

Title of Session: Doing History With Primary Sources and Technology

Moderator: John Raymond

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Room: After School Online

BJ: Welcome to today's discussion

BJ: The topic is Doing History with Primary Sources and Technology

BJ: Our discussion leader is John Raymond.

BJ: We usually start all the discussions in Tapped In with introductions

BJ: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a helpdesk volunteer for Tapped In

JaneC: I am Jane and teach fourth grade.

CarolynLM: I'm an Instructional Facilitator in South Carolina.

PaulaR: I'm an eighth grade literature teacher from Pickens, SC.

MollyBM: I am a montessori teacher - upper elementary ages (4-6)

LeahCH: I'm Leah Hanna, Instructional Facilitator for PreK-6 Elem. school in SC

NoemiP: Hi, I'm a pre-service teacher at the University of Houston

LindaGP: I am an Instructional Facilitator in South Carolina.

JenniferGr: I'm pre-service at the University of Houston.

ReneeHa: I'm a curriculum and instruction facilitator in South Carolina, and I work primarily with fourth and fifth grade.

MollyBM: grades 4-6, that is

LeniD: Hello. I'm Leni Donlan, Coordinator of the Learning Page, Library of Congress. Peering over my shoulder is Gail Petri, my colleague here on the Learning Page.

PatsyL: I am instructional Facilitator for a elementary school

LyndaL: I'm an Instructional Facilitator as well, and I work mainly with intermediate grades in an elementary school in SC.

JohnRa: I'm director of TIELab (Technology -in-Education Laboratory)

MidgeF: I'm a technology consultant and author from Massachusetts

BJ: John, looks like you have a great group here!

MaryFT: I teach preservice teacher technology at the University of Houston

BJ hands the virtual floor over to John Raymond

JohnRa: hi every one

JohnRa: thank you for coming

JohnRa: I'm less than fast on the keyboard so there may be pauses

JohnRa: I wanted to begin by asking who teaches social studies or history?

GailP: Hi there - I'm Gail - Library of Congress - retired Librarian now working on the Learning Page.

MollyBM: I do - both

PaulaR: I teach one class of US History-8th grade

MidgeF: I teach teachers who teach social studies or history and am an amateur genealogist

JohnRa: ok. are the rest of us tech folks?

PaulaR: I teach one class of US History.

LindaGP: Those who said they were Instructional Facilitators work with all areas of the curriculum.

JaneC: I teach US History

MaryFT: I used to teach American History to 5th graders...now I teach technology to preservice teachers

MaryFT: but history is my first love

BernieD joined the room.

JohnRa: great. it seems like a varied group.

JohnRa: welcome Bernie D

BJ: welcome, Bernie

BernieD: Hi John! Sorry to be late.

JohnRa: no problem!

LyndaL: We, 9 from Spartanburg, have been developing a social studies/ English Language Arts curriculum.

JohnRa: anyway, doing history. it all starts with science.

JohnRa: the idea of "doing history" is rooted in the same teaching methods we see in the sciences. let's ease into the concept by taking a look at this picture. tell me what you see:

JohnRa: <http://www.mtbaker.wednet.edu/harmony/ablelearn/salmon/images/wtrtemp.jpg>

JaneC: They are studying ecosystems.

JenniferGr: It looks like some kind of science experiment is going on.

JohnRa: good. anything else?

MidgeF: Kids being curious about what's in the water

JohnRa: great!

MaryFT: at least one of them looks like he's going to record some observations

PatsyL: must be Science

NoemiP: Maybe they are studying regions/geography in correlation to science

JohnRa: I know it's hard to say, but what is their state of mind, do you think?

MaryFT: inquisitive

JohnRa: good.

MaryFT: engaged

JohnRa: good!

JaneC: They are curious about what is in the water.

CarolynLM: curious

JohnRa: yes, curious.

LeahCH: they seem very interested and engaged in the activity

LyndaL: Looks like they're studying pond water.

JohnRa: how about this. where are they?

JohnRa: at school?

MaryFT: somewhere muddy and wet

JaneC: One little boy doesn't look like he's too interested

JenniferGr: outside, at a small creek or water reservoir behind their school

CarolynLM: Could be...we have a stream on our property.

