

Distance Learning Opportunities

National Archives at Kansas City

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Primary Grades (K – 2): Hairy History (Puppet) Series:

Length: 30 minutes

Story of “National Symbols”

This puppet show will introduce young students to symbols and the National Archive documents which illustrate them. The students will then have the opportunity to make their own Great Seal with symbols that tell about themselves.

National History Standard: Topic 3:4

Story of “Teddy Bear”

This puppet show will tell the students the story of how the Teddy Bear got its start with President Teddy Roosevelt and a hunting trip. Students will study the National Archives documents that first portrayed the popular bear.

National History Standard: Topic 3:6

Story of “Smokey the Bear”

Smokey Bear, the American icon, was created in 1944. The Smokey Bear Wildfire Prevention campaign happens to be the longest running public service campaign in America. This puppet show highlights National Archives photos of Smokey and discusses wildfires.

National History Standard: Topic 3:6

Story of “Presidential Pets”

Some very interesting pets have lived at the White House. This puppet show informs students about the pets, and introduces the owners. This is a fun way for students to learn about some of the presidents! Photos and other documents from the National Archives help relate the stories.

National History Standard: Topic 3:4

Intermediate Grades (3 – 5):

Length: 45 minutes

Charters of Freedom

Students are asked to analyze primary source documents and then decide upon the document's constitutional relevance.

National History Standard: Topic 3:4; Era 3:3

The Invention That Changed History: The Cotton Gin

Students will discover how Eli Whitney's cotton gin impacted a whole nation's history. Economic vocabulary including supply and demand is illustrated in this lesson.

National History Standard: Topic 4:8; Era 4:2

The Lewis and Clark Expedition

Interesting primary sources demonstrate the Expedition's anticipated challenges. How would you plan a journey without having knowledge of the terrain, native population, or length of trip? Students analyze decisions made by expedition leaders based on this lack of information.

National History Standard: Topic 1:2, Topic 2:3; Era 4:1

The Invention of Barbed Wire

Barbed wire simplified the farmers' and ranchers' work. It also significantly affected politics, economics, and society. Students will discover how this invention impacted the west.

National History Standard: Topic 4:8; Era 4:2

Increased Tensions with the Indians

The Sioux Treaty of 1868 is the basis for this lesson. Even though this treaty was to keep the Sioux on the Black Hills reservation, students find out what happens when gold is discovered in the Black Hills and the miners demand protection from the United States Army.

National History Standard: Topic 4:7; Era 4:2

African American Soldiers in the Civil War

By the end of the Civil War, ten percent of the Union soldiers were black men. From different pay scales to different prisoner of war treatment, the documents will show a fight for equal rights.

National History Standard: Era 5:2

Telling the Story of the Civil War Through Photography

Photography was just in its infancy when the Civil War came along. Luckily photographs caught scenes of camp life, routines, before, and after battles. Questions can be answered and raised based on these photos. Students will analyze interesting photos that will uncover a mystery.

National History Standard: Era 5:2

Middle and High School (6 - 12):

Length: 45 minutes

Child Labor

Students will analyze photos by Lewis Hine, a photographer for the National Child Labor Committee. These photos helped raise awareness and were instrumental for the fight for tougher child labor laws.

National History Standard: Era 6:1

Women Soldiers in the Civil War

From Harriet Tubman to women who hid their gender, women were on the battlefield fighting for their respective governments. Primary source documents tell the story of a few of these women from a time where women were thought to be frail, subordinate, and passive.

National History Standard: Era 5:2

Jackie Robinson: The Game Changer

Before Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in baseball's major league, he championed against Jim Crow laws in the military. Second Lieutenant Jack Roosevelt Robinson's general court-martial for refusing to move to the back of the bus at a military base foreshadows future events in America's racial history. Hands-on documents from the National Archives will let the students discover that a baseball legend was a civil rights leader as well.

National History Standard: Era 9:4

The Cherokee Removal

Presenting differing viewpoints through primary source documents help students analyze this historical event.

National History Standard: Era 4:1

The Depression

Primary source documents (including photos) illustrate examples of FDR's War on the Great Depression.

National History Standard: Era 8:1

The Twilight Sagas and the Enemy Aliens from Kansas Sagas

Bella may be willing to sacrifice everything for her love, but are there such love stories in the National Archives? Students may be surprised to find out that women sacrificed their U.S. citizenship to marry men who were citizens of other nations. There is reference to The Twilight Sagas in the lesson, but just to establish the point that our history has stories of actual women from Kansas willing to sacrifice everything to marry a man. These really are love stories you can sink your teeth into!

National History Standard: Era 7:2

Documented Rights, Documented Wrongs

Civil Rights legislation took place long before the 1950's. The Civil Rights Act of 1875 guaranteed certain rights to all people. The Supreme Court deemed the act unconstitutional on the premise that Congress had no power to regulate the conduct of individuals, and that the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits discrimination by the state, not by individuals. Students will study the primary source documents and follow the path from rights to Jim Crow laws.

National History Standard: Era 5:3