

### teachinghistory.org

# History Education Lews

Dear Friends of History,

I'd like to welcome you to the first newsletter of the *National History Education Clearinghouse*, where you will find the latest information on resources and best practices for teaching American history in your classroom. The *Clearinghouse* website serves as a virtual meeting place for the most recent historical scholarship and new developments in the learning sciences that together can transform classroom practice. This newsletter provides a glimpse into the many resources that await you at *teachinghistory.org*. We invite you to explore our website and to provide us with your thoughts and suggestions.

Warmly,
Sam Wineburg,
Executive Producer

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#### About:

The National History Education Clearinghouse (NHEC) is designed to help K-12 teachers access resources and materials to improve U.S. history education in the classroom. NHEC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Innovation and Improvement's Teaching American History (TAH) program under contract number ED-07-CO-0088. It builds on and disseminates the valuable lessons learned by more than 800 TAH projects designed to raise student achievement by improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of traditional U.S. history. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Education nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

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## HISTORY CONTENT

How many hours have you spent online searching for history resources? Has it been rewarding? Frustrating? Both? History Content will help you quickly locate quality resources, including primary sources, websites, exhibits, and online history lectures. This newsletter features two popular websites with a national focus. Visit teachinghistory.org to search thousands of resources by time period, type of source, and/or keyword.

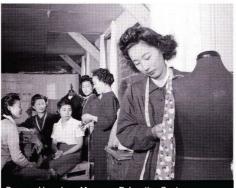
#### Featured Website Reviews

### Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

http://www.gilderlehrman.org/

This website provides close to 10,000 American historical documents, images, and objects from the fifteenth through the twenty-first century, including a weekly featured document. Exhibit topics include

Alexander Hamilton, the Dred Scott decision, and Abraham Lincoln. Podcasts address issues such as presidential history and the Great Depression. Additional resources include links to historical documents, published scholarship, and general history resources on the web.



Dressmaking class, Manzanar Relocation Center, Ansel Adams, Library of Congress, American Memory

#### American Memory: Historical Collections for the National Digital Library

http://lcweb2.loc.gov/amhome.html

This expansive archive of American history and culture features more than nine million items from 1490 to the present. Popular topics include the early republic, the Civil War, exploration and settlement of the West, and the New Deal. Collections offer papers of presidents, inventors, reformers, and composers. African American history, ethnic history, military history, political history, women's history, and social and cultural history are well documented. Furthermore, entertainment history is amply represented with collections on the American Variety Stage, Federal Theatre Project, and early sound recordings.

### HISTORY CONTENT



George Washington (Lansdowne Portrait), National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

Perfect for Younger Students!

George Washington: A National Treasure

Smithsonian Institution
http://www.georgewashington.si.edu

Explore the symbols and meaning in an interactive version of Gilbert Stuart's famous portrait of George Washington. Students can solve a mystery as they follow clues and find missing pieces.

Click on "Launch the Interactive Portrait."

#### Online History Lectures

Are you looking for a quick review of a particular topic? Or a deeper understanding of the causes, outcomes, or multiple perspectives of various historical events? Discover online audio and audiovisual lectures on history and history education from public historians, educators, authors, and university professors through this searchable database.

#### Featured Online History Lectures

us/speakers/index.html

Beyond Binary Interpretations: The Mexican War and Constitutional Issues http://www.teachingamericanhistory.

Listen to Professor Alex Saragoza discuss the Mexican-American war following the annexation of Texas. He focuses on different interpretations of the war and contemporary press coverage, and includes events that received media attention and those that did not

The Causes of the Civil War http://teachingamericanhistory.org/ seminars/2004/mcpherson.html

What caused the Civil War? Students, teachers, and scholars alike have debated and explored this question for close to 150 years. Listen as James McPherson discusses the many causes of the Civil War, including slavery, leadership decisions, and cultural differences.

teachinghistory.org

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### History Content In Your Backyard

Connect with local historic sites and museums and use your community as a teaching tool! Explore national locations online! Search by topic, time period, place type, state, and/or keyword. Museum educators are ready to host your class for an inquiry-based field trip, visit your classroom with an engaging outreach program, or provide you with exciting curriculum materials that connect local history to American history.