NoemiP: It looks like a pond

JohnRa: Jane, I wonder if he is just lost in thought?

LeahCH: near a stream in the country

MaryFT: could be in the middle of the city or on a field trip

MidgeF: Washington State

LindaGP: could be a river bank

JohnRa: they may be on school grounds, but they're "in the field"

PatsyL: There are several students and they don't seem to be working together.

MidgeF: all boys?

JohnRa: I don't want to dwell on the photo but want to use it as an intro to focus on two concepts

JohnRa: the first is history as a "lab" activity as in science lab, not computer lab

ReneeHa: It looks as if there is an adult in the picture and perhaps he is allowing the students the opportunity to make observations and they will formulate their own inquiry.

JohnRa: the first idea is a history "lab"

JaneC: Explain

JohnRa: that inequity you're noting, Renee, is critical

JohnRa: "inquiry"

JohnRa: what takes place in a science lab?

JaneC: Experiments

MaryFT: hands-on investigation

JohnRa: yep

JohnRa: yep yep

JenniferGr: students figure out things on their own

BernieD: hypothesis testing

LeahCH: observations

LindaGP: experiments, observations, predictions

JohnRa: you're on!

NoemiP: Based on history?

PatsyL: Process skills

JohnRa: no, just science, for a moment.

NoemiP: ok, sorry

MidgeF: doing research can be the same as the scientific method

JohnRa: there are a few elements in a science lab to focus on for our purposes

JohnRa: students work with raw materials

JohnRa: they are "doing" science

JaneC: the scientific method

JohnRa: albeit at a basic level

JohnRa: they follow a methodology

JohnRa: and the teacher isn't saying "this is the answer". they are expected to find it on their own.

JohnRa: ideally, at least.

BernieD: So they're looking for Jimmy Hoffa?

BJ smirks at Bernie

MidgeF: LOL

LeniD: Good one, Bernie

JohnRa: I'm proposing that these basic tenets apply to history. what do you think?

PatsyL: They should be able to manipulate materials to help them discover different ideas and concepts.

JohnRa: history teaching that is.

LindaGP: so we have raw materials and methodology

MaryFT: clothes, utensils, old documents, dusty stuff

JohnRa: that's great, Molly.

NoemiP: the history of how that got there, or how that was formed

JaneC: The big idea about whatever they are studying.

CarolynLM: diaries, letters, and other sources

MollyBM: they could also explore similarities among the animals separated when the continents divided

JohnRa: the concrete examples are excellent!

LyndaL: I like the idea of connecting fossils to what is presently seen.

JohnRa: those of you who teach history know all about primary sources

JohnRa: can you imagine setting up a, say 30-minute exercise where students are interpreting these?

MollyBM: yes

JaneC: Give us any example in social Studies

JohnRa: let me show you a concrete example:

JohnRa: click on this link:

JohnRa: http://hlab.tielab.org/labs_show.php?id=9

MollyBM: you could set up a dig for "artifacts" uh oh here we go

JohnRa: Molly, I'll hit on fieldwork a bit later. an excellent topic.

JaneC: The Cuban Missile Crisis

MollyBM: can you describe the scene?

LindaGP: I didn't find a scene. I found a letter from Castro.

JohnRa: that's right, Linda

JohnRa: it's basically a lesson on the Cuban Missile Crisis

JohnRa: it asks students to read three primary sources and then answer a historical question about it.

JohnRa: about them, that is.

JohnRa: the idea of the history lab is that since we now have untold numbers of primary sources online (thanks Leni and the LOC!) we can use them to construct these types of "doing history" lessons.

LeahCH: this is an interesting approach

PatsyL: Are you talking about mainly research?

JohnRa: the teacher has done the "research" in the sense that he or she has found the materials.

JohnRa: the students are now trying to interpret the materials & answer the guiding question or inquiry.

PatsyL: So what do the student's do? Go to a specific website

JohnRa: please ask questions.

MidgeF: I am getting a lot of questions from elementary teachers about using primary resources.

JohnRa: yes, they read the materials (under primary source links).

LeahCH: wouldn't the teacher need to pose some guiding questions for the students prior to beginning to give them some direction?

