

Making Connections

Goal: Making connections to primary sources and across disciplines

Objectives: Participants will:

- Connect with a primary source
- Make assumptions based on prior knowledge and close observation
- Discuss ways to engage students with primary sources
- Make connections between primary sources and multiple subject area disciplines
- Give specific examples of how a primary source can be used to meet learning goals across disciplines

Materials: Facsimiles of Primary Sources from the GHS collection

Procedures:

1. Spread items on tables for participants to browse. Ask participants to select one item that appeals to them and take it back to their seats.
2. Ask participants to take a close look at what they have selected and try to make some initial observations and conclusions. Guiding questions – what time period might this item come from. What are some topics and themes this item covers? What background knowledge do I know about this item that might help me interpret it?
3. (optional depending on size of group) have participants briefly share why they chose that primary source.
4. Ask participants to get up and move around the room, comparing their item with others' and looking for one person who has an item that makes a good pair because it has a similar topic, comes from a similar time-period, or speaks to similar themes.
5. In pairs discuss how their pair of documents could be used in the classroom. Ask them to come up with two ideas for two different subject areas.
6. Paris will briefly share their ideas.

Reflection

- How do you think an activity like this could work in your classroom?
- Do you think it makes a difference to make a personal connection to the primary source?
- Was it difficult to think of ways the primary sources could be used in a non-history classroom?

This activity was adapted from a Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources professional development activity.