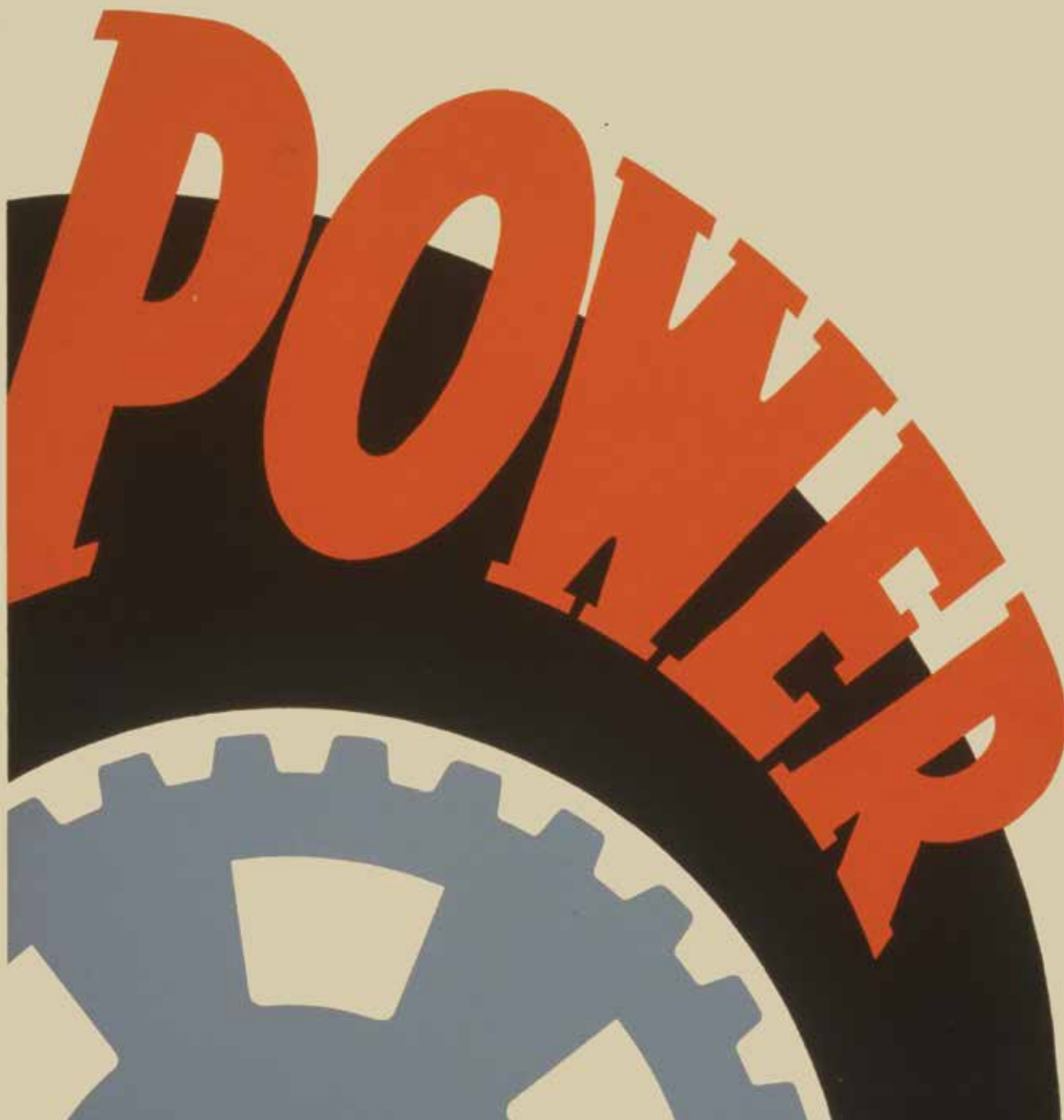


LOOK BACK. SEE FURTHER.

