

Research-Based Curriculum



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Introduction

Traditionally, the teaching of social studies has focused primarily on the rote memorization of important facts and dates. This approach to social studies instruction relies heavily on textbooks. However, developments in the past several years have led to major changes in the methodology used to teach these subjects. These changes came as the result of the assimilation of research on effective teaching practices and the development of comprehensive standards for social studies. This document describes the research base of Teacher Created Materials' *Exploring Primary Sources* series and explains the program components that were developed from this research.

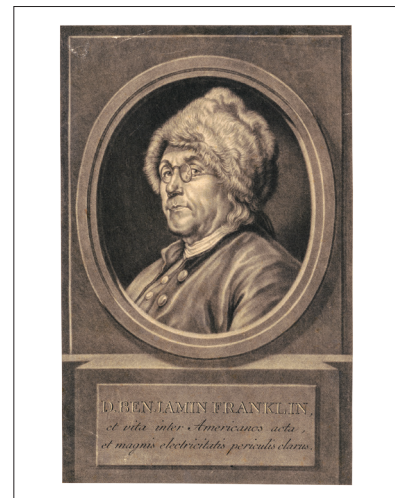
Teacher Created Materials has created this series to support effective instruction and close the achievement gap evidenced in schools around the country. The research evidence compiled from numerous studies shows that students who are not achieving to their potential require different teaching strategies. In addition to teaching strategies, curriculum programs must be designed to include both content and process standards. Teacher Created Materials has followed national and state content standards, including College and Career Readiness standards (CCR), when creating the *Exploring Primary Sources* series. The CCR standards include the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), as well as other state-adopted standards such as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs). Research has also shown effective programs include assessment that drives instruction. A variety of assessments were included in the program to assess students' content knowledge and process skills.



Primary Sources

The term *primary source* covers a wide range of materials linked by their connections to the past. Have your students ever held a handwritten letter from Abigail Adams or Benjamin Franklin? How about a presidential ballot? By their nature, primary sources increase students' content knowledge while allowing them to practice critical-thinking skills. Primary sources are engaging; they catch students' attention with special characteristics that stand out against a backdrop of textbooks and worksheets. Colors, textures, handwriting, graphics, and other features make primary sources inherently interesting (Potter 2005). Holding a letter written by a historical figure, examining a map that was carried into battle, or reading a document created centuries ago helps students connect with their subject matter in a unique way.

According to Lee Ann Potter, the three main reasons to teach with primary sources are that "...they are a part of the past; they are with us today; and touching them allows us, quite literally, to touch and connect with the past" (2003, 377). Primary sources are materials created by participants in or witnesses to important events. They give firsthand accounts or direct evidence of a subject being studied. Primary sources can be printed texts such as pamphlets, newspapers, and reports. They can be manuscripts and archival materials such as diaries, letters, clothing, and tools. Visual materials include photographs, maps, and sketches that serve as primary sources. Audio and visual recordings are also important primary sources. And more recently, internet materials have become a category of their own (Lucy Scribner Library 2016).

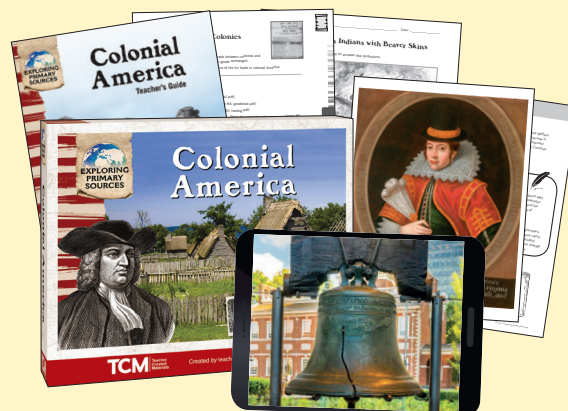


**EXPLORING
PRIMARY
SOURCES**

Research to Practice

Exploring Primary Sources provides opportunities for students to participate in what one scholar has described as this "communion with the primary materials" (Eamon 2006, 299). While some materials or reading textbooks are beyond the struggling reader's conceptual abilities, or simply too brief, these lessons encourage the use of scenarios and stories that give depth and breadth to the work being taught that is appropriate for the age level and the level of reading. The primary sources included in each *Exploring Primary Sources* kit illustrate differing viewpoints and encourage students to interpret the social, political, and economic institutions of the time period they are studying. The Teacher's Guide contains a historical background information page for each primary source that situates the source in its historical context, as well as explains any broader historical significance that the source carries.