#### Featured Resources

#### **Preserve America**

http://www.preserveamerica.gov

Preserve America encourages and supports community efforts to discover and save history in our backyards. Grant awardees include: Williamsburg, Virginia, the eighteenth-century capital of the Virginia Colony; Billings, Montana, visited

by Lewis and Clark in 1806; Huntsville, Alabama, incorporated in 1811; Ketchikan, Alaska, a boom town during the Yukon gold rush in the late nineteenth century; and the main street program in Oskaloosa, Iowa. The program brings students and teachers together in collaboration with community organizations to promote heritage tourism and community preservation projects, such as the development of self-guided walking tours.





#### **Teaching With Historic Places**

http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/

Explore more than 100 historic places, such as the distinctive French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana, to learn about its Creole heritage and its role in American westward expansion. *Teaching with Historic Places* uses properties listed in the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places to enliven history, social studies, geography, and other subjects. The program has created a variety of lesson plans and classroom activities that help teachers bring historic places into their classrooms.

## BEST PRACTICES

Explore state-of-the-art practices and multimedia examples of classroom teaching and historical thinking. The content on teachinghistory.org draws on the latest historical scholarship and research into the teaching and learning of history.

### **Using Primary Sources**

Helping students learn to analyze primary sources is a complicated process, whether in elementary or secondary classrooms. Visit the National History Education Clearinghouse to find tools that teach students how to read different kinds of primary sources: from worksheets for analyzing maps, photographs, or speeches, to definitions of primary and secondary sources. Learn about strategies for thinking like a historian and for making sense of films and popular songs. Watch

historians in action as they talk about how to analyze historical sources.

#### Featured Resources **National Archives Document Analysis Worksheets**

http://www.archives.gov/education/ lessons/

These resources help students critically examine written documents, photographs, cartoons, posters, maps, artifacts, motion pictures, and sound recordings.



#### Library of Congress Media **Analysis Tools**

http://memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/ media.html

Use these worksheets to guide students' analysis of primary sources, including life histories, objects, and photographs. These can be used as general guides or with specific Library of Congress collections.

#### National Park Service **Teaching With Museum Collections**

http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/ tmc/index.htm

Use this lesson plan template or object chart to assist students' understanding of historical objects and what they tell us about history. Guided guestions ask students to examine such factors as the object's construction, purpose, value, and design.

## Examples of Historical Thinking

Over the past few years, researchers have made great strides in understanding how students actually learn history. On *teaching history.org*, you will find videos that show historians and students thinking out loud about primary sources and historical questions.

#### Featured Model

### Introduction to Historical Thinking and Reading

http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/why/

This Flash movie introduces historical thinking and models the process with historians "thinking out loud" about two primary source documents related to the shots fired at Lexington Green on April 19, 1775. Examples highlight four kinds of questions that historians ask about sourcing, contextualization, corroboration, and close reading.

### **Examples of Teaching**

At teachinghistory.org, you can explore online examples of teachers in action and gain insight into the planning and thinking that went into creating these activities.

#### Featured Models

### Improving Role-Playing Activities in the Classroom

http://www.tc.edu/ncrest/teachers/andrews/index.htm

This video shows a fifth-grade teacher teaching a unit entitled "Colonial New



Website, Historical Thinking Matters

York: Developing Perspectives through Historical Role Play." The site provides examples of two promising practices: establishing an understanding of historical time and place before engaging in roleplaying activities and continuing to build student understanding of historical context as students elaborate roles and take on perspectives.

