TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES
AT CALIFORNIA UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES

NEWSLETTER: NOVEMBER 2013

HEINZ HISTORY CENTER – EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The Heinz History Center recently welcomed a new Education Manager and the team is busy creating exciting opportunities for teachers and students. Teachers can earn Act 48 credits and learn great material for the classroom during professional development evenings, including Faces of Abolition in Western Pennsylvania this January, and History and Hollywood: Teaching Social Studies Through Film this February. Students can benefit from a full slate of fun, rigorous, and standards-aligned student learning experiences. They can examine the impact of slavery on Western Pennsylvania in the From Slavery to Freedom exhibition or explore Pennsylvania’s role in the Civil War through focused gallery activities and analyzing primary source materials in our Library and Archives. The History Center has also launched a new curriculum resource website, www.heinzhistorycenter.org/classroom, with units that bring period maps, images, advertisements, personal communication, and more into the classroom. This resource will continue to grow in the coming year. National History Day 2014 is also underway, a program that empowers 6-12th graders to conduct meaningful primary source research, analysis, writing, and presentation. For dates and more details about the event, go to the History Center website. For information about any event or resources, contact Education Manager, Mariruth Leftwich at maleftwich@heinzhistorycenter.org or Lead Educator, Kate Lukaszewicz at kalukaszewicz@heinzhistorycenter.org.

UPCOMING TRAINING

TPS Basic Online Course
30 Free Act 48 Hours

Spring 2014
Section 1 – January
Section 2 - February

Contact Lynne Berdar
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Using a 1916 Christmas Play to Engage Students

What Makes Christmas Christmas: A Morality Play in One Act by Grace L. Jones was written for the Columbus School for Girls and performed for the first time at the Christmas dinner in 1916. The play, suitable for middle or secondary students, can be used to examine morality, meaning, perspectives and as a prompt for persuasive or argumentative writing. Enhance the experience by having students listen to a YouTube reading of the play.

Using Primary Source Christmas Resources to Compare Present with Past

Among all the holiday sales and festivities, people continually debate if the spirit of Christmas has diminished or continues to live on. Use this timeless debatable topic to show students how things seem to change yet remain the same by reading Arnold Bennett’s 1917 classic, “The Feast of St. Friend.” Bennett shares his views on Christmas goodwill using satire and thought provoking ideas that read just as well today as they did then. On page 9, Bennett writes, “That Christmas has lost some of its magic that the common sense of the western hemisphere will not dispute.” That thought alone connects yesterday with today and, thusly, draws students in. The book’s text and topical perspectives are suitable for secondary student reading and writing assignments and can be used for compare/contrast debates. Besides addressing the topic of Christmas spirit, the book can be used as a primer to have students examine society and culture during the 1900 – 1920 time period and consider how society has changed or remained the same compared to today. Search Library of Congress for keywords “Christmas” and “1915.”

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http://www.calu.edu/business-community/teaching-primary-sources/
The California History-Social Science project at UC Davis

The California History-Social Science Project (CHSSP) is a collaborative, statewide network of classroom teachers and university scholars dedicated to improving classroom instruction, student learning, and literacy. Through its programs, leaders provide teachers with a research-based and classroom-tested approach to improve students' understanding of the past, critical thinking, reading, and writing.

This portion of the TPS newsletter highlights lessons from the History Blueprint project at UC Davis. The History Blueprint is a dynamic program of curriculum, innovative assessment tools, student literacy support, and teacher professional development, aligned with Common Core State Standards, designed to revolutionize history instruction, and increase student learning and literacy. Although the lessons align with CA Common Core Standards, they easily adapt to PA Common Core standards.

Civil War Lesson #3 – Strategies & Battles

The third lesson asks students to consider the impact of individual sacrifice, regional geography, military leadership and tactics, and national resources on the eventual outcome of the Civil War. More specifically, students are asked to consider twelve battles that were especially important in shaping the course of the war. They will gather information on each battle, and based on its importance, will evaluate whether or not it was a turning point in the war.

This lesson includes a number of activities designed to improve student reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and expository writing ability. For example, students are taught how a text is structured by comparison and contrast, as they compare and contrast the advantages of the north and the south. In their study of Confederate military strategy, students gain practice in understanding unfamiliar vocabulary in context. The concluding activity helps students understand how to marshal evidence to support an interpretation.

For an Introduction to the History Blueprint Civil War Unit, click on the following webinars:
- Webinar: Introduction to History Blueprint and Civil War Unit
- Webinar: Common Core Skills, Academic Literacy, Historical Thinking, and the California History-Social Science Standards in the Civil War unit

Chapter 3: Building Instructional Modules

In this chapter, we will build on “What Task?,” or the teaching task design from Chapter 2, and explore the LDC module tools and what is involved in designing an LDC module that wraps around the teaching task.

Having tasks that connect the CCSS to what students are asked to do is only the beginning. The tasks need to be taught. The LDC module system moves educators from thinking about designing quality teaching tasks – the large piece of work that students are asked to do – to thinking about how students will accomplish the task. Once again, there are key questions educators need to consider, following the initial all-important “what task?” question: What skills do students need to accomplish the task? What instructional experiences will students need to do to develop those skills, and what do teachers need to do to teach students the skills? How do we know what success on the task looks like?

All together, in LDC short-hand, we refer to the LDC module as a series of four key steps:
- What Task?
- What Skills?
- What Instruction?
- What Results?

These four sections, built step-by-step, make up a complete LDC module. In essence, an LDC module is a comprehensive literacy plan – starting from a teaching task and ending with a student product – that teachers teach over approximately a 2-4 week period. Sample modules are included in the appendix, and we suggest you take a look at them. As you read through this chapter, you may want to refer to the actual modules to help make sense of the explanations.

The LDC system supports teachers in building their own modules based on a single LDC task they design. The elements of the module tools ensure that the reading, writing, and thinking skills students need to successfully complete the task are intentionally taught and are deeply connected to selected content.