Students around the world have benefited from *Exploring Primary Sources* kits. The series has been awarded the Association of American Publishers' Distinguished Achievement Award as well as critical acclaim from educators.



Active, Engaged Learning

New federal and state standards are placing greater emphasis on critical thinking and deeper reading than previous assessment-driven approaches allowed. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills calls for teachers in the United States to shape students who are able to solve problems, think creatively, and work effectively with others. Furthermore, CCR standards emphasize active, engaged reading that leads to a deeper understanding of complex texts in preparation for college and careers (Jaeger 2012).

Shays's Rebellion

About the Painting
 This painting by Howard Pyle was completed in 1883. It was done in oil on canvas. The painting shows a mob outside of a courthouse. The mob of protestors is stopping a farm foreclosure hearing from happening. Many acts such as this one took place between August 1786 and February 1787. Daniel Shays, a farmer from Massachusetts, led these rebellions. He came back from the war to find his and other farmers' lands were being foreclosed. He became a leader of the movement protesting these unfair foreclosures. Shays is shown toward the middle of the painting in the red coat.

Analyzing History

- What details show this is an organized event? What are in the men's hands?
- What do you think Shays is saying to the men surrounding him at this event?
- The stairs are packed with protestors. What are the different feelings these men may have had? What events could have shaped their feelings at this historic moment?
- Compare this protest with ones today. How do they differ? How are they the same?

Historical Writing

Fiction
 Pretend you are a journalist interviewing Shays as he walks with his men to a courthouse in Massachusetts. They are not going to let the court hear foreclosure cases against farmers in the area. Write about the conversation you have with Shays.

Nonfiction
 After Shays and the Regulators shut down several debtor courts, militia groups were called out to stop them. But many of the men in these groups sympathized with the Regulators and often switched sides. Write about what you would do if you were asked to stop the Regulators. Make sure to write about both sides of the conflict.

Writing Challenge

The Constitution includes an army clause, which was included as a direct result of Shays's Rebellion and other protests. Research the debate about standing armies that took place during the Constitutional Convention. Write a response in favor of the Federalist or Anti-Federalist views.

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Research to Practice

The *Exploring Primary Sources* series involves students in role-playing and research to solve a problem. The lessons in *Exploring Primary Sources* were designed based on specific recommendations in recent research. Because the strategies for active learning described in these programs are innovative, calling for change in classroom techniques, many of the strategies work better than traditional, teacher-centered approaches. The *Exploring Primary Sources* series is designed to go well beyond the standard procedures: copying notes from the board, passively listening to a teacher's lecture, or answering multiple choice questions from a text. These lessons are designed to make students active learners, good decision makers, and competent problem solvers. The strategies promote a high level of student participation. The lessons challenge students to develop speaking skills and the intellectual dexterity to debate, make speeches, lobby wisely and shrewdly, and take part in hearings, discussions, and simulations.

Inquiry-Based Teaching

Potter (2017) believes that digital natives are "growing up in a time where if they have questions, they suspect that the answer exists somewhere." This was not what students believed before they carried computers around in their pockets. As Sam Wineburg states in his book *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*, "We live in an age when going to the library means turning on our laptops and making sure we have a wireless connection" (2018, 2). Educators need to make sure that students are using valid and reliable sources to find answers to their questions. "We need to make sure that not only are we teaching kids that we can find answers to questions, but we also need to be cognizant of where those answers are coming from" (Potter 2017). Students who study primary sources learn to ask important questions such as "Is this valid?" "What is the bias?" "Who created this?" Those questions are important for students to ask themselves when they're conducting any type of research, especially in today's digital world.

