

Inspired by History  
MCHE Conference Theme  
Nov.5, 2008

**Slide 1:**      **Title:** Using LOC/American Memory to inspire and motivate your students.

**Slide 2:**      Introduction:

- ✧ So often people (parents and students) view history as a deadly boring exercise. What can we do to “inspire” students to inquire and understand history’s lessons?

**Slide 3:** *My view of history:*

- ✧ In the past decade there have been calls for the use of primary sources in teaching history and other subjects

### Why use primary sources?

**Slide 4:** Recent Studies **Discuss**

- ✧ **Discuss Websites** on slide
  - **Primary Source Learning** was created by the [Northern Virginia Partnership](#) of the [Teaching with Primary Sources](#) program made available through a [Library of Congress](#) grant funded by the [U.S. Congress](#). The purpose of this Web site is to share the resources and Learning Experiences developed by teachers in Northern Virginia with other educators.
  - Created by the [Center for History and New Media](#) at [George Mason University](#) and the [Stanford University History Education Group](#), with funding from the [U.S. Department of Education](#) (Contract Number ED-07-CO-0088)

**Slide 5:**

- ✧ **Findings from these studies support the use of primary source documents in the classroom** (Stahl et al., 1996; Wineburg, 1991)
- ✧ but identify the challenge that teachers face in developing the necessary skills and “habits of mind” to actively engage students in the analysis process.
  - This includes reading pictures, developing and understanding an historical vocabulary
- ✧ In order to engage critical thinking skills at this level, the research indicates that frequent and early exposure to primary source analysis is necessary (Young & Leinhardt, 1998).  
Ibid
  - In this environment – start where you need to begin.

So what is the answer:

- ✧ Become familiar with some of the research in the field (
- ✧ Understand the skills necessary for developing historical understanding
  - Reading pictures, developing and understanding an historical vocabulary

**AND TAKE THINGS SLOWLY!!!!**

**DON'T DO IT ALONE!!!**

**Slide 6:**

1. Get in touch with your school Media Specialist/teacher librarian.
2. OR a colleague

**Slide 7:**

3. Explore the Library of Congress/American Memory collections
4. Difficulties:
  - a. I've visited the site. It is intimidating.
  - b. I don't have time to go through all those collections
  - c. This summer's experience.....
5. The Positives
  - a. Original documents can "inspire" students imaginations
    - i. Explanations of how secondary sources such as textbooks are written
    - ii. Discuss the stories behind the documents

**LOC Site:**

- b. Over 10 million resources
- c. Guides to help you locate resources
- d. Special collections to assist educators
- e. Discuss the following:
  - i. LOC main page
    1. Kids and Visitors
      - a. America's Library
        - i. America's Story from America's Library
        - ii. Today in history
        - iii. Wise Guide to LOC
          1. a type of online magazine featuring the collections of LOC
          2. refreshed monthly
        - iv. Lifelong Literacy
        - v. Local Legacies
        - vi. Everyday Mysteries
        - vii. Places in the news
        - viii. Center for the Book

ix. Veterans History Project

**2. Teachers (link)**

- a. Resources Section
  - i. Citing Electronic Resources
  - ii. Classroom Features and Activities
    - 1. Elections (Share)
  - iii. Reference Sites
  - iv. Thematic Resources
- b. Spotlight on Teachers Section
  - i. The Learning Page
  - ii. Getting Started...
    - 1. What are Primary Sources**
      - a. Discuss the three links on the page and show the pages.
      - b. Teacher Activity >Looking into Holidays Past > About this Activity > Document Analysis Worksheets
      - c. Introductory Lesson on Primary Resources
      - d. Student Workshop
      - e. Look at the other links
    - 2. How to.....**
      - a. As a teacher, review all the links on this page before making assignments
    - 3. Links**
      - a. As a teacher, review all the links on this page before making assignments.
    - 4. Site map**
    - 5. Features and Activities**
      - a. Previously discussed
    - 6. Collection Connections**
      - a. Collection Connections provide activity ideas for using the collections to develop critical thinking skills
      - b. View index
      - c. Select: [By Popular Demand: Portraits of the Presidents and First Ladies, 1789-Present](#)

- d. Review the suggestions incorporated with each entry.

7. **Community Center**

- a. Discussed earlier under Thematic Units

8. **Lesson Plans**

- a. Review the Resources about constructing lessons before selecting a lesson plan.
- b. Review lesson plans by Era, Topic, Theme or Discipline
- c. Select one to try in your classes.

9. **Don't miss...**

- a. Check out the newsletter.
- b. Great teaching ideas and suggestions
- c. You can subscribe

iii. **Exhibitions** <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/>  
*A list of exhibitions to visit or to view online.*

- 1. Links to Current Exhibitions,
- 2. All Exhibitions.

- a. Select an exhibition:
  - i. Note tabs at top.
  - ii. Select EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES: **note additional activities**

iv. **American Memory**

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

*American Memory is an online gateway to rich primary resources relating to the history and culture of the United States. The site offers more than 10 million digital items from more than 100 historical collections.*

- 1. Discuss briefly:
  - a. Links to collections
  - b. Today in History
  - c. Teachers link

v. **National Archives** [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov)

- 1. Discuss briefly:
  - a. (Right side menu) National Archives for Educators and Students

- b. (Center) Links for Teachers and Students
- c. (Left) Focus on Lesson Plans and Teaching Activities.
  - i. Show page and point out Analysis Worksheets on right side
  - ii. Select an era and point out background information and “Lesson Resources on left hand side.
  - iii. Other documents: [ourdocuments.gov](http://ourdocuments.gov)