Massachusetts liberty song To the tune of the British grenadier. [April 1770]

Music has often been used to spread ideas and boost movements throughout history. What are some of the core values referenced in this song? How do those values align with other patriotic songs such as the Star-Spangled Banner? What does this song say about America’s relationship to Europe at this time?

Washington as a Surveyor

Plat of the land where on stands the town of Alexandria [1748]

Though many associate George Washington with his roles as a military leader and president, he was also a surveyor and a map maker. This survey of Belhaven is an example of a map created by George Washington. Do you think that Washington’s experience as a map maker affected his military career? If so, in what ways? Is it surprising to know that Washington was a map maker? Why or why not?

The Invasion of Quebec

Death of General Montgomery at Quebec [1900]

When many think of the American Revolution, images of Valley Forge or Yorktown come to mind. However, in 1775 General Montgomery, joined by forces under the command of Benedict Arnold, led an American army to invade the British Province of Quebec. In doing so, they hoped to not only deal the British a loss but convince French-speaking Canadians to join their cause. Do you think this was a sound plan? Why or why not? What would be some difficulties Montgomery and Arnold might encounter?