Studying primary sources through an inquiry-based model replicates the way historians work. Historians piece together clues about the past to determine what happened and why (Rosenzweig 2010). History is not a discipline of reading and memorizing facts. It is a discipline of asking questions, comparing stories, and weighing differing perspectives (Rosenzweig & Wineburg). Students benefit from authentic learning experiences where they do the work of historians, geographers, economists, and political scientists. Primary sources invite students into historical inquiry. They provide opportunities for students to ask questions, look for clues, and draw conclusions (National Archives Experience). According to the Why Historical Thinking Matters project, “Using the questions historians ask about sourcing, contextualizing, close reading, and corroborating, we begin to see history as an inviting set of stories awaiting investigation” (Rosenzweig & Wineburg, slide 10).

Teaching Students to Think

The authenticity of primary sources makes them valuable teaching tools. They are materials created by real people in connection with real-life events. They have histories of their own that enhance the subjects being studied (Potter 2003). This authenticity extends to students’ interactions with primary sources. Instead of receiving information passively, students are actively engaged in inquiry. They ask questions, make comparisons, and draw conclusions. According to the position statement of the NCSS, “There is a profound difference between learning about the actions and conclusions of others and reasoning one’s way toward those conclusions. Active learning is not just ‘hands-on,’ it is ‘minds-on’” (2008, 182).

Primary sources help students develop important critical-thinking skills. Charles Perfetti, a professor of psychology at the University of Pittsburgh, found that college students exposed to primary sources learned to read, write, and think more critically (Perfetti et al. 1994). The students who used only textbooks and secondary sources tended to view history as clear-cut and uncomplicated. The students who used primary sources questioned the sources’ origins, identified biases, compared accounts from multiple sources, and drew conclusions. These students referred to evidence and cited sources of information more often than students who did not use primary sources. Perfetti concluded that primary sources help students recognize the importance of accuracy in the materials and in their own interpretations (Rosenzweig 2010).

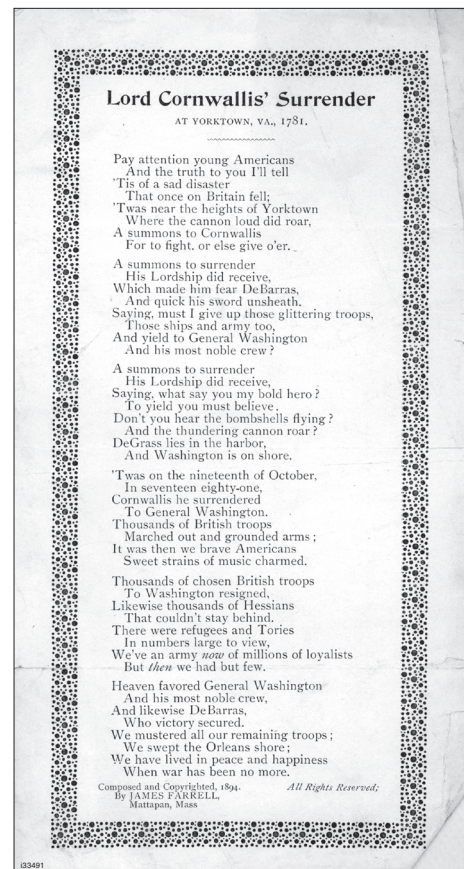
In its curriculum standards, the NCSS (2010) stresses the importance of historical thinking skills. Primary sources help students develop these skills. As students interact with documents and artifacts, they identify biases, determine the validity and reliability of sources, and recognize the need for multiple perspectives on issues and events. They are able to compare and contrast information, examine cause-and-effect relationships, ask questions, find evidence, and learn about historical contexts. These are skills that are beneficial to students and citizens alike.



