Section 2: Library of Congress Primary Sources
Primary Sources
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS’ EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH
DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

Activity One: Individual/Pair and Share/ Large Group

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects, which were created at the time under study.

Provide examples:

SECONDARY SOURCES

Secondary sources are accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without first hand experience.

Provide examples:

AUTHENTIC USE OF PRIMARY SOURCES

Using a primary source within an historic context as a basis for inquiry and discovery.

Example: We will view a lesson.

Some questions to ask about primary sources:

a. What does the research say about using Primary Sources in teaching and learning activities?

b. Why should we use photographs, maps, and images in teaching and learning activities?

c. How can we use photographs, maps, and images in teaching and learning activities?
### Activity Two. What Do You See? ---------Photographic Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective Observation</th>
<th>Subjective Observation</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Deduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe what you see in the photograph—the forms and structures, the arrangement of the various elements. Avoid personal feelings or interpretations. Your description should help someone who has not seen the image to visualize it.</td>
<td>Describe your personal feelings, associations, and judgments about the image. Always anchor your subjective response in something that is seen. For example, “I see..., and it makes me think of...”</td>
<td>Describe prior knowledge that you can associate with this image including prior experience, study, assumptions, and intuitions.</td>
<td>What can you conclude about this photograph?</td>
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</table>

**Questions:** What questions does this photograph raise? What else would you need to know?
Develop critical thinking skills...

Primary sources are snippets of history. They are incomplete and often come without context. They require students to be analytical, to examine sources thoughtfully and to determine what else they need to know to make inferences from the materials.

*A high school student states, “I learned that in order to do history, one must be objective and be able to look at a puzzle of historical events and put them together in order.”*

Understand all history is local...

Local history projects require students to “tell their own stories” about familiar people, events, and places. Memories from an adults’ perspective provide a rich glimpse of history that is not available in a textbook. What evolves is the sense that world history is also personal family history, which provides a compelling context for student understanding.

*An elementary/middle school teacher reports that, “...finding information about topics that are of importance to our local history is invaluable. Students are excited by the fact that our local history is archived nationally. This gives their immediate cultural area importance in their eyes.”*

Acquire empathy for the human condition...

Primary sources help students relate in a personal way to events of the past coming away with a deeper understanding of history as a series of human events.

*A high school teacher reported that, “In sharing the Whitman hospital letters, I clearly saw a sheen of tears in students’ eyes and noted an avid interest in Civil War soldiers as ‘people,’ not simply as pallid historical figures.”*
Consider different points of view in analysis...

In analyzing primary sources, students move from concrete observations and facts to making inferences about the materials. “Point of view” is one of the most important inferences that can be drawn. What is the intent of the speaker, of the photographer, of the musician? How does that color one’s interpretation or understanding of the evidence? A high school teacher states that, “Discovering that two people seeing the same primary source differently creates a kind of dissonance that opens up the meaning of the source and creates new understanding in learners.

Understand the continuum of history...

It is difficult for students to understand that we all participate in making history every day, that each of us in the course of our lives leaves behind primary source documentation that scholars’ years hence may examine as a record of “the past.” The immediacy of first-person accounts of events is compelling to most students.

“Comparisons of events of the past to events that students are engaged in daily, helps to bring “history” to the present and make it ‘live’ for our students.”

Drafts of Langston Hughes's poem "Ballad of Booker T."
Teachers

The Library of Congress offers classroom materials and professional development to help teachers effectively use primary sources from the Library's vast digital collections in their teaching.

Find Library of Congress lesson plans and more that meet Common Core standards, state content standards, and the standards of national organizations.

Search Our Classroom Materials by Standards ▼ Common Core ▼ State Content ▼ Organizations

Understanding the Cosmos: Changing Models of the Solar System and the Universe
Primary Source Sets

Civil War Soldiers’ Portraits: The Liljenquist Family Collection
Primary Source Sets

Taking the Mystery Out of Copyright
Presentations and Activities

Baseball, Race Relations and Jackie Robinson
Lesson Plan

TEACHING WITH THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS BLOG

Summer Reading: Primary Source Teaching Ideas for the Teacher and Librarian
June 10, 2014 by Charlie Lardate

In many areas of the United States, schools still have an extended break in the summer time. For teachers, this time is often an opportunity to rejuvenate, attend workshops, and catch up on professional reading.

Go to the blog ▶

Subscribe to the blog via e-mail or RSS.

Professional Development

The Library of Congress provides primary source-based, ready-to-use resources for teachers and facilitators

Self-Paced Online Modules

Guides for Facilitators: “Build and Deliver”

Or consider training with Library of Congress staff:

Workshops at the Library
How to Link and Bookmark (add a favorite) in American Memory & the Prints and Photographs Sections

1. **URL bookmarking method one:** In 2010, the bookmark or favorite for a primary source is shown near the bottom of the primary source page. The other words used for a primary source is sometimes “item” and sometimes “record”. For example

   **Bookmark This Record:**
   
   [http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00651244](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/00651244)

   This link will take you to one specific primary source.

2. **URL bookmarking method two:** Find the digital ID at the bottom of the page of the primary source. Sometimes there is more than one handle (URL) shown here.

   **DIGITAL ID**
   
   - [digital file from b&w film copy neg. of unretouched fileprint showing thumb](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b41800)
   - [digital file from original neg.](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/fsa.8b29516)

3. **The Original Method of finding and Bookmarking your Favorite.**

   **Explanation for Understanding:** A search in the American Memory collections and Prints and Photographs yields web pages which are assembled "on the fly" in response to your particular request. Frequently, "temp/" appears as part of the URL shown in the Address/Location window of the page.

   This is frustrating for users who carefully bookmark their "finds" because a temporary page cannot be called up at a later date. With just a bit more work, however, you CAN get a permanent URL through the process outlined below.

   1. Search for the item within the collections. See search for more information about why you will have better results if you search within a specific collection rather than across all collections.

   2. At the bibliographic (item) record screen, go to the **View** menu on the web browser menubar, and then select **Page Source** (or Document Source or **Source**, depending on your browser).

   3. A new browser window will open showing the HTML formatting tags for the page you received from your search. Scroll to the bottom of this new window.

      You will see:

      When you select View Source, you will get a new window that has a bunch of computer code in it (this is **HTML language**). Don’t panic!! All you need to do is scroll to the very bottom of that window and you should see some text that reads similar to this:
1. Highlight and copy the complete URL, including final parentheses (but not <!-- or -->).

<!-- http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/alad:@field(DOCID+@lit(h46672)) -->

2. Close the window displaying the HTML formatting tags.

**Check the URL:**

1. Paste the URL in your browser's Address/Location window, as you would any other URL.

2. To test the URL, press the Enter or Return key on your keyboard. If the browser brings up the correct item, you now have the permanent URL!

**Bookmark the page:**

1. With the tested URL in the Address/Location window of the browser, you can now bookmark the web page.

2. Simply go to the Bookmarks/Favorites menu on the web browser menu bar, and then select Add Bookmark/Add to Favorites.
Questions and Answers: Copyright and Fair Use

How do I use the Restriction Statements that accompany the American Memory collections?

What is copyright?

If there is no copyright notice, does that mean there is no copyright?

When can I assume that there is no copyright protection for a work?

Does copyright give the owner an absolute monopoly?

You should explore some of the U.S. Copyright Office's suggested Internet sites to learn more about calculating duration of copyright in general.

Where can I go for more information on copyright?

Start with the U.S. Copyright Office in the Library of Congress. They maintain a list of Copyright Information Circulars and Form Letters. Scroll to find "Circular 21-Reproductions of Copyrighted Works by Educators and Librarians." In addition, the U.S. Copyright Office maintains a list of Internet Resources.

Fair Use

What is "fair use"?

Copyright Information Circulars and Form Letters for "Circular 21-Reproductions of Copyrighted Works by Educators and Librarians."

For classroom use, how does "fair use" apply?

The Internet magnifies the possibility for making an infinite number of perfect copies, which changes what it means to be "fair." Be careful when using material from the Internet; keep in mind the four factors of the fair use test, or get permission from the owner. The National Digital Library Program goes to great effort to identify possible copyright owners for items in American Memory, though we are often unable to ascertain possible rights holders because of the age of the materials. When known to us, we will provide that information in the Restriction Statements accompanying the collections.

