TEACHING with PRIMARY SOURCES—MTSU
NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 2019

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

• TPS-MTSU is partnering with the University of Tennessee, Martin Department of History to offer a workshop “The Values of Democracy in Action: Teaching America’s Social Movements” on February 20th in conjunction with their annual Civil Rights Conference. This workshop is open to UTM students as well as K-12 educators. Contact Kira Duke for more information.

• This issue of the TPS-MTSU newsletter marks our ten-year anniversary! To celebrate ten years of exploring the Library of Congress collections and thinking about how to use these great primary sources in the classroom, we will be doing a special issue next month highlighting some of our favorite primary sources and lesson ideas. If you have a favorite, let Kira and Stacey know!

“AWESOME” SOURCE OF THE MONTH:

WPA rumor [between 1939 and 1941]

Have students summarize the message of this image. What is the context for this poster? Why would New Deal programs want to push this message?

THEME: HISTORICAL THINKING, VOL. V

This is the fifth year that Stacey’s History 3011 class has created the content for an issue of the TPS-MTSU newsletter. This course, Teaching Historical Thinking, challenges future history teachers to combine primary sources, curriculum standards, historical content, and historical thinking skills into classroom-ready lessons, four of which you see here. Students worked in groups and selected topics to go with their chosen highlighted skills. Two students even transcribed manuscripts!

UPCOMING EVENTS:

• 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 20 (Martin) - “The Values of Democracy in Action: Teaching America’s Social Movements” workshop from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at UTM. 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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LESSON IDEA—CONTEXTUALIZATION: TEDDY ROOSEVELT AND AMERICAN CONSERVATION

With the advancements in technology and rapid industrialization that occurred in the late 19th century, many aspects of American life vastly improved, but such developments had an adverse effect on America's wilderness. While the U.S. government had protected pieces of land since the 1860s, not enough land was covered so that every citizen had access to the great American wilderness. However, when Theodore Roosevelt took office in 1901, he vowed to give nature a fighting chance in this brave new world, and set aside millions of acres to be protected by the government.

According to the Stanford History Education Group, “contextualization asks students to locate a document in time and place and to understand how these factors shape its content.” Students will practice this skill by reading one of TR’s writings on conservation. First, however, ask students to read this statement and ask them where they think it comes from and when it was written. Then, have them read the first two pages of this essay by Teddy Roosevelt. When do they think this came from? How is it similar/different from the previous environmental statement? Reveal the sources of these two statements and then detail the steps taken by conservationists such as John Muir (founder of the Sierra Club) and Teddy Roosevelt to curtail the shrinking wilderness. Explain that these early efforts took place during the Industrial Revolution in America, and were a direct response to it. How were TR’s efforts directly influenced by the Industrial Revolution and its impact on American workers, lifestyles, and public lands?

This lesson meets TN state standards for high school U.S. History & Geography (US.16, SSP.05).

LESSON IDEA—CHRONOLOGICAL THINKING: HITLER’S RISE TO POWER

In 1933, Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor over a recovering Germany. Overwhelming economic problems and general frustration created the demand for a strong leader to “save” the German citizens. In a mere six years as Chancellor, Hitler would go on to rebuild Germany from rubble left in the aftermath of WWI into a global superpower, winning the support and trust of the German people along the way. Germany’s economic problems were primarily a result of World War I and the Treaty of Versailles—Germany being forced to pay reparations to France. These troubles were only exacerbated by the global depression of 1929.

Students, relying on historical contextual clues and using the principle of causation, will create a chronology from images that surround this time period to better understand Hitler’s rise to power and his support from the German people. Chronological thinking requires the students to use context clues and the principles of cause and effect to create a timeline of events.

Start the lesson by giving the context and overview to the class. Explain to the students about what was going on in Germany following the first World War. From there discuss with the students how Germany’s economic troubles contributed to Adolf Hitler’s rise to power. Let the students know they will have to rely on the principle of causality to arrange the photos in chronological order. Distribute the pictures of Children Play with German Marks, Wir Sind Fur Hitler Campaign Poster, The Fifteenth Point Cartoon, Signing of the Treaty of Versailles, Cheers for the Idol of German Fascists (Newspaper), Light! More Light! Cartoon, and Goose Step Clumps in Reich (Newspaper). Once the sources are distributed, have the students write a brief summary of the key takeaway from each source. Then have them try and put them in chronological order. You may need to assist them if you see students struggling. Then discuss the timeline and explain why and how these events are related. Have students write a reflection at the end of the class.