Multiple Intelligences and Multimodal Learning

In 1983, Howard Gardner proposed his theory of multiple intelligences, explaining in a coherent system what many cognitive psychologists, biologists, and cultural researchers had recently been discovering. In his landmark book, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Gardner suggests “a new theory of human intellectual competencies...[that] challenges the classical view of intelligence that most of us have absorbed explicitly (from psychology and education texts) or implicitly (by living in a culture with a strong but possibly circumscribed view of intelligence)” (Gardner 1983, 5). He identifies these different intelligences as linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and intra- and interpersonal. Perhaps surprisingly, Gardner suggests that these intelligences are “relatively autonomous” in their development and function (Gardner 1983, 8). In other words, a child who displays difficulties learning certain mathematical concepts or solving equations does not necessarily indicate someone lacking intelligence. Instead, this child might have a stronger intelligence in a different cognitive category or might simply be viewing the concepts or equations in a different, or even deeper, way due to their unique intellectual strengths and weaknesses.

Not at all surprisingly, educators have responded to the concept of multiple intelligences with great interest and enthusiasm. Gardner’s theory seemed to put into words what teachers have observed in their students for many years—that students can display weakness in one particular area while simultaneously exhibiting profound intellectual strength in other areas. Responding to debate over how educators should apply the concept of multiple intelligences to their pedagogy, Gardner suggested that a multiple intelligences approach “entails multiple entry points to important concepts so that learning opportunities are maximized for every child” (1995). With regard to curriculum, he recommends “materials that draw on a range of intelligences, including both disciplinary and interdisciplinary areas of study” (Gardner 1995). While some scholars have challenged Gardner’s claim that these intelligences are largely autonomous, few dispute that individuals have unique intellectual strengths and profiles. Indeed, the multiple intelligence theory continues to inform educational research and theory (Clarke and Cripps 2012; Kaufman 2012; Narli, Özgen, and Alkan 2011; Tracey and Richey 2007).



EXPLORING PRIMARY SOURCES

Research to Practice

The lessons in the *Exploring Primary Sources* series challenge the range of intelligences inherent in all individuals: logical mathematical, visual spatial, verbal linguistic, rhythmic musical, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Students apply math skills when compiling statistics and doing surveys. They utilize spatial skills in building three-dimensional models. Linguistic skills are utilized when giving speeches and taking part in discussions and debates. The musical element is used when students are called upon to create songs, perform dances, or play musical instruments. The interpersonal and intrapersonal skills are tapped daily as students reflect on how the work affects them personally, and they are engaged in the everyday activity of cooperative learning and evaluations of all they do as individuals and groups.

Name _____ Date _____

Thomas Jefferson's Advertisement

Survey of the Founders

About the Advertisement
While many of the Founders believed slavery to be wrong, some of them enslaved people and profited from slave labor. Thomas Jefferson once owned slaves. He paid for an advertisement to run in the *Virginia Gazette* in September 1789. The advertisement gives information about Sandy, an enslaved man who ran away. Jefferson also has a reward for anyone who brings Sandy back to him. The reward amount varies depending on where Sandy is recaptured.

Directions: Five of the Founders are listed below. Using this sheet, ask three people whether or not they think that each of the men kept people enslaved. Mark the answers you receive, and report your findings to your class.

Name	Description	Owned Slaves?
Benjamin Franklin	co-writer of the Declaration of Independence; signer of the Constitution; diplomat	1. yes no
		2. yes no
		3. yes no
George Washington	general of Continental army; signer of the Constitution; first president	1. yes no
		2. yes no
		3. yes no
John Adams	co-writer of the Declaration of Independence; signer of the Constitution; second president	1. yes no
		2. yes no
		3. yes no
John Jay	first Supreme Court justice	1. yes no
		2. yes no
		3. yes no
Thomas Jefferson	main author of the Declaration of Independence; third president	1. yes no
		2. yes no
		3. yes no

Challenge
Some early American presidents kept people enslaved. Research who kept people enslaved and how these enslaved people were freed.