THE POWER OF THE POSTER: CONNECTING WPA POSTERS FROM THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS TO LOCAL COLLECTIONS.



**The University
of the Arts**

with support of



LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS

TEACHING *with* PRIMARY SOURCES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



The University of the Arts
Division of Continuing Studies



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS **TEACHING** with PRIMARY SOURCES



The University of the Arts, established in 1876, is one of the nation's only universities dedicated solely to educating students in design, fine arts, media arts, crafts, music, dance, and theater. The University has developed an innovative, and flexible approach to developing professional artists, designers, and writers. The University of the Arts acts as a catalyst for these creative professionals to connect, collaborate, and create across disciplines and traditional boundaries. The Professional + Adult Programs office at the University provides K-12 teachers in the regional educational community professional development programming across subject disciplines and grade levels.

The Library of Congress is the nation's oldest federal cultural institution. It is the world's preeminent reservoir for knowledge, providing unparalleled integrated resources to Congress and the American People. Founded in 1800, the Library seeks to further human understanding and wisdom by providing access to knowledge through its magnificent collections. This extensive collection covering the world's knowledge includes books, maps, manuscripts, photographs, recordings, and newspapers, available in most of the world's languages. The Library seeks to spark the public's imagination and celebrate human achievement through its programs and exhibits. In doing so, the Library helps foster the informed and involved citizenry upon which American democracy depends. Today, the Library serves the public, scholars, members of Congress, and their staff, all of whom seek information, understanding, and inspiration. Many of the Library's rich resources and treasures may also be accessed through the Library's award-winning website.

The Free Library of Philadelphia advances literacy, guides learning, and inspires curiosity. With more than 6 million visits to its 54 locations including the Rosenbach, and millions more online annually, the Free Library is one of Philadelphia's most widely used educational and cultural institutions. Its Print and Picture Collection (PIX) is home to diverse collections of fine art prints, photographs, drawings, and artists' books, as well as extensive research collections of Philadelphia images, both historical and modern. PIX is a free resource that is invaluable to artists, students, teachers and collectors.

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP), founded in 1824, is a provider of education and information about America's history for the people of Philadelphia and beyond. Its collection of manuscripts, graphics, and ephemera encompass more than 350 years of America's history—from the stories of its 17th-century settlers to those of its

most recent immigrants. Including the holdings of the Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies and the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, HSP is an international resource for the documentation and study of ethnic communities and immigrant experiences as well as one of the largest family history libraries in the United States. HSP welcomes thousands of researchers onsite each year and serves millions more around the globe through its digital collections and online curricular materials. At its historic library in Philadelphia's Gayborhood, HSP hosts workshops and lectures throughout the year, committed to being a voice that catalyzes informed dialogue on contemporary issues and inspires the curiosity to delve into history and share its stories.

Since 1996, the people at **Social Impact Studios** have combined artistry and activism to promote important social issues. They believe positive, proactive messages should get the most attention, and they are committed to thoughtful, beautiful, meaningful communication as the best way to engage and motivate people toward action. Social Impact Studios is a place where creative activists collaborate, learn, and do the work. From the concept to the material, they create action plans, visuals, messages, and moving grassroots experiences that make a social impact. Posters for the People is a project created by Social Impact Studios to document and present the posters made by the U.S. Works Progress Administration (WPA) between 1936 and 1943 and is the most comprehensive record combining data from the Library of Congress with public and private collections around the world.

Contributors: Ennis Carter, Catherine Cooney, Erin Elman, Stormy Vogel, Kitty Heite (Social Impact Studios), Beth Twiss Houting (HSP), Kaitlyn Pettengill (HSP), Vincent Fraley (HSP), Laura Stroffolino (Free Library)

Teaching with Primary Sources (TPS) Program at the University of the Arts administrative team: Erin Elman, Michael O'Connell, Kaitlynd O'Doherty, Sheila Watts

Art Direction and Design: Erik Summa

Content created and featured in partnership with the TPS program does not indicate an endorsement by the Library of Congress