Using Maps as Primary Sources http://chnm.gmu.edu/loudountah/explore sources/johnsmithclassroom.php

This website shows a fourth-grade teacher in northern Virginia teaching about a map drawn by John Smith that was published in 1612. The lesson asks students to answer the question: What is important to John Smith? The teacher carefully plans activities requiring students to look closely at the map and consider how this primary source helps them answer the central question.

## TEACHING MATERIALS

### Three Years' Service!

#### FAIL NOW. & OUR RACE IS DOOMED

#### ARE FREEMEN LESS BRAVE THAN SLAVE

Gilder Lehrman Collection, on deposit at the New York Historical Society

teachinghistory.org

Looking for ideas on how to teach a particular topic? Searching for innovative ways to improve your lesson plans? Teaching Materials contains examples encompassing a range of time periods, topics, and grade levels that teachers can use immediately. Gateway to History Lesson Plans allows educators to search quality online lesson plans and get immediate results. In addition, a database of state standards helps educators stay on top of history education in their states.

#### Reviewed Lesson Plans

Be sure to explore these reviewed lesson plans and join in the conversation about what makes selected plans and activities "classroom worthy." Classroom teachers have reviewed and critiqued these lesson plans according to the National History Education Clearinghouse rubric (available

at teachinghistory.org) with categories focused on analytic thinking, lesson structure, and scaffolding.

#### Featured Lesson Plans

#### A Look at Slavery through Posters and Broadsides

http://www.historynow.org/12 2004/lp4.html Elementary

This well-planned lesson that uses posters about slavery and abolition is particularly successful in teaching students to ask questions when reading a source. After the teacher models the task by analyzing a poster in front of the classroom, students analyze additional posters in small groups, and locate such information as author, audience, purpose, and message. They use this data to consider the attitudes towards slavery conveyed in the posters.



#### Children's Letters to Mrs. Roosevelt: Analyzing the Letters

http://www.newdeal.feri.org/classrm/clasdmr1.htm

Middle and High School

This one- to two-day lesson plan uses short, evocative letters from children to Eleanor Roosevelt. Students gain an intriguing picture of what their own lives might have been like in the 1930s. The letters are part of a larger phenomenon—Americans sent an unprecedented number of letters to the White House during FDR's presidency. In fact, an average of more than 5,000 letters arrived daily!

#### **American Presidents**

http://www.americanpresidents.org/classroom/gen13.asp

Middle and High School

This lesson uses analytic questions to investigate letters by American Presidents. The content coverage is broad. Students are asked questions, phrased in student-

friendly language, to think about a letter's audience, purpose, and tone. Using several letters across instructional units or over several class periods will provide students with multiple opportunities to develop their ability to critically examine letters as historical documents.

#### Ask a Master Teacher

Ask a question online about your history classroom at teachinghistory.org.

- "How do I use document-based questions (DBQs) with my struggling readers?"
- •"How do I challenge gifted tenth graders?"

Experienced classroom teachers are on hand to help think through various questions on teaching and learning.

Questions are answered via email, and may also be posted in our archives for others to review.

## ISSUES AND RESEARCH

Stay up to date with current issues and research that affect history education. Browse research briefs and monthly issue roundtables and join in the vibrant conversation on history education.

#### Featured Issue Roundtable

In March 2007, a statement composed by a consortium of professional organizations, including the Teaching Division of the American Historical Association (AHA) and the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), urged Congress to add history (along with civics/government, economics, and geography) to subjects already covered under "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB). We asked our respondents to consider this statement and focus on the possible outcomes of the assessment and monitoring procedures that accompany NCLB.

Read excerpts from their responses below; view the full responses and join the conversation at teachinghistory.org.

#### **Testing Increases Attention to History**

"The American Historical Association resolved in 2007 to support the addition of history to the fields of testing under NCLB. The resolution came to the AHA Council from the Teaching Division of the association, an elected body with representation from secondary, community college, and university levels, which I chaired at the time. Our main point was that if history is to be a high-priority subject in the public-school curriculum, then it must be tested and evaluated, as math and reading have been."

~Patrick Manning, historian

### We Don't Want History Left For Last

"The simple truth is that history/social

studies should be standardized because they are key parts of the curriculum. These subjects teach us what, where, why, when, and how. In fact, history has the capacity to anchor everything else we teach in the curriculum."

~Kelly Clark, elementary school teacher

History has the capacity to anchor everything else we teach in the curriculum.

~Kelly Clark, elementary school teacher

#### There are Other Ways to Improve **History Education**

"The federal and state governments should invest in a mandate to change the

current English language arts assessments to include a defined and designated non-fiction component, tied to a state's mandated history/social studies curriculum framework. English language arts and social studies departments at every level would have to collaborate to help students become fluent in the varied literacies required in today's world." ~Michelle Davidson Ungurait, secondary

#### Let's Teach History, Not Watch the Scoreboard

schools curriculum director

"Education should be about helping students make sense of their surrounding world. Integrating the 'well told story' of the past into our students' reality is the authentic charge of our discipline. Standardized testing does not measure that. It does, however, function well as an auditioning tool for 'Are You Smarter than a Fifth Grader?"

~Max W. Fischer, middle school teacher

#### **Teaching History Well is the Answer**

"Historians should be offering assistance to teachers, going into classrooms and talking to students. We should listen to teachers and provide them with what they want and need. We should write books for elementary school students and high school students, or at least be willing to collaborate on them."

~Carol Berkin, historian

#### Coming Soon

#### Featured Research Brief

### TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY GRANTS

Explore resources related to Teaching American History (TAH) grants to learn from current and past grants and to plan for future grant applications.

#### **TAH Grants Database**

Explore the TAH database to find project abstracts, award amounts, contact information, and partners. Search by year, location, and/or keyword. Quickly find projects in your state or ones that focus on specific content areas, such as "Abraham Lincoln" or "World War II," methodological terms—including historical thinking—or grade levels.

#### Lessons Learned

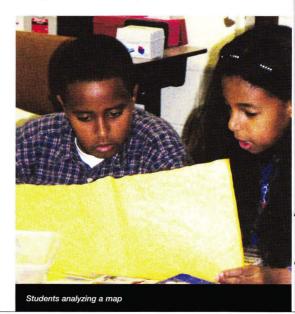
Lessons Learned features essays from directors, project partners, and participating teachers reflecting on their grant experiences. Topics include recruitment, sustainability, building strong partnerships, effective workshops, and meeting the needs of teachers. Read these essays on teachinghistory.org.

The Power of Primary Sources: How Teaching American History Grants Changed My Classroom

"Before beginning my first Teaching American History (TAH) grant in 2003, I was a struggling new teacher. I found myself struggling to get my students to become as enthusiastic about history as I was. I worked every day to get them to see a connection between what we were studying and their own lives. It was not until the lead professor of my TAH grant took us to do research at the nearby National Archives facility that I really caught a vision of how using primary

sources could engage my history students."

~Tracy Hutton (Kansas)



teachinghistory.org

### The Critical Role of Assessment in Evaluating TAH Projects

"For many projects, outcomes are expressed as gains in student achievement as a direct result of TAH projects, so the assessment of student achievement can be the linchpin of an evaluation design. The question then remains, 'What is a valid assessment?' The key to answering that question, based on my experience evaluating several TAH grants, is the extent to which the assessments used in the evaluation are 'content valid,' or aligned to the content and goals of the project."

~Dr. Michael Herrick (Wisconsin)

### Project Spotlight

### Sharing Ideas and Practice: History Grows in Oakland (California)

How do teachers incorporate ideas learned from TAH workshops into classroom practice? How can TAH project directors, partners, and participants share resources with each other and learn from the successes of other grants? History Grows in Oakland project addresses both of these questions by sharing its process of lesson study as well as numerous content resources. One section of the website is devoted to lesson study, making visible the process of teachers working together to develop, teach, evaluate, and revise lessons to improve their instruction.

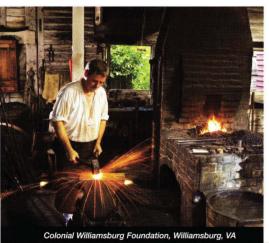
### A Focus on American Political Thought (Ohio)

Bringing a well-known, founding document such as the Declaration of Independence into the classroom can be exciting, but it can also be daunting. *TeachingAmerican History.org*, created by the Ashbrook Center for Public Affairs at Ashland University, provides the transcribed text of the Declaration alongside related documents, such as the rough draft of the Declaration and the Constitution of Virginia, that can help teachers and students place it into a larger historical context.

### Tell us what you think...

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Summer is the perfect time to participate in workshops and distance learning courses or to explore opportunities and events for the upcoming school year. Search for events and professional organizations nationally and in your own backyard.



Featured Workshops and Lectures

#### Metalworking for Revolution Colonial Williamsburg

All levels; November 16-19;

Cost: TBD

Reservations are first come, first served. Apply early!

www.history.org/History/institute/institute\_about.cfm

This symposium will "explore the role of metalworkers in supplying the equipment needed to fight the American Revolution. It will focus on the materials, technologies, and skills of blacksmiths, founders, silversmiths, gunsmiths, tinsmiths, and toolmakers," including lectures and craft demonstrations. Call 757-220-7255 for more information.

Integrating Field Research Activities into Your Classroom Curricula National Park Service

Grades 4-8; October 14-15;

Cost: \$225

Reservations are first come, first served. Apply early! Stipends and scholarships available!

www.nps.gov/acad/forteachers/ professionaldevelopment.htm

Integrate field research activities into your classroom curricula with the Schoodic Education Adventure program. Join us for two- and three-day workshops as we investigate opportunities to collect field data, apply it to classroom lessons across the curricula, and connect it to real-world applications in America's national parks. Workshop activities highlight studies of forest community structure, marine biodiversity, geology, soil development, and New England history.

#### Featured Online Courses

### Primary Sources Workshops in American History

http://teachinghistory.org/professionaldevelopment/online-courses/15769

These free (registration required) workshops from Annenberg Media are designed to help high-school teachers develop activities and lessons with documents that deal with controversial topics in American History. Topics include: Colonial America, the American Revolution, the Lowell system, Emancipation, the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition, the census, public health: Typhoid Mary, and Korea and the Cold War.



#### America's History in the Making

http://www.learner.org/channel/courses/amerhistory

Historian Gary Nash serves as lead advisor for this professional development series that begins with pre-contact Native American history and continues through Reconstruction. The course is designed to enrich middle-school and high-school teachers' American history knowledge, while introducing teaching methods that will help them develop their own classroom applications. Registration is required (no fee) to stream videos and download all workshop materials.

### The Second Wave (Immigration 1850–1920)

http://memory.loc.gov/learn/educators/workshop/european/wover.html

This workshop examines the question: what was America like for immigrants arriving at the turn of the century? Designed for upper-elementary and middle-school teachers.

#### Featured Grants and Fellowships

#### **Motorola Lincoln Grants**

Apply now and be ready for the Lincoln Bicentennial—applications due July 30. The Motorola Foundation is proud to partner with the Chicago History Museum to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth. Working in collaboration, they will identify projects developed by U.S. civic, educational, and cultural organizations that actively engage the public in the lessons from Lincoln's life. For more information, see www.motorola.com.

#### National Education Association Learning and Leadership Grants

These grants fund individual participation in high-quality professional development experiences, such as summer institutes or action research. Applications may be submitted at any time. For more information, see <a href="https://www.neafoundation.org">www.neafoundation.org</a>.



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