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These programs are also intended to assist teachers in developing in students a unique understanding of essential material taught through an integrated approach. The method of instruction is multimodal—connecting the visual, spoken, auditory, literary, and linguistic modes of instruction. This compilation of activities responds to the need to respect the diverse ways in which students integrate information; it also recognizes the importance of addressing the multiplicity of personal learning styles that exist among individuals. In this way, the strategies used can help students move information from short-term to long-term memory.


Writing from Sources

Creative and reflective writing assignments are important activities in building writing and thinking skills. Recent studies have demonstrated, however, the imperative role of writing from sources in the process of college and career readiness. These studies identify unique skills that students acquire in source-based writing assignments. One of the fundamental skills students learn through these writing activities is the ability to distinguish between and analyze primary and secondary sources (Fitzhugh 2011–12; Pecorari and Shaw 2012). By requiring students to use sources, especially primary sources, to formulate and support their arguments, teachers help students develop the skills utilized in analyzing and challenging sources, as well as situating sources in their historical contexts. Source-based writing also pushes students to interact with texts and images in a deeper and more thoughtful manner. For example, in thesis-driven writing assignments that require source-based evidence, students are forced to reevaluate their thesis and supporting arguments by examining whether the source provides evidence to support their claims.

Name _____ Date _____

Ethan Allen at Fort Ticonderoga

Directions: Analyze this engraving by Alonzo Chappel, Ethan Allen and Captain de la Place, May 1775, the capture of Fort Ticonderoga, New York. Then, answer the questions.



1. What is happening in the image?

2. Who is being awakened?

3. For which army does the man with the sword fight?

4. How does it seem like the fort was captured?

92 11510 • Exploring Primary Sources: American Revolution © TCM Teacher Created Materials

Research has also revealed the benefits of source-based writing assignments for English language learners' writing development. Writing activities that require students to write from the source help English language learners generate ideas about the topic, as well as provide an important language repository (Plakans and Gebril 2012). These writing assignments also encourage students' attributional complexity (Li and Casanave 2012).

EXPLORING PRIMARY SOURCES

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The *Exploring Primary Sources* lessons require students to engage in a variety of writing assignments. Students are asked to write speeches, poems, and songs, as well as keep journals, compose diaries, and generate polemics. Many of the writing assignments also challenge students to base what they write on the primary source they are examining. For example, rather than writing about how a political cartoon makes them feel, students are required to write an analysis of the source by citing specific details from the cartoon to support their claims.

Citizenship

Whether students are studying American history, world geography, or microeconomics, the underlying goal of social studies education is to prepare students to fulfill their citizenship responsibilities. According to the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), social studies courses should raise students' civic competence. "Civic engagement in the social studies may take many forms, from making independent and collaborative decisions within the classroom, to starting and leading student organizations within schools, to conducting community-based research and presenting findings to external stakeholders" (NCSS 2010, 59). The fourth dimension of the C3 Framework, Communicating Conclusions and Taking Informed Action, illustrates NCSS's commitment to this goal of social studies.

Learning about social studies is not always easy for students. It requires critical thinking and analysis of diverse media. An effective way to teach content and thinking skills simultaneously is to incorporate primary sources into the curriculum. By their nature, primary sources increase students' content knowledge while allowing them to practice critical-thinking skills. "Primary sources can serve as points of entry into challenging subjects that not only get a conversation started, but also allow our students to draw important conclusions" (Potter 2011, 284).



Cooperative, Paired, and Independent Learning

In cooperative learning, the teacher groups students together in order to create heterogeneous teams. Within each group, students are given the instructions needed to complete a task. In fact, a recent study has revealed that cooperative learning accompanied by teacher-guided instruction is significantly more effective than cooperative learning with minimal guidance (Law 2011). Research has also demonstrated the benefits of heterogeneous group learning. One recent study revealed that working in heterogeneous groups “emphasized complementarities and pluralism in [students’] ways of thinking” (Kyprianidou et al. 2012, 103).