TABLE OF CONTENTS



Page 8



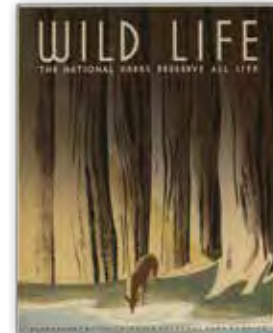
Page 10



Page 12



Page 14



Page 16

Teaching with Primary Sources	4
How to Use this Guide	7
Posters That Promote Health	8
Posters That Promote Arts & Culture	10
Posters That Promote Books & Libraries	12
Posters That Promote Workers	14
Posters That Promote Natural Resources	16
Primary Source Analysis Tool	18
Common Core State Standards	19

Photo Credits: Unless otherwise noted, images above and throughout this guide are from the collections of the Library of Congress.

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

LOOK BACK AND SEE FURTHER

By **Erin Elman**

Director of the TPS Program at the University of the Arts

Dean of the Division of Continuing Studies at the University of the Arts



We find ourselves living in *interesting* times. American citizens of all ages are seeking guidance on how to move through these times, find their voices, and take a stand. Often at moments like this, we look to our past, our history, to guide us.

By linking content to the artistic production of a given era, teachers and students discover artifacts that tell our individual and collective stories.

Connecting teaching and learning to the arts provides students with an integrated approach to learning that identifies how the arts inform and reflect history, in turn making connections between their lives today and events of the past.

Teaching with primary sources through the arts allows students to study and investigate how individuals use creative activities to celebrate and explore their individual, cultural, and national identity and history through documents, objects, and artifacts, as well as their own experiences. The arts teach us to think about qualitative relationships and movements, celebrate multiple perspectives, develop aural and visual literacy skills, and consider complex forms of problem solving. The arts also allow us to experience the world in a way no other source can.

The arts provide a humanistic, sociological, and aesthetic connection to the reactions and responses of our nation as it evolves. Looking back through the lens of the arts connects students to the continuum of history and provides them with a glimpse into their role in the process. One can find possibly no better example from American history where the arts and the government were more aligned in working to serve the American people than through the WPA.

At TPS-UArts, we are honored to be part of the Library of Congress's Teaching with Primary Sources consortium as we bring an artistic perspective to teachers, allowing them to look back and see further. We hope that teachers find this guide to be a useful tool in their classrooms as they seek to guide their students through these most interesting times.

WORKING WITH TEACHERS

By **Stormy Vogel**

Librarian Facilitator for the TPS Program at the University of the Arts



The Library of Congress has a multitude of digitized primary source materials available on their website at www.loc.gov. The Library developed these digital resources to help us understand history by providing access to original artifacts.

Using the Library of Congress's digitized images of WPA posters and this guide, teachers learn how to analyze and understand the meaning behind the prints and their significance in US history. Visual literacy, the ability to recognize and understand ideas conveyed through visible actions or images (as defined by Webster's dictionary), is an important skill for students to develop. Visual learning experiences are extremely interesting and engaging and can even be used with very young students. For the art teacher, using primary sources like the WPA posters as a model can inspire creative ideas and composition from budding artists. Also, using primary sources in the arts curriculum can reinforce the learning of the past by connecting historical events with the art that surrounds them.

Teachers can also explore the Library of Congress' classroom resources located on the teachers' page (www.loc.gov/teachers) and resource posted on the UArts TPS website (tps.uarts.edu). This is a starting point to gather resources like lesson plans, themed resources, primary source sets, and interactive presentations. The Library also provides primary source-based professional development so educators can learn how to instruct other teachers about the vast resources available at the library www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/. These professional development opportunities include activities and videos, ready-to-present lessons (which can be used with students too), webinars, and Summer Teacher Institutes. The Teaching with Primary Sources Blog <http://blogs.loc.gov/teachers/> and the TPS Journal <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/tps/journal/> as well as the LOC Twitter feed @TeachingLC are additional resources provided by the Library to engage learners and apply critical thinking.

