Grade 2 - PA State Standards:

- 1.2.2 Reading Critically In All Content Areas
- 1.4.2 Types of Writing
- 1.5.2 Quality of Writing
- 2.2.2 Computation and Estimation


Local Primary Source # 1: Local grocery store, Donora Smog Museum

Comparing and Contrasting Past and Present Grocery Stores

Local primary sources and national primary sources are extremely useful when teaching students about things in the past and present. There are many different newspaper articles, videos, pictures, maps, etc. that could be used in the classroom. For this lesson in particular, I am using two local primary sources and two primary sources from the Library of Congress. To begin my lesson, I will ask my students if they have ever gone grocery shopping with a parent/guardian. I will ask them what they see inside the grocery store. I will ask: “What does it look like inside? Describe the store using adjectives.” I will show the students a picture of a grocery store in Donora (discuss where Donora is and what happened in Donora about 60 years ago) showing a Christmas sale. I will ask the student what is the difference between this photograph of the store in Donora, PA compared to a local grocery store that they may have been in. Students will brainstorm their ideas; ideas will be recorded on chart paper. Once the students can’t describe any other differences between the store in the photograph and the local grocery store, the students will take a field trip to a local grocery store. We will also be taking a trip to the Donora Smog Museum (since it is the subject we are discussing and students know a general idea about the Donora Smog incident they will enjoy seeing artifacts up close in the museum). At the grocery store, students will take notebooks and record what they see. They will be required to locate specific items (oranges, 1 lb. macaroni, Welch’s Grape Juice and Pepsi) and record the price. Once students return to the school, they will continue to brainstorm the differences between the store in the photograph and the store they visited. Because students have visited the store, they should be able to gather more ideas! Since there are plenty of ideas written on chart paper, the students will complete a Venn diagram. They will record what they know about the grocery store in Donora, PA in the circle on the left, facts they know about the local grocery store in the circle on the right, and the similarities between the two stores in the center circle.

At the grocery store, students were required to locate items. I will display a photograph that I located from the LOC on an overhead projector; photograph of an advertisement displaying grocery prices. I will ask students to locate the items in the advertisement that they
located in the local grocery store. Once students have located the 3 items, I will ask them to look at the cost. They will take out their notebook and determine if the prices that they found in the local grocery store during the field trip are the same as the prices in the advertisement. Obviously, the prices are nowhere near the same! Students will then tell what the price of Pepsi was in the local grocery store. I will display a photograph of a grocery store. I will ask students to locate the Pepsi advertisement in the photograph. Students will determine the cost of Pepsi. Students will then refer to their notebook and tell what the price of Pepsi was that they found in the local grocery store. Students will determine the difference in cost. I will ask:

*Were things more expensive back then? Why not? What are some reasons that you think costs were so low?*

Students will brainstorm their ideas and I will write them on chart paper. I will save the ideas. I will ask my students to go home and have them ask a relative (such as grandma/grandpap) why they believe prices were lower many years ago compared to today. Students are required to write at least 1 reason. When the students return to school the next day, I will ask what they found out from grandma/grandpap. Students will discuss the ideas and we will determine if any of the ideas were recorded the previous day on the chart paper (though we are looking for new ideas). Once we have discussed all of the ideas as to why prices have changed over the years, students will be required to write a small paragraph (about 6-8 sentences) on something they have learned about the change of prices over the years. The ideas located on chart paper will be displayed for those students who need it. Once students have written what they have learned, they will be asked to share their papers!

The students will get a general idea of the Donora smog incident and will see artifacts up close at the museum. Students will be comparing and contrasting differences between grocery stores in the mid 1900’s to grocery stores in the modern 20th century. Students will also be comparing and contrasting grocery prices from back then to prices today. Overall, I think students will enjoy the lessons on Donora. Many different subjects are integrated into the lesson and I think students will gain a lot of knowledge between the past and present.