There are many structures used for cooperative learning groups. Some techniques are often used for research. Although no leader is designated, every student has a particular job. Students are assigned different cognitive jobs, such as recorder, speaker, voter, organizer, or clarifier. All the members of the group must contribute to the assignment. Every member is reminded that it is necessary to try to see other points of view within the group. A member of the group may ask the teacher a question only after the group has tried to solve the problem or answer the question themselves. At the end, the speaker of the group is selected to present the group’s findings to the rest of the class.

Another structure for cooperative learning involves having each student obtain a different area of information for the group’s theme. Then, all students participate and share their work for the group as a whole. By either assigning roles or allowing students to choose subtopics to research, the teacher helps students focus on the information they need to contribute to the group report.

Paired learning is useful when students are asked to reflect on personal experiences. At times, personal experiences may help students intimately identify with the content of a lesson. For example, if students are studying international conflicts as an integrated unit, the teacher may want to pair students and have them discuss their personal relationships with family and friends. Although the originally paired speaker and listener may only hear these personal anecdotes, students may be able to better understand why conflicts exist when they can identify and share conflicts that are close to home. Such personal reflection, however, should never replace the steady diet of source-based activities and assessments.

Gettysburg Address

Lincoln in Gettysburg

Learning Outcomes

- Students will discover the history behind the Gettysburg Address.
- Students will be able to identify differences across multiple drafts of Lincoln’s speech.

Materials

- copies of the Gettysburg Address primary source card (address.pdf)
- copies of *History of the Address* (page 45, lgaddress1.pdf)
- copies of *Text of the Gettysburg Address* (gettysburg.pdf)
- copies of *Hay Draft* (haydraft.pdf)
- copies of *Nicolay Draft* (nicdraft.pdf)
- copies of the Lincoln’s Address document-based assessment (page 46, lincoln.pdf)

Essential Question

- Why is it important to understand the accomplishments of historical figures?

Guiding Questions

- Where is Abraham Lincoln in this photograph?
- Describe the differences between the attendees at the top of the photograph and those at the bottom.
- Why do you think there were so many handwritten drafts?
- What may account for the differences between the drafts?

Introducing the Primary Source

- Have students think of a time when they had to give a speech or presentation. Discuss their preparation. If students wrote their speeches, ask them if the words they spoke exactly matched the words they wrote.
- Share the photograph of the crowd at Gettysburg from the primary source card. Give students time to discuss observations or questions they have about the image.
- Introduce the essential question, and use the first two guiding questions to discuss the photograph of the crowd at Gettysburg.

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Gettysburg Address

Lincoln in Gettysburg

Analyzing the Primary Source

- Have student pairs read the background information, *History of the Address*. (A copy of this text at a lower reading level is provided in the Digital Resources—lgaddress2.pdf.) Review the key words with students as necessary. As students annotate their copies of the text, encourage them to note any sections of the text they have comments or questions about.
- After students have read the background information, discuss the last guiding question with them.
- Distribute copies of *Text of the Gettysburg Address*, which is provided in the Digital Resources. Read aloud the document to students. Then, provide time for students to complete at least two of the activities from the back of the primary source card.
- Explain to students that John Hay and John Nicolay had originally owned the two copies of the Gettysburg Address housed at the Library of Congress. Hay and Nicolay were Lincoln’s personal secretaries.
- Place students into two large groups. Distribute copies of *Hay Draft* (haydraft.pdf) to half the class and the *Nicolay Draft* (nicdraft.pdf) to the other half. Both drafts are provided in the Digital Resources. Have student pairs perform a careful side-by-side analysis of the traditional text and the draft they have been given.
- Have students note all the differences between the versions on separate sheets of paper. Students should explain which copy they prefer and why. Then, have the two halves of the class come together to compare the drafts. Hold a class discussion to record all of the differences, and the possible reasons behind them, on the board.

Document-Based Assessment

- Distribute copies of *Lincoln’s Address*. A digital copy of this primary source is provided in the Digital Resources (lincoln.jpg).
- Have students think about what they’ve learned throughout this lesson, carefully analyze the primary source, and respond thoughtfully to the questions.

Key Words

These key content words are included in both levels of the background information.

- captivated**—fascinated and charmed
- casualties**—military people who are killed, injured, ill, missing, or captured
- keynote**—main or central
- offensive**—the side that is attacking

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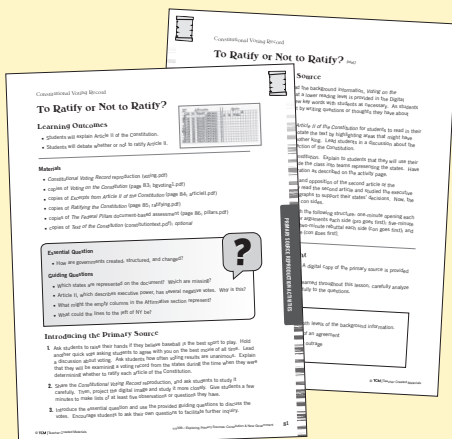
Although working cooperatively warrants support, learning what is possible on one's own is equally valuable. When students are engaged in independent work, the primary goal of the teacher is monitoring progress. When teachers assign a long-range task, it is imperative to discuss and negotiate a contract with students. It is important that the teacher maintains a balance of monitoring student progress while allowing room for students' self-monitoring, which research has shown to be an effective strategy for independent work behavior (Coughlin et al. 2012). Periodically, the teacher should ask students to bring to class necessary materials for "inspection." How closely a teacher monitors students' work during independent study is usually a good indication of the overall quality of the finished piece. The more attention paid to the tasks by the teacher, the better work produced by the students. Hence, having a checklist is often valuable. Not only should the teacher critique this stage of development, but students can also critique one another before the final project is due.



One of the most important skills a student can learn is how to constructively critique. At first, the group discusses the project that has just been assigned. Students are then sent off to either create or solve a problem. Then, the group reconvenes to critique each other's work. Part of their grade is determined by their ability to critique and analyze one another's work in a positive spirit. The emphasis is always on growth, rather than on creating a "perfect" product.

**EXPLORING
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Research to Practice



There are many opportunities for cooperative learning within the *Exploring Primary Sources* lessons. Each kit comes with a Teacher's Guide that features cooperative learning lessons and activities. There are also opportunities for paired learning within the lessons. During a lesson, the teacher may want to pair students and have them discuss the ways in which their pasts parallel some of the events. The teacher can then create meaningful ways through lessons with primary sources for the information to be shared with the whole class. The pairs can work together to use their personal experiences to relate to the content and create more meaning out of the reading.

Exploring Primary Sources also features independent learning activities. For example, assume a teacher asks his or her students to list 15 items necessary to survive for two weeks in the Negev Desert. Then, they are asked to select and prioritize the five most important items. Students would have to first consider what they feel they need to survive, and then they would have to be critical of their own selections. As a final step in this exercise, students may have to defend their choices against any challenges posed by their peers.

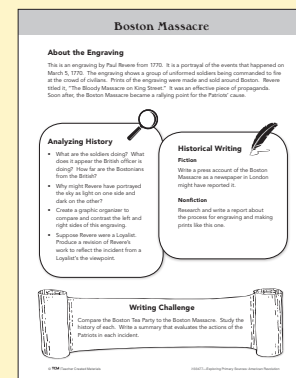
Assessment

“In education, assessment refers to the wide variety of methods or tools that educators use to evaluate, measure, and document the academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs of students” (Abbott 2015). Assessment is an indispensable learning and teaching tool in today’s classrooms. Teachers use the data gained from assessments to guide their instruction. They need to know whether to scaffold a lesson, differentiate an assignment, or make other instructional decisions to support the diverse learners in the classroom. Exploring Primary Sources offers multiple assessment opportunities. The assessments require students to demonstrate chronological thinking, comprehension of the historical contexts, and the ability to write evidence-based responses.