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

RESEARCHING WPA POSTERS

By Catherine Cooney

Coordinator for the TPS Program at the University of the Arts



What does it mean to “read” a poster? Visual literacy is the ability to make meaning of images through analysis and interpretation, to evaluate their sources, to use them effectively, and know how to find them. Finding images from the Library of Congress’s collections is straightforward. They are organized into collections and thematic groups on the Library’s website, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/>.

Because posters most often promote local activities, researchers can likely

find them in digitized public and private collections such as the HSP, and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

Users of this guide might find the following Library of Congress collections, which provide context and complimentary material for WPA posters of special interest:

- The New Deal Stage: Selections from the Federal Theatre Project, 1935-1939, <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/connections/new-deal-stage/>
- The digitized negatives from the Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information, <http://loc.gov/pictures/collection/fsa/>, which provide a record of daily life in America between 1935 and 1944
- American Life Histories: Manuscripts from the Federal Writers’ Project, 1936 to 1940, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/federal-writers-project/about-this-collection/>, which collects more than 2,900 documents compiled and transcribed by writers working on the Folklore Project
- Florida Folklife from the WPA Collections, 1937 to 1942, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/florida-folklife-from-the-works-progress-administration/about-this-collection/>
- California Gold: Northern California Folk Music from the 1930s <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/afccchtml/cowhome.html>.

Users interested in posters as a medium should look at the Library’s many poster collections, including:

- Performing Arts Posters <https://www.loc.gov/collections/performing-arts-posters/about-this-collection/>
- Artist Posters <https://www.loc.gov/collections/artists-posters/about-this-collection/>
- Spanish Civil War Posters <https://www.loc.gov/collections/spanish-civil-war-posters/about-this-collection/>

- World War I Posters <https://www.loc.gov/collections/world-war-i-posters/about-this-collection/>
- A wide range of analysis tools can be used to guide inquiry and build visual literacy skills: <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/resource/researchertool.html>.

During the depths of the Great Depression, the US government became a vital patron of the arts, employing thousands of artists in the WPA Federal Art Project. Muralists, actors, writers, musicians, and other artists worked to represent positive social ideals, programs, and a uniquely American way of life. Records about the WPA posters were kept at the state level, and by policy, WPA poster artists were not allowed to sign their work. For those reasons, we don’t always know which artists created which posters. However, every poster is marked in some way with a government stamp, and some artists snuck their signatures in so we can sometimes fill in the blanks about these often-undocumented artists and artifacts.

As an example of where using the TPS method of observing, reflecting, and questioning might lead, we can think of the Rural Pennsylvania poster, pictured on page 11 of this guide, and notice details focusing on what is surprising, unexpected, or intriguing. A perusal of the Library of Congress’s cataloging record reveals basic information: Katharine Milhous was the artist, and the poster dates from the early days of the program, 1936. With that basic knowledge, we can turn to examining the visual elements of the poster: What might the composition, line, the color choices, and the font style tell us? What effect does the placement of the text have, and how does it relate to the images? Might the meaning of the poster be clear, even if you did not understand the language of the text?

The way the composition of the Rural Pennsylvania poster echoes the topography of central Pennsylvania’s mountain ranges is striking, and one might notice the way Milhous’s palette echoes that of Pennsylvania German pottery. This might lead the researcher to look into the artist’s connection to Pennsylvania and the traditional arts and crafts of the region. Milhous came from a Quaker family who worked as printers in Philadelphia, and she was proud of her Pennsylvania Dutch heritage. Her partner, Frances Lichten, with whom she shared a studio for more than 40 years, was the state supervisor for another WPA project, the Index of American Design, which sent artists around the country to document American arts and crafts. Lichten’s work for the Index would have included Pennsylvania German decorative arts, such as those referenced by Milhous in her Rural Pennsylvania poster. A brief investigation of the artist, leads to questions of how artists are inspired and influenced by their family backgrounