



# Foundations of U.S. History

Virginia History  
as American History

Teaching American History Grant

A partnership between Loudoun County Public Schools  
and CHNM at George Mason University

## Primary Source Activity Case Studies and Observations Cohort 3A

### ASSIGNMENT

- Locate two primary sources you have not used in the past. Incorporate them into two separate lessons in September, October, or November, 2008.

### GOALS

- For each lesson, create an activity in which students will carefully analyze one primary source, using historical reading skills. Utilize the content and methodology you have learned in TAH and incorporate it in each activity. Draw on information from presentations, readings, site visits, and online resources.

### PROCESS

- Identify key periods or topics that you will teach during the fall. Select two topics, and one primary source for each topic.
- Complete the *Primary Source Activity Summary Sheet* (attached) and submit it electronically to Sarah Whelan by July 18, 2008. A copy of the summary sheet is available at <http://chnm.gmu.edu/loudountah/resources/assignments/>
- Teach your Primary Source Activities during September, October, or November.
- Schedule a time for Sarah Whelan to observe you teaching one of your Primary Source Activities in September or October. We'll discuss the lesson afterward, and I will send you written feedback.
- For the Primary Source Activity that I do not observe, write a reflective case study that analyzes your experience teaching with the primary source. Use the "Case Study Guidelines" (attached) as you write your reflection. The case study is due December 5, 2008, and should be submitted via email to Sarah Whelan ([sarah.whelan@loudoun.k12.va.us](mailto:sarah.whelan@loudoun.k12.va.us)). In addition, please submit examples of student work (copies are fine) produced during this activity. You can mail those via the Pony to Sarah Whelan at the LCPS administrative building.

## Primary Source Activity Summary

**Directions:** Please complete the following form and submit it by email to Sarah Whelan ([sarah.whelan@loudoun.k12.va.us](mailto:sarah.whelan@loudoun.k12.va.us)) by July 18, 2008.

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary Source Activity #1

1. Topic of Lesson:
2. Description of Primary Source (include link to source):
3. What are your goals for using this source? What historical content/themes do you want students to learn or understand?
4. Provide a brief overview of the activity. How will the students analyze the source?
5. What are some guiding questions that will help students use the historical reading skills?

Sourcing:

Close Reading:

Contextualization:

6. Approximate date that you'll be teaching this lesson:

**Primary Source Activity #2**

1. Topic of Lesson:
  
2. Description of Primary Source (include link to source):
  
3. What are your goals for using this source? What historical content/themes do you want students to learn or understand?
  
4. Provide a brief overview of how you plan to use the source in your lesson. How will the students analyze the source?
  
5. What are some guiding questions that will help students use the historical reading skills?

Sourcing:

Close Reading:

Contextualization:

6. Approximate Date that you'll be teaching this lesson:

## Primary Source Activity Case Study Guidelines

**Directions:** After teaching your Primary Source Activity, write a 2-3 page case study about the experience. Your case study should include the following four sections. The questions are provided as guidelines of what types of information to include.

- 1. INTRODUCTION:** Describe the source and why you chose it. Describe how you set up the lesson and give an overview of the procedures.
  - What was the source and why did you choose it?
  - What did you want students to learn by working with this source?
  - How did the source fit into the larger context and essential understandings of the course?
  - What prior experience, if any, did they have working with primary sources?.
  - What prior knowledge did they have of the time period or historical context?
  - What role did you play while students were reading, discussing, and analyzing the source?
  
- 2. READING THE SOURCE:** Explain how the analysis proceeded in your class, using specific examples.
  - What happened when students read the source? What did they notice or observe?
  - How did students investigate sourcing: authorship, perspective, audience?
  - What questions did they have about the source?
  - How did students place the source in historical context? How did you help them?
  
- 3. ANALYZING STUDENT WORK:** Analyze the written work created by your students during the primary source activity.
  - Describe the written assignment and what your objectives were.
  - What do you think your students learned?
  - Does their work provide evidence of historical thinking? Explain.
  - What did the students do well? What would you like to see them do better?
  
- 4. REFLECTING ON THE LESSON:** Analyze your experience teaching with a primary source.
  - What did you learn from this exercise?
  - What skills did students develop that will help them work with new primary sources (of this genre or of a different genre) in the future?
  - What problems, if any, did you or the students encounter?
  - What made this assignment work well or not so well?
  - What would you change the next time you teach this source?

## Primary Source Activity Rubric for Observations

4 = Exemplary, 3 = Proficient, 2 = Adequate, 1 = Inadequate

	1-4	Comments
<b>Primary Source Selection</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a clear connection between lesson topic and primary source?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the lesson use one or two primary source(s)?</li> </ul>		
<b>Primary Source Analysis</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an emphasis on historical reading skills: sourcing, close reading, contextualization, and corroboration?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there time to notice, ask questions, and provide context?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a worksheet is used, are the questions helpful?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does teacher frame the analysis to fit the kind of source (eg. photo, cartoon, document, etc.)?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are students engaged in analyzing the source?</li> </ul>		
<b>Historical Context</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the historical context clearly explained to students?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do students and teacher explore the connection between the historical context and the primary source?</li> </ul>		

## Primary Source Activity Rubric for Case Study

4 = Exemplary, 3 = Proficient, 2 = Adequate, 1 = Inadequate

	1-4	Comments
<b>Introduction</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the lesson use one or two sources that clearly connect with the lesson topic?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the objective clear? Is the primary source tied to historical context and essential understandings?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the structure and procedures of the lesson clearly explained?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Did teacher activate prior knowledge about historical context and using primary sources?</li> </ul>		
<b>Reading the Source</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the source analysis utilize historical reading skills:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sourcing</li> <li>Close Reading</li> <li>Contextualization</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an explanation of what students noticed, observed, questioned, and concluded about the source?</li> </ul>		
<b>Analyzing Student Work</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are samples of student work included?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an analysis of how the student work demonstrates historical thinking?</li> </ul>		
<b>Reflecting on the Lesson</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the teacher identify strengths and weaknesses of the lesson, and ways to improve the lesson?</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the teacher demonstrate an understanding of what students learned, and what they might need to work on more?</li> </ul>		