Additional Constitution Day Resources

Listed below are some resources that may enhance your knowledge and use of primary sources in relation to the topic of the Constitution.

- ❖ **Interactive Activities**
  - ➢ Creating the Constitution Interactive
    - ▪ This online interactive allows students to take a look at the Constitution and how it was formed. This interactive activity highlights five topics; we the people, executive, war powers, representation, and taxation. All five of these topics were heavily debated. The interactive allows the student to explore the roots of these decisions and documents that influenced them.
      - • http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/interactives/constitution/index.html
  - ➢ Creating the United States Word Search
    - ▪ This online interactive activity is a great way to review constitutional terminology. Find the words and continue learning about the constitution.
      - • http://myloc.gov/Education/OnlineActivities/Pages/onlineactivities/wordSearch/index2.html

- ❖ **Library of Congress Collections**
  - ➢ Creating the Constitution Collection
    - ▪ This collection of collections looks at the road to the constitution, the creation of the constitution, and the applications of the constitution today.
      - • http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/Constitution/Pages/default.aspx
  - ➢ Constitutional Legacy
    - ▪ The constitution has been used throughout history by many groups including politicians and the media. This collection showcases several examples of the constitution in action.
      - • http://myloc.gov/Exhibitions/creatingtheus/Constitution/ConstitutionLegacy/Pages/SlObjectList.aspx
  - ➢ The New Nation
    - ▪ This online collection allows the user to explore conflicts of a new nation and the efforts to ratify the constitution. Look at an excerpt from the constitutional debates in Pennsylvania. Consider what it would have been like to be a delegate at this time.
      - • http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/timeline/newnatn/usconst/
  - ➢ To Form a More Perfect Union
    - ▪ Have you ever wondered what the first drafts of the constitution may have looked like? This online collection includes documents and photos from the Constitutional Convention.
      - • http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/continental/constit.html

- ➢ Primary Source Set: The Constitution
  - ▪ This collection features some of the libraries best primary and secondary sources surrounding the constitution. You will find images, maps, and documents that will take you back to the constitutional convention.
    - http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/primarysourcesets/constitution/

- ❖ **Lesson Plans**
  - ➢ The Constitution: Drafting a More Perfect Union
    - ▪ Grades 9-12
      - http://myloc.gov/Education/Pages/lessonplans/education/lessonplans/constitution/index.aspx
  - ➢ The U.S. Constitution: Continuity and Change in the Governing of the United States
    - ▪ Grades 6-12
      - http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/continuity-change/index.html
  - ➢ The Constitution: Counter Revolution or National Salvation?
    - ▪ Grades 9-12
      - http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/constitution/

- ❖ **Additional Resources**
  - ➢ Naturalization Self-Test
    - ▪ What do you know about the United States? Do you think that you could pass the Naturalization test? This online assessment allows you to put your knowledge to the test on your home computer.
      - TPSWaynesburg.delivr.com/1860h

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Why Use Primary Sources?

Primary sources provide a window into the past—unfiltered access to the record of artistic, social, scientific and political thought and achievement during the specific period under study, produced by people who lived during that period.

Bringing young people into close contact with these unique, often profoundly personal, documents and objects can give them a very real sense of what it was like to be alive during a long-past era.

1. Engage students

- Primary sources help students relate in a personal way to events of the past and promote a deeper understanding of history as a series of human events.

- Because primary sources are snippets of history, they encourage students to seek additional evidence through research.

- First-person accounts of events helps make them more real, fostering active reading and response.

Why Use Primary Sources?

2. Develop critical thinking skills

- Many state standards support teaching with primary sources, which require students to be both critical and analytical as they read and examine documents and objects.

- Primary sources are often incomplete and have little context. Students must use prior knowledge and work with multiple primary sources to find patterns.

- In analyzing primary sources, students move from concrete observations and facts to questioning and making inferences about the materials.

- Questions of creator bias, purpose, and point of view may challenge students' assumptions.

3. Construct knowledge

- Inquiry into primary sources encourages students to wrestle with contradictions and compare multiple sources that represent differing points of view, confronting the complexity of the past.

- Students construct knowledge as they form reasoned conclusions, base their conclusions on evidence, and connect primary sources to the context in which they were created, synthesizing information from multiple sources.

- Integrating what they glean from comparing primary sources with what they already know, and what they learn from research, allows students to construct content knowledge and deepen understanding.

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How to Use Primary Sources

A Quick Start Guide

Primary sources are the raw materials of history — original documents and objects which were created at the time under study. They are different from **secondary sources**, accounts or interpretations of events created by someone without firsthand experience.

Examining primary sources gives students a powerful sense of history and the complexity of the past. Helping students analyze primary sources can also guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills.

Before you begin:

- Choose at least two or three primary sources that support the learning objectives and are accessible to students.

- Consider how students can compare these items to other primary and secondary sources.

- Identify an analysis tool or guiding questions that students will use to analyze the primary sources.

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How to Use Primary Sources

1. Engage students with primary sources.

Draw on students' prior knowledge of the topic.

Ask students to closely observe each primary source. • *Who created this primary source? • When was it created? • Where does your eye go first?*

Help students see key details. • *What do you see that you didn't expect? • What powerful words and ideas are expressed?*

Encourage students to think about their personal response to the source. • *What feelings and thoughts does the primary source trigger in you? • What questions does it raise?*

2. Promote student inquiry.

Encourage students to speculate about each source, its creator, and its context. • *What was happening during this time period? • What was the creator's purpose in making this primary source? • What does the creator do to get his or her point across? • What was this primary source's audience? • What biases or stereotypes do you see?*

Ask if this source agrees with other primary sources, or with what the students already know. • Ask students to test their assumptions about the past. • Ask students to find other primary or secondary sources that offer support or contradiction.

3. Assess how students apply critical thinking and analysis skills to primary sources.

Have students summarize what they've learned. • Ask for reasons and specific evidence to support their conclusions. • Help students identify questions for further investigation, and develop strategies for how they might answer them.

Analysis tools and thematic primary source sets from the Library offer entry points to many topics.

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