

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES ACROSS TENNESSEE

NEWSLETTER: AUGUST 2012

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 8

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.

Contact: [Stacey Graham](mailto:Stacey.Graham@mtsu.edu) or [Kira Duke](mailto:Kira.Duke@mtsu.edu) at (615) 898-2947 or www.mtsu.edu/tps

NEWS

- If you have any ideas for **lesson plans for grades K-2**, please work with us to create a lesson plan we can post on our Web site. Successful plans receive \$250!
- It's not too early to [sign up](#) for the **Stones River teacher workshop** on October 26 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Murfreesboro. This workshop is part of the 2-day [Stones River Symposium](#) with the theme, "Why the Battle Matters 150 Years Later."
- If you are a middle or high school teacher gearing up your students for the 2012-13 **History Day** competition, don't forget the wealth of primary sources available from the Library of Congress to enrich your students' projects. See how to incorporate loc.gov into History Day at one of our upcoming events (see list at right).

"AWESOME" SOURCE OF THE MONTH:



[The health of the child is the power of the nation Children's year, April 1918 - April 1919 / / F. Luis Mora.](#)

Why would the Children's Bureau create a poster such as this during World War I?

THEME: USING PRIMARY SOURCES IN THE K-2 CLASSROOM

Educators might think that primary sources are too advanced to introduce into the K-2 classroom, or that primary sources are irrelevant to the K-2 curriculum. However, K-2 students are actually engaged with learning through primary sources on a daily basis—they learn from contact with primary sources such as animals, classroom objects, and music.

Younger students are particularly good at the "wonder" step of the inquiry cycle. They wonder about everything! Ask them to try to answer their own questions, beginning with the words, "I think." This welcomes all sorts of answers because students won't be as afraid of being wrong. Then, when a student says something like, "I think the child in the picture is sad," push their thoughts a little further by prompting, "What makes you say that?" This encourages even the youngest students to back up their claims with evidence.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **August 20** (Dyersburg) - "Building a National History Day Project Using the Library of Congress" workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email [Jennifer Core](mailto:Jennifer.Core@mtsu.edu).
- **August 21** (Memphis) - "Building a National History Day Project Using the Library of Congress" workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email [Jennifer Core](mailto:Jennifer.Core@mtsu.edu).
- **September 13** - "Presidential Elections and Primary Sources from the Library of Congress" Webcast from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Click [here](#) for viewing options.
- **September 15** (Cookeville) "Building a National History Day Project Using the Library of Congress" workshop from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. To register, email [Jennifer Core](mailto:Jennifer.Core@mtsu.edu).



[Kindergarten child of Portuguese descent in a grade school in San Leandro, California](#) [1942 Apr.]

LESSON IDEA— CLASSIC CHILDREN’S STORIES



You can find a great selection of classic children’s books that have been digitized on [Read.gov](#). Choose from classics such as [Aesop’s Fables](#), [Mother Goose](#), [The Three Little Pigs](#), and [Humpty Dumpty](#), just to name a few.

Select one of the titles based on your students’ interest and read the story aloud. Be sure to pause to give students time to examine the illustrations. Ask your students what they see in the illustrations. What is happening in the images? Depending on the length of the story, pause at regular intervals to allow students to ask questions about the story, vocabulary, or anything they see in the illustrations. Also, be sure to ask questions to gauge their reading comprehension. Who are the main characters? Where does the story take place? What is the moral of the story?

[Denslow’s Three Bears](#) [1901] You can also use these books to have students compare and contrast these classic stories with more contemporary ones. For example, read [Denslow’s Three Bears](#) to your students. Ask your students if they can think of other stories that are similar to this one. If your students are not familiar with Goldilocks and the Three Bears, you might read it to them as well. Then discuss which elements are the same in each story and which elements are different.

This lesson idea will meet common core standards (reading standards for literature and speaking and listening skills) for English/Language Arts for grades K-2.

IMPORTANT LINKS:

- [Primary Source Set— Children’s Lives at the Turn of the Twentieth Century](#)
- [America’s Library](#)
- [TPS Journal: Primary Sources and Elementary Learners](#)
- [Lesson plan: The Iditarod: The Last Great Race](#) (for Kindergarten)
- [Aesop’s Fables Interactive Book](#)
- [National Book Festival : Kids Create Activities](#)
- [Everyday Mysteries: Fun Science Facts from the Library of Congress](#)

LESSON IDEA— SUMMERS OF THE PAST

How did your students spend their summer vacation? Many of the summer activities students participate in today have been enjoyed by children for decades. You can read about these summer vacations of the past at [America’s Story](#). The Library’s online collections include many photographs of children’s summer activities during the first half of the twentieth century. Using these photographs is one way to make the summer vacation question fresh and to introduce young students to the use of primary sources.

Ask your students to name some of the activities they participated in this summer. Did they go [camping](#) or to the [swimming pool](#)? Did they go to the [playground](#) or to an [amusement park](#)? Did they play [baseball](#) or [basketball](#)? [Ride their bicycles](#), [skate](#) or go to [the movies](#)? Help with chores like [mowing the lawn](#) or [gardening](#)? Go to [the beach](#)?

Offer your students a selection of these images or [search for more](#) in the Library’s collections. Explain that these are historic images of children enjoying their summers in the past.

Have older students chose an image depicting an activity they participated in this summer. Then ask them to write a paragraph describing what they observe in the photo that is different from or similar to that activity today. Prompt them to look at the clothes, the environment, and the equipment. Then students can report on their observations to the class. Younger students can be shown the images and discuss them as a group.

This lesson idea can be adapted to meet common core standards (writing and speaking and listening skills) for English/Language Arts for grades K-2.



[On the beach at Coney Island](#) [c1902]

LESSON IDEA— ZOO ANIMALS



[Brookfield Zoo—By the “L” / Long.](#) [between 1936 and 1938]

During the 1930s and 40s, the federal Works Projects Administration (WPA) provided funding for artists to create posters to publicize various cultural activities. Several of the [WPA posters](#) in the Library of Congress’s collection encouraged people to visit zoos.

You can use these visually stunning posters to prompt discussion of biodiversity, animal habitats, ecosystems, and animal life cycles. Show students the posters of the [elephant](#), the [penguins](#), the [panda](#), the [hippopotamuses](#), and the [polar bear](#). For each poster, ask students: What animal is this? What catches your eye about the animal and how it is portrayed? Have you ever seen one of these animals in a zoo? If so, can you describe its enclosure (plants, other animals, food, water, toys)? Where is the animal’s native land? Do the babies look similar to the adults?

Take a class vote on which of these animals to “adopt.” Gather library books and Internet resources about this animal to share with the class. Break children into groups and ask each group to find the answer to one of the following questions: What does this animal’s habitat consist of? What does this animal eat? How many babies do the females typically have? How long does this animal live? Is this animal endangered, and if so, why? If there’s time, create an ecosystems mural that includes the animal. (See also the animal advertising lesson idea in the [March 2010 newsletter](#).)

This lesson can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for K-2 Science (Standard 4: Heredity and Standard 5: Biodiversity and Change) and Visual Art (Standard 6: Interdisciplinary Connections).

LESSON IDEA— AMERICAN FOLK LULLABIES

Which lullabies do your students know? Chances are, they know one or two that have been sung in this country for hundreds of years. “Rock-a-bye Baby,” for example, first appeared in print in the eighteenth century, and had been sung for years before that. Here are four lullabies, all recorded in 1939 in the American South by [John and Ruby Lomax](#): 1) [Go Tell Aunt Nancy](#) ([text](#)); 2) [Hush, My Baby, Don’t You Cry](#) ([text](#)); 3) [Pretty Little Ponies](#) ([text](#)); 4) [Go to Sleepy](#) ([text](#)). (Click on the blue ball icon to listen. For information on playing sound files, click [here](#).)

Ask your students if any of them recognize any of the songs. Can they sing them? Do they know different versions? Why would more than one version exist?

Listen again to the recordings. What do the students notice about these recordings, which were made more than 70 years ago? If they cannot understand all the words to a song, read the text to them. How are these recordings different from those they would hear today? (Think about recording quality, lack of instruments, non-studio setting, etc.)

Are there any words they are unfamiliar with? Have them write down the words and look them up in a children’s dictionary. (For example, have they heard of all the kinds of horses in “Pretty Little Ponies”?)

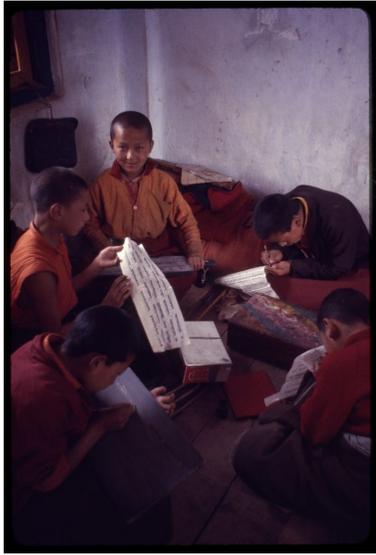
Which one(s) would they like to learn to sing? Try singing as a class. Which one(s) are their favorites? Ask them to explain why they like the songs they chose. What about the songs make them good for bedtime singing?

This lesson can be adapted to meet state curriculum standards for K-2 Music (Standards 1: Singing; 6: Listening and Analyzing; and 7: Evaluating), and Reading.



[\[Woman sitting on front porch with child\]](#) [between 1934 & 1950; detail]

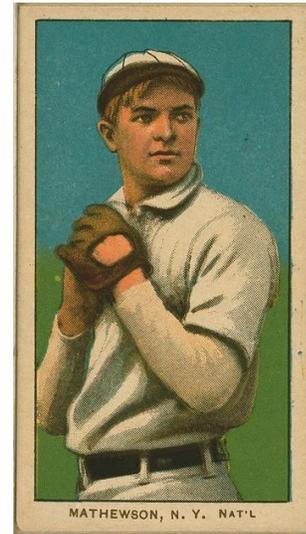
LEARNING TO WRITE



[\[Class learning to read and write, Sikkim\]](#) [1965 April]

Are your students learning to write? Ask them if they read and write like the children in this photograph. How is their writing different? How is their classroom different? Explain that Sikkim is a former kingdom near India, Nepal, and Bhutan. Can your students find that on a map?

COLLECTING THINGS



[\[Christy Mathewson, New York Giants, baseball card portrait\]](#) [1909-11]

This baseball card shows Hall of Fame pitcher Christy Mathewson. Children (and adults) have been collecting baseball cards for more than a century. Show students this image and ask if any of them collect baseball cards. Find out what else the kids collect and why.

TELLING STORIES



[\[Two children enjoying the commotion caused at meal time when a dog has chased a cat onto the back of their father\]](#) / A. Willard.

Illustrations can be used to engage students' observation skills and imagination. Have students examine this image. What do they see? What do they think is happening here? Ask your students to work together to develop a story for the action taking place in this scene.

MAKING GOOD CHOICES



[A good lunch - one hot dish, meat, vegetables - sandwich - fruit - milk WPA school lunch.](#) [between 1936 and 1941]

This poster was designed by the WPA Oklahoma Art Project to promote good eating habits in school. What posters can your students find in your school? What is their purpose? Have students think about what would help them make good lunch choices and then draw their own posters.