DIY:
Create Your Own Primary Source Sets

Mary Johnson, Coordinator
TPS Teachers Network
johnsonmaryj@mac.com

Social studies teachers “get” primary sources! You already understand how primary sources relate to inquiry and critical thinking. You’ve probably used primary source sets from various institutions in your own teaching. Maybe you’ve even made your own through whatever means you can cobble together - Word or Google docs or some kind of annotated resource set or maybe just a whole lot of PDF printing!
The TPS Teachers Network has a tool for the do-it-yourselfer! We call it our ALBUM TOOL. It gives you an online space for collecting, curating, and building your own primary source sets, along with relevant secondary sources, in all formats and across multiple institutions.

At the same time, the album prompts you to develop effective teaching strategies around your selected primary sources.

Finally, the tool offers options for sharing your work with students, exporting to social media, and embedding albums of primary sources in lesson plans and activities.

In this session, following a brief introduction to the TPS Teachers Network, I hope to demonstrate our Do It Yourself (DIY) album tool and then ask you to contribute to a collaborative album of primary sources that you can take with you via Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, or as an actual outside-the-network URL.
What Exactly Is the TPS Teachers Network?

Officially, the TPS (Teaching with Primary Sources) Teachers Network is a professional social media platform designed to host and facilitate community conversations, connections, and collaborations - all focused on using primary sources to improve student learning.

- A grant project of the Library of Congress Learning and Innovation Office.
- Free to join. Password protected.
- Nearly 9,000 members!
What Happens in the TPS Teachers Network?

This is a homepage screenshot of three members’ contributions: Jessica started a discussion about elections and culturally relevant pedagogy; Tom commented on a discussion about children’s books with Native American themes, and Cheryl created an image as a prompt for discussing impeachment proceedings. Clicking on a post’s title from the homepage feed will take you to the entire nested discussion.

The TPS Teachers Network derives its strength from the fostering of relationships among users with similar professional interests, so it’s more than a mere content repository or archive. It is based on a peer-to-peer model of teachers helping teachers.

Every type of content supports professional conversations around teaching with primary sources. Whether teachers start discussions, share links to resources, upload videos, or build albums, other members can expand on the ideas through comments, replies, and likes.

It’s a friendly, supportive, professional place to hang out with colleagues across the nation.
A Network of Groups

- TPS Commons - a group for everyone!
- Groups correspond to almost every grade level and content area
- Join public groups by clicking on

- Teaching English Language Learners
- Pre-service and First Year Teachers
- STEM
- Disability History
- Civil Rights
- Election Central
- Maps & Geography
- The Arts and Primary Sources
- Plus dozens more public groups!

The TPS Teachers Network is also built on a group model. The list on this slide is only a sampling of the public groups available. There are dozens more, and we continue to create new groups upon request. Our newest groups are Teaching with Film, Primary Sources and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Research on Teaching with Primary Sources, and The Question Formulation Technique (QFT) for Primary Source Learning.

Because NCSS was just awarded a big grant from TPS, we’re anticipating a new group sometime in the next year for NCSS to feature its new products and invite discussion around them. For the grant, NCSS is going to be developing online resources for social studies methods professors that combine Library of Congress resources with NCSS’s C3 Framework. They’re also going to be doing some face-to-face and online professional development for methods professors.
The TPS Commons is our most general, all-inclusive group. Everyone belongs to this group. This slide shows the typical look and organization of a group in the TPS Teachers Network. Each group includes:

- Menu bar (home, profile, groups, albums, help, message system, Search box)
- Group header with icons
- Activity feed from most recent to least recent as you scroll down
- Quick links to recent content in the group
- TPS Commons also displays the most recent Insider post
Partnering with Museum Educators and Archivists

Here you can see the typical design or look of a more focused group homepage, complete with icons for all the different types of activities available and with quick links to “recent content in this group.” This particular group is an excellent place to connect with and learn from museum educators and archivists.
All types of posts include the tools to comment, reply, and “like.” Posts become nested discussions, and the back-and-forth conversational nature of the platform often adds value to the original content through additional resources and suggestions for teaching. Content can be tagged for easy retrieval, which is important in a growing archive of teaching resources and ideas.
We’re almost ready to move on to the album and DIY portions of this session! But first, if you’re not already a member of the TPS Teachers Network, you may join it now.

If you are already a member, you may use this time to explore a number of albums created by others by clicking on ALBUMS>ALL ALBUMS. What, in your opinion, makes a superior album?

We have helpers right here in the room! Let’s take five minutes to get going. (Identify helpers. Set timer.) After that, I’ll show you how the album tool works.
The Album Tool

- Create - Add title, description, teaching notes
- Add images, videos, sound, outside URLs, files
- Make albums collaborative
- Select items, reorder items, and export as PDFs
- Generate and copy unique URLs to Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, or external sites

The Album tool in the TPS Teachers Network is like no other we have seen in educational networks! Other tools exist in other platforms for creating primary source sets, but typically these tools limit selections to the collections of single institutions.

The album tool in the TPS Teachers Network makes it easy to upload primary sources in a variety of formats (audio, video, image, text, historic newspaper articles, etc.), secondary sources, links to outside supporting websites or publications, lesson plan documents, and more - both from within the Library of Congress and from outside institutions.

The album tool also provides support for developing lessons and learning activities, complete with feedback opportunities from other members of the TPS Teachers Network. It’s kind of an all-in-one development tool for building primary source-based lessons.