This lesson meets TN state standards for high school World History & Geography (W.39, SSP.05).
LESSON IDEA—MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The Revolutionary War was the result of growing tensions between Great Britain and the American colonies. After the French and Indian War, British soldiers were stationed throughout the colonies and taxes were raised to help pay down war debt. Soon, acts by the British Government, such as the Stamp Act (1765), the Quartering Act (1765), and the Townshend Acts (1767), escalated the conflicts between the two sides. This led to events like the Boston Massacre (1770), the Boston Tea Party (1773), and the “first shots” of the war at Lexington (1775). Although a large portion of the colonists wanted independence from Great Britain, several still remained loyal to the mother country.

It may be difficult for students to understand the Loyalist point of view, since our nation was founded on the defeat of the Loyalists. Have students imagine what British subjects living in England would have thought of the Patriot point of view. Furthermore, if Great Britain had won the war, how would Patriot perspectives have been received in the colonies?

In this lesson, students will examine multiple perspectives of the colonists during this time. Begin by giving the students background information on the events leading up to the American Revolution. Split the students into two groups. Group 1 will read Thomas Hutchinson speech (loyalist leader) which is an exchange from a Loyalist to the House of Representatives. Group 2 will read George Washington’s letter which was sent to British inhabitants in Bermuda. From the two groups, students should determine the perspective of each letter. Some questions to pose to your students could be, “Why would a letter from George Washington be a good source of showing support for the patriots, and the same for Thomas Hutchinson’s letter? What kind of emotions are being portrayed in these speeches; are they asking for war?” “Why did George Washington feel that the war was justified?” or, “What were some of the reasons Thomas Hutchinson gave as to why the loyalists opposed a revolution?”

This lesson meets TN state standards for 8th grade Social Studies (8.19, SSP.03).

LESSON IDEA—A CLOSE READING OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Susan B. Anthony was a suffragette who championed women’s equality during the early women’s rights movement (1849-1920). Her writings, speeches, and actions helped gain women the right to vote with the passage of the 19th amendment in 1920. This lesson will have students perform a close reading of one of her writings in order to analyze language and determine the main idea and the author’s purpose.

First, ask what students already know about Susan B. Anthony. What did she do to advance the cause of women’s suffrage? Next, have the students read background on Susan B. Anthony and the woman’s suffrage movement (or show video clips from this PBS documentary). Then, show them the letter from Susan B. Anthony to Edward M. Davis dated December 19, 1872.

They may not be able to read the letter in its original manuscript form, but tell them that’s okay. Ask them analysis questions to start the process.

Now that they are familiar with the original, give them the transcription worksheet. They should read the letter once through just to determine what she’s saying. Then have them follow the instructions on the worksheet to do a close reading of the document. What famous incident is she writing about (i.e., her 1872 arrest — read about it here, starting with page 1)? Can students say anything about her personality from the way she wrote this letter? Considering what they know about Susan B. Anthony, what is her goal in writing this letter? How persuasive is this letter?

This lesson meets TN state standards for high school U.S. History & Geography (US.18, SSP.02).
Rochester, New York. Earl Babcock’s school day begins with the salute to the flag [1943]

Freedom of religion is one of the five rights afforded to U.S. citizens by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In the case of *Minersville School District v. Gobitis*, two children who were Jehovah’s Witnesses were expelled from school because they refused to salute the flag. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the school. What evidence did the court present to support its ruling against the students?


During the Progressive Era, efforts were made to eliminate the hardships of child labor. It was not until 1938 that Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act that protected children from unsafe work environments. Although the United States has mostly eliminated child labor, many children around the world still suffer. Many countries today now have regulating child labor laws, but they are not always enforced by the government. What would be the benefits of child labor, from the early 20th-century U.S. to today? Based on the photograph and its caption, what change is the photographer trying to initiate?

Join or Die [1754]

In 1754, Benjamin Franklin published his cartoon "Join or Die" in his newspaper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. Why did he publish this, and what does it mean? In order to find out, students will need to read background on Benjamin Franklin. Additionally, by knowing the historical context, it will be easier for the students to source this cartoon. How does this information shape the students’ interpretation of the document?

Lynchings by states and counties in the United States, 1900-1931... [1931?]

Violence against African Americans has been a part of American culture for hundreds of years. Gaining an understanding of the purpose and frequency of this violence is important for students to learn about post-Reconstruction America in particular. By examining different documents on the topic students can gain valuable insight into the historical thinking skill of corroboration. Have students read these two documents about lynching: by John Edward Bruce and by Ida B. Wells-Barnett. How do these two sources agree with each other? Now, compare them to an entirely different format: a map pinpointing lynchings in the U.S. from 1900 to 1931. Do you think any source is more reliable than the others? How do the sources support each other? Are there points of disagreement? What can be learned about the state of post-Reconstruction America by viewing these documents?