Classroom Examples

Can you describe a few examples based on questions from teachers who use the Learning Page?

Sure...here are a few. The general concepts discussed here apply to student and teacher uses.

1. Is there a difference in fair use guidelines for public, non-profit, or private schools?
2. A teacher selects a set of 15 photos or other materials from the American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers' Project, 1936-1940, and makes 5 printed copies of
this set for small groups to use in a lesson. Is there a limit on the number of items in a set, or the number of copies that can be made for the lesson?

3. This lesson will be used in other sections of the same class in the same semester. This is still a one-time use with different students. Is this fair?

4. The lesson will be used by different teachers teaching the same class. Fair?

5. This lesson will be used year after year by the same teacher at the same point in the plan of studies for the course.

6. This lesson will be copied for each student in the section of the class.

7. A teacher prepares a lesson for a World Wide Web presentation using photographs and documents from the Library of Congress (not linking to them in American Memory). Always keep in mind all four of the fair use factors in the Fair Use section of this page.

8. Students in a project-based curriculum prepare presentations with multiple examples of their topic. How many is too many? How much of a text is too much? As you know from the above examples, the medium in which the student presents the examples contributes to the fairness of the use. If the examples are placed on a local network for a short period or printed only for class members, it may be fair, depending on a balancing of all Fair Use factors. It is probably not fair to display the same material on a World Wide Web site.

The question of how much is too much is also hard to define. A page or two of a two hundred page novel may be acceptable, though if you copy a particularly significant portion, such as the two pages that make the book marketable (the end of a mystery, for example), you may diminish the market value - which would weigh heavily against one of the fair use factors). A mere two lines from a short poem might also be unfair for the same reason.

9. **A student prepares a multimedia presentation using American Memory resources. How does a student credit sources? Is permission to reproduce materials needed?**

Everyone who uses materials from American Memory should credit the American Memory collections of the Library of Congress. See Citing Electronic Sources for suggestions. Further, users should credit particular items and collections which are described in Restriction Statements within the collections. The Library of Congress does not grant or withhold permission to use the materials that are made available online. You must contact the owner for any uses that exceed the limits of fair use. Proper credit is always an indication of good research.

10. **May I link to American Memory? Do I need permission?** If you wish to link to our site, you may do so even without permission as long as your link makes it clear that there is a transition to another site, and that you do not present the link in a way that implies that the Library of Congress or the National Digital Library Program is endorsing a particular product, service, or organization. However, the Library of Congress does like to hear how its site is being used, so please send an email message to the National Digital Library Program mailbox as a courtesy.
Great variation exists among accepted styles, and different disciplines rely on different style guidelines. It is not possible to give one example of documentation for the digitized materials available on the Library of Congress Web site. The examples below use style guidelines that are commonly used in history and language arts disciplines.

Copyright refers to the author's (artist, composer, director, illustrator, performer, photographer, producer, or writer,) exclusive right to reproduce, prepare derivative works, distribute copies, and publicly perform and display his or her works. More about copyright...

Materials available on the Library of Congress Web site include: cartoons, films, legal documents, maps, newspapers, photographs and drawings, sound recordings, special presentations, and texts. Representative selections from the digitized historical collections are used to illustrate the citation examples that follow.

This guide is intended to help users prepare citations for electronic resources from the Library of Congress Web site. The purpose of a works cited document is to acknowledge the source of information and give as much detail as possible to find the source of that information at a later date. Consistency and the intended audience are the guiding principles to the following suggestions.

**MLA Citation Format**

*(MLA Handbook, 6th ed., section 5.9.2)*

*Structure:*

1. Title of the site (underlined or italicized).
2. Editor first name middle initial last name (if given).
3. Any electronic publication information available, including version number, date of electronic publication (original posting) or latest update.
4. Name of sponsoring institution or organization.
5. Date of individual access and electronic address.

*Title of Site.* First name Middle name Last name. Electronic publication information. Sponsoring institution or organization. Day Month Year of access <electronic address>.

*Example:*