You can also customize your albums to your own audiences, both for teaching and for other types of presentations. And the EXPORT options? Totally cool! You can export albums to social media or insert album links into emails or websites. Print them as handouts. We’ll go through some of the export options in awhile.

The example pictured here was created by a university professor in Mississippi to introduce the concept of “Creating Historical Narratives: Investigating the Death of Lincoln.” What album would you like to create when you return home from the NCSS conference? Pair and share!
Let’s take a look at an album I created almost on a whim. It all started with one photo that caught my attention in a Library of Congress Flickr Photostream email! Who was this young man named Harry Plotz? I discovered that he was a young American doctor during World War I who ended up discovering a cure for typhus. I thought this might be of interest to science and social studies teachers, and it could even become a part of a current events study of “the vaccination question.”

Let's take a look at the album that resulted from my quest to find out more about Dr. Harry Plotz (click on slide title).
Top portion of Typhus and Dr. Harry Plotz album, including:

- Description of the album
- Tags
- Photos, Chronicling America newspaper articles, a New York Times “timesmachine” article from 1914, a WWI Centennial Commission Website about “Military Medicine in World War I” and a photo of my own grandfather as a medic in the Spanish American War!
Bottom portion of the Typhus and Dr. Harry Plotz album, including:

- Photo of Plotz visiting Poland with a health team
- Poster about fighting other viral diseases
- A film made by the British military to teach soldiers how to combat lice
- The Plotz obituary from the New York Times
- Note the export options at the bottom!
It is clear from this 1920 photograph that Dr. Harry Plotz continued his work to eradicate typhus following World War I. Students could investigate the eradication of diseases worldwide throughout history and then go on to learn more about the Centers for Disease Control, current epidemics, and world governing bodies related to health issues. In addition, the health conditions in war-related refugee camps could lead to more understanding of the impact of war on civilian populations.

#world health #war refugees #epidemics
#humanitarian aid

When you create an album, you can include teaching notes for every item you add. For example, one of the newspaper articles I uploaded was from 1939. This story had many messages for students about persistence, the role of influential teachers, and the value of an education. I would probably use it as an introductory read-aloud. So that’s what I wrote in my teaching notes.

The article told the story of Harry Plotz as a teenager in a Brooklyn public school, discouraged and on the verge of dropping out. His teacher convinced him to stay in school and brought him onto the football team! “When the World War broke out, it was Dr. Harry Plotz who cleaned up typhus-plagued Serbia. And a few years later, it was Dr. Harry Plotz who was called to carry on the work of the great Pasteur, as head of the Pasteur Institute in Paris. And of course it was Dr. Harry Plotz who was directing the research that might virtually end the scourge of children, measles.”
Why they have Typhus in Roumania.

Dressing Station, 26th Division, near Samogeux, Muse, October 23, 1918

LOC.GOV example -  https://www.loc.gov/item/2017669659/
Outside example -  

One of the longest titles on record! - “Why they have Typhus in Roumania. Typhus is epidemic in Roumania. It is a disease carried by body lice. Where people are cleanly in their habits of life typhus is an impossibility. But in Roumania, cleanliness is virtually impossible. The American Red Cross Commissioner to Roumania, in his official report, tells why cleanliness is impossible in hundreds of Roumanian villages. Describing one section which is a typical section by the way he says, ‘they have very little soap, no bedding, no clean clothing for the Typhus sufferers and no food.’ Hospital facilities are hopelessly inadequate. About all that hospital treatments amount to in such a community is isolating the typhus and small pox victims from the remainder of the community.”
Demo the advanced download (only briefly)
Show how a COPY SHAREABLE URL displays:
Share the album to Twitter. Add #NCSS19 as a tag.
Personally Identifiable Information (PII) is stripped from shareable albums. “This album was created by a member of the TPS Teachers Network, a professional social media network for educators, funded by a grant from the Library of Congress. For more information, visit tpsteachersnetwork.org.”

Now we’re going to be doing some hands-on work building a collaborative album that you can “take home with you.”

Title of Album: NCSS: Favorite Primary Sources

If wifi is a problem, demo the albums below:

Community Helpers
https://tpsteachersnetwork.org/primary-sources-in-elementary-education/community-helpers

Geography Aligned Railroad Resources for the Study of Westward Expansion
https://tpsteachersnetwork.org/maps-geography/geography-aligned-railroad-resources-for-the-study-of-westward-expansion

Morse Code https://tpsteachersnetwork.org//tps-commons/morse-code

Women During World War II and the Scarcity of Labor
What’s Next?

Join the Network
Browse, explore, meet other members
Refer to the Help Center
Create your first album!
Ask, share, create!

- Based on what you have learned about the TPS Teachers Network, how do you think you might use the album tool?
- In what ways might the album tool be useful for your own work?
- What additional questions do you have about the TPS Teachers Network or the TPS program at the Library of Congress?
To register - http://tpsteachersnetwork.org/register

After registering - http://tpsteachersnetwork.org

Remember to register!
Contacts

Mary Johnson
Coordinator
TPS Teachers Network
Ph: 719-640-0554
johnsonmaryj@mac.com

Keith Patterson
Associate Director
TPS Western Region
Ph: 303-615-1577
patterke@msudenver.edu

Kile Clabaugh
Project Coordinator
TPS Western Region
Ph: 303-615-1576
kclabaug@msudenver.edu