JohnRa: yes. look at "Inquiry Options" on the right hand side.

JaneC: So, you can set up a link for them to find the answers to history questions and this makes them be active participants.

NoemiP: Thanks everyone, for asking good questions

MaryFT: these primary resources indicate that the Soviet Union was not as cohesive as it has been portrayed in traditional history books

JohnRa: that's right Jane & Mary!

CarolynLM: I'm concerned about reading levels of primary sources. I find lots of good sources, but many of them seem too advanced for elementary folks.

JohnRa: yes, of course, Carolyn.

JohnRa: I recommend using images at that level.

JaneC: What about the US Constitution? Could you set up links to guide students to find information about the Framers?

JohnRa: there are plenty of great images at the Library of Congress site for example.

LyndaL: Yes, we've seen some.

JohnRa: yes, Jane. you can make a history Lab on any historical topic! as long as you can find the materials online.

MollyBM: we make card sets that have corresponding information cards and pictures that are easy for the students to interpret and they match them using a control to check their answers

BernieD: Couldn't you scaffold that with a glossary, Cliff Notes, something?

PatsyL: My favorite is the American Memory Collection.

JohnRa: Bernie, what are you referring to as "that"?

BernieD: The scary feeling of reading the Constitution if you're a 5th grader.

MaryFT: I've used a really wonderful primary source lesson called Turn of the Century Child that uses pictures from the American Memory Collection...it's fantastic

JohnRa: ah, yes. take it in small bits. make a "translation" for the children.

JaneC: There is a version written in Kid language

PaulaR: Where?

LindaGP: What is the best way to find primary sources? Search for a topic?

JaneC: Also We the People and the Citizens put out By Civic Education

JohnRa: but you should also think beyond the "biggies" like the Constitution. so much can be learned from an old photo of your town's main street. primary sources can be very accessible & local.

JohnRa: there are some great websites for primary sources.

LindaGP: I see what you mean. I was focusing mainly on internet searches.

JohnRa: here's a link where I have begun collecting them

JohnRa: <http://hlab.tielab.org/links/>

JohnRa: give it a click.

JaneC: A Timeline would be good to use an old photos

NoemiP: You guys have great ideas

JohnRa: I also want to mention the idea (in science labs & history labs) of a methodology

JohnRa: in science you get the workbook

JenniferGr: thanks! this website seems like a great resource

JohnRa: up until recently, in history there was nothing comparable.

GailP: Putting in a plug here for the Library of Congress Learning Page - We've tried to make the 7 million primary sources accessible for teachers at:

<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/>

JohnRa: take a look at this link:

JohnRa: did you scan all of those yourself Gail?

GailP: Oh John

JaneC: We have been there

JohnRa: the LOC has some great "analysis guides". here's one I made:

JohnRa: http://hlab.tielab.org/lab_worksheet.pdf

JohnRa: like Bernie suggested, it scaffolds students through challenging material

PaulaR: I can't wait to check out your links later.

JohnRa: if anyone wants to make a history lab as a trial, go to <http://tielab.org/trial> for documents with instructions.

MollyBM: it looks great

LeahCH: wow, that looks great!

SharonBH: This looks great!

LyndaL: Some of these sites don't want to open.

JohnRa: Molly, you mentioned field work before, no?

MollyBM: yes

MollyBM: simulation

JohnRa: in my mind, that's the other area where history teachers can "take a page" from the sciences

PatsyL: I have checked out the links and they are great.

JohnRa: have any of you ever tried to create a historical scrapbook or archive of your town with students?

MollyBM: we have tried working with artifacts and asking the children to determine uses...the point is to help the children identify with the experiences that field researchers have

JohnRa: do your schools have digital cameras?

CarolynLM: Yes

JaneC: I have a sony mavica

LindaGP: Yes, for every grade level.

SharonBH: Yes

MollyBM: a teacher at my school did a historical walk of our town ...they did research and it ended with a walk through town...12 miles...they used people and records as research

ReneeHa: Yes.

LeahCH: yes, but it seems to always be in use therefore hard to get

JohnRa: can you envision students taking some time on the weekend to take pictures of historic locations around town?

