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
Coming soon

New content will be added regularly to all National History Education Clearinghouse features. Visit weekly to view new blog postings, information, and topics and to participate in ongoing discussions. New features in the coming months include:

English Language Learners
NHEC will feature guides to best practices for teaching history to English language learners, including specific strategies such as vocabulary legends, questioning the author, and using non-textual sources such as images and music to help students access challenging content.

History Quiz
"A man who has never gone to school may steal from a freight car, but if he has a university education, he may steal the whole railroad." Did a president really say that? Identify famous presidential quotes spoken by (or never spoken by) presidential lips! Or figure out what invention is represented in this patent drawing:

Coming in fall 2008, visit our weekly quiz. Submit your answer and enter a drawing to win a USB flash drive!

Teaching with Textbooks
The textbook is a mainstay of the history classroom. Visit this feature in Best Practices to learn ways to use textbooks with precision and purpose. Featured strategies include opening up the textbook and analyzing textbook language—both focus on teaching reading and historical thinking.
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.

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.
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

Beyond Binary Interpretations: The Mexican War and Constitutional Issues
http://www.teachingamericanhistory.us/speakers/index.html
Listen to Professor Alex Saragosa 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
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.
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.

Ask a Historian

- "Who was the typical American family?"
- "Why aren't Delaware and Georgia included on the body of Ben Franklin's famous Join or Die snake?"

Submit a question you have always wanted to ask or a question your students posed today in class.

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.
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 questions 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 teachinghistory.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

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.
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.

**Featured Lesson Plans**

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


**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.

**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.
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

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.
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

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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 schools curriculum director

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

Let's Teach History, Not Watch the Scoreboard

"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

Coming Soon

The second roundtable addresses the role of multiple choice testing in the history curriculum. Theodore K. Rabb of Princeton University presents his perspective in an opening statement, followed by alternative views. Join the conversation and share your views and experiences.

Upcoming Roundtables:
- American History—new perspectives from world history
- History Teachers—education and qualifications

Featured Research Brief

Learning to Think Historically: A Classic Study

What does a curriculum designed to foster historical understanding and thinking look like? This research brief discusses a groundbreaking curricular innovation in the UK that left an indelible mark on history instruction in that country and throughout the English-speaking world.

Project founders believed that traditional instruction left students with bodies of information, but with little idea of how to evaluate it. Students could commit to memory an agreed-upon narrative, but they lacked a way of deciding whether it—or any other narrative—was true. The project's evaluator likened students from traditional history classes to those in a drama class, who could talk "sensibly about the separate scenes and characters of King Lear, but do not know what a play is."

Read more at teachinghistory.org.
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)
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. TeachingAmericanHistory.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.
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/professional-development/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 www.neafoundation.org.