**EXPLORING
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There are multiple forms of assessment in *Exploring Primary Sources*. The questions on the backs of the photograph cards can serve as informal assessments. They cover multiple levels of Norman Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) outline (1997) and Revised Bloom’s Taxonomy. The activity sheets can also serve as a type of informal assessment. The document-based assessments test students’ abilities to analyze primary sources. Finally, the document-based question essay tasks serve as summative assessments and require students to draw upon what they learned throughout the unit of study.



Using Technology in the Classroom

Perhaps the single most significant change in classroom teaching over the last 20 years has been the gradual incorporation of more technology-based lessons and activities. While it is no secret that the current generation of students uses technology outside of the classroom far more frequently and extensively than any generation that preceded them, data shows that they are using more technology inside of the classroom as well. According to the U.S. Department of Education, around 75 percent of American students have access to computers in their classrooms or labs (Mitchell, Bakia, and Yang 2007). Researchers have discovered that incorporating technology in the classroom can help increase student achievement, improve higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills, enhance student motivation and engagement, and improve students’ abilities to work collaboratively (White, Ringstaff, and Kelley 2002).



Exploring Primary Sources features many resources that provide a variety of opportunities to integrate technology into social studies instruction. The Digital Resources contain many materials that teachers will find useful. They include introductory activities, student reproducibles, digital primary source images, and general primary source images that teachers can incorporate into their lessons and activities.

Using Primary Sources in the Classroom

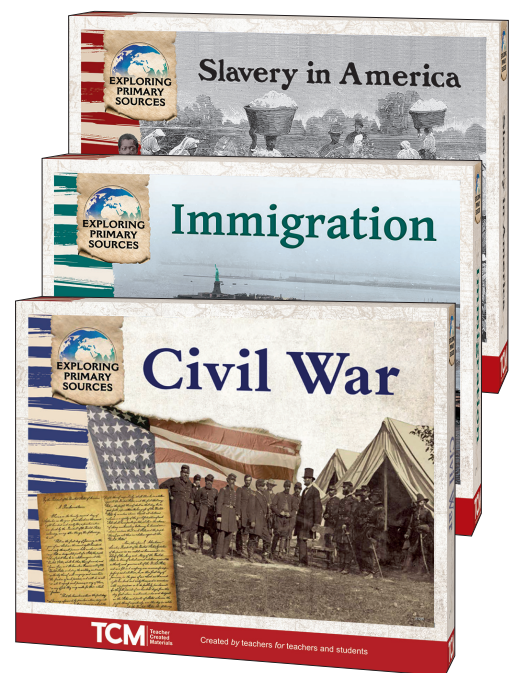
Viewing photographs and handling reproductions of primary source documents will bring history to life for students. “To see, touch, hear, and smell the objects (whether real or replica) adds a whole new layer of learning that textbooks simply cannot provide. Artifacts anchor students in their own learning process, making them active investigators for, instead of passive receivers of, information” (McKoy 2010).

Furthermore, the different types of primary sources will appeal to the different types of learners present in the classroom. For instance, students who struggle with reading may learn more efficiently and effectively from visual or audio primary sources (Cruz and Thornton 2009). Visual learners may respond well to analyzing photographs or interpreting maps. Primary sources allow teachers “to reach a wide variety of learning styles and ability levels among learners” (Moessinger 2008).

Conclusion

The *Exploring Primary Sources* series provides teachers with creative, research-based supplemental kits that help students learn how to interact with primary source materials. *Exploring Primary Sources* is an integrated approach to active learning that features activities to accommodate different learning styles and levels. When students are offered the freedom to participate actively through independent, cooperative, and student-centered learning, they are more likely to retain a greater percentage of the content.

This approach to teaching will encourage teachers to act as facilitators rather than as lecturers. This will support not only the best interests of students, but excellence in teaching, as well. The freedom to explore knowledge through an integrated approach to active learning allows teachers to harmonize with their students rather than force them to strain to follow one tune.



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