PatsyL: Molly, I hope your walk was enjoyable.

MollyBM: it was great

JaneC: What town did you walk in

MollyBM: Anderson

MollyBM: South Carolina

LindaGP: Our town has lots of American Revolution sites nearby.....like Cowpens Battleground.

JaneC: Do you know the Orrs

JohnRa: I'll bet there are some interesting historic location there

ReneeHa: I cannot envision the students in my school doing this on the weekend, but I think it would be a wonderful activity to do during school time.

MollyBM: I know of the family and some of the history

JohnRa: it could also be on a field trip

MollyBM: I think the children I teach would love getting out to take photos..even on the weekends

NoemiP: I could see this being used as a whole thematic unit for the school year

MollyBM: just the chance to use a camera

JohnRa: we're running out of time soon, but I wanted to express this idea of fieldwork as another facet of doing history.

PaulaR: At our school we had students interview war veterans, and use photos that they had of their military experience to create a powerpoint presentation, and then the kids wrote an actual book, using the photos and interviews of the veterans.

SharonBH: I think this would be a great culminating activity.

JohnRa: it could be as simple as students going into their grandparents attic & finding a letter.

MidgeF: I am doing some personal history as part of my family genealogy

JohnRa: are you involving students?

MidgeF: I have a Civil War Medal of Honor 2nd great grandfather

PatsyL: That is a great idea.

MidgeF: <http://www.MidgeFrazel.net/barber.html>

JohnRa: once they have an artifact, they can do some basic research on it.

LyndaL: Our students enjoy sharing their home life past with each other.

LindaGP: Just think! Future generations will use CDs and DVDs as primary sources for our historical time.

MollyBM: we did a research project that involved the children choosing a person of influence from our state...they learned about the person and made a bust...we put them in chronological order for display...the timeline spanned from ancient peoples to current politicians

JaneC: This has been very interesting. Thank you for all the information.

GailP: My colleague and worked with kids for several years on creating scrapbooks which they added to all year long. It was a big success!

LeahCH: I can't wait to have time to investigate your civil war page

MidgeF: He's a real cutie LOL

JohnRa: very cool, Midge

MidgeF: Thanks to all and see you tomorrow night?

JaneC: What is tomorrow night?

JohnRa: if your student finds a town document (a law for example) they can call the local historical society & gather some basic information on the item.

JohnRa: the idea is to get them into town & out of the classroom to "make contact" with history.

MidgeF: Immigration Chat (relates well to this, I think)

JaneC: Okay I forgot about it.

LeniD: Thanks, Midge

JenniferGr: I bet many chambers of commerce would be willing to help out with research too

JohnRa: would you like to see what some students in my area in CT have done?

JohnRa: here's a nice example

JohnRa: http://lhap.tielab.org/pictures_show.php?id=40

NoemiP: Wow

JohnRa: you're now looking at the Local Historical Archives Project which take the student archive to a public level (i.e. it's published on the Web)

JohnRa: this is from a 5th grader.

JaneC: Did the student look at the architecture?

JaneC: What was the student studying?

JohnRa: the student was studying pre civil war US history. I don't think they spent much time on the architecture.

PatsyL: The Botsford House was really something.

JohnRa: but you determine the focus & parameters of the project.

JaneC: Why was the house used to study the Civil War?

JohnRa: anyway, we're almost out of time. I want to thank you for participating & I hope it was worth your time. please

MidgeF: Thanks John

JaneC: This was great

LindaGP: Thanks!

LeahCH: very interesting John, thanks

NoemiP: Thanks, I learned a lot!

SharonBH: Thanks, it was great.

JohnRa: please visit the site for more examples of both the Lab and the Archive:
www.tielab.org

CarolynLM: Thanks

MollyBM: it was really interesting -- the time passed so quickly

PatsyL: Hope to do this again sometime

JenniferGr: Thanks! I have a lot of great ideas now!

BernieD: Nice show, John.

BJ: John will be leading another discussion on November 11

LeniD: Thanks!

ReneeHa: Thanks. I enjoyed it.

LyndaL: Thank you , John . You created some real food for thought.

JohnRa: you guys were (are) great!