Charleroi Area Workshop

Twenty-seven teachers from various grade levels attended a two-hour workshop that focused on teacher resources at the Library of Congress and search strategies to successfully locate and access resources to enhance classroom instruction. Teachers were briefed on the differences between primary and secondary sources as well as the rationale for using primary sources to engage students. The teachers in this group are members of Charleroi’s Technology Academy. The Technology Academy is an outgrowth of the Classrooms for the Future grant and members of the Academy learn teaching with technology skills and explore ways to effectively integrate technology into classroom instruction. The Library of Congress web site is ideal for teaching with technology projects as it provides various types of electronic resources that support differentiated learning at all grade levels across all disciplines.

Charleroi Area National History Day

Jennifer Daum, eighth grade teacher is working with a group of students to introduce them to National History Day and to prepare them for a contest to be held in April at California University of PA. Mr. Nick Roberts, Instructional Specialist with the Teaching with Primary Sources program, has visited with Ms. Daum and her students to introduce them to the Library of Congress and to help them understand the role that primary sources play in history and how they can be used to enhance National History Day contest entries.

Both the workshop and the National History Day project are delivered in support of the Professional Development School collaboration that exists between California University of PA and the Charleroi Area school district.
TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

ANNEMARIE SAYS!

AnneMarie Walter, Associate Director, LC/TPS Mars Hill College

AnneMarie says, “Looking for some fun math lessons and creative problems for your grade school stu-

dents? At MathLab 101 you will find concept building links, to explain fractions, problems solving links and m u ch n o r e. 
http://www.manatee.k12.fl.us/sites/elementary/palmasol/a/mathlab.htm,”

Build it from Scratch
Think of Lego building blocks as computer code. Here is a free downloadable program that can get any-

one started building interactive programs. This new programming language was developed at the MIT Media 
Lab to turn ‘kids from media consumers into media pro-
ducers, enabling them to create their own interactive stories, games, music, and animation for the Web. ‘With this new software, 
called Scratch, kids can program interactive crea-
tions by simply snapping together graphical blocks, 
much like LEGO® bricks, without any of the obscure 
punctuation and syntax of traditional programming 
languages. Children can

PHILOSOPHY OF PRIMARY SOURCES FOR SCIENCE AND MATH

Our department has a lot of minds to change since it believes that primary sources can—and ought to—be used throughout the academic disciplines.

The mental opposition is that primary source mater-
vials are typically thought to exist in just a few forms—be it photographs, journals, sound recordings, and let-
ters. (This is likely because we are sticking to our roots; the term “primary source” originated in historiogra-
phy.) This thinking largely restricts the use of primary sources to social studies disciplines. Educators today should realize that primary sources are much more versatile than what their r o o t s d i s c l o s e.

Standing on the shoulders of past achievements, pri-
mary sources today m a y vary by discipline. For ex-


ample, in the natural sci-
ences, primary sources could include original lab reports or new theoretical ideas. In medicine or psy-

chiatry, they could include official diagnoses or case study histories.

This subjective philosophy carries over to mathematics as well. Here primary sources can include re-

search literature detailing new numerical discoveries or uses in emergent fields such as data mining or n a n o t e c h n o l o g y .

Those who hesitate to adapt might also think that primary sources—which are often seen as aged re-

sources—seem curious for modern resources. However, the only criteria for a primary source is that it’s original and comes from direct experience. Thus, nothing about the history of primary sources restricts them from use in contemporary disciplines.

As any one who teaches with primary sources knows, the efficacy in their use is rather expansive (e.g., they boost student interest, critical thinking, creativity, and build empathy for the human condition). And what science or math teacher wouldn’t want to do that?

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM

Computers in the High School Classroom

High school teachers face enormous pressure to prepare students for state standardized tests, college ad-

missions tests, and AP ex-
ams. Do computers “get in the way” of teaching in such an environment or can tech-

nology improve achieve-
ment without taking time away from the curriculum? Education World’s Tech Team offers opinions on the reality and possibilities of “teaching” in high school. Included are nine easy ways to integrate technology in high school and links to technology in action at high schools across Amer-

ica. AP exams, college ad-
missions tests, the dreaded state standardized tests, no matter where you are in America, if you teach high school, you’re probably teaching to a test. Almost everything you do in the high school classroom seems to revolve around test success, and much of that means cramming students with equations, dates, concepts, vocabulary, and more. Is there room for computers in this quest for test suc-

cess? Are the benefits of technology-infused lessons worth the risks of time away from a traditionally taught curriculum? Education World asked members of its Tech Team, many of whom are high school teachers them-
selves, what’s really happening in high school technology -- and what could be happening with a little knowledge and planning. This information was retrieved on February 19, 2007. For more information on computers in the high school class-

room visit http:// www.educationworld.com/ 

a_tech/tech/tech211.shtml.

For more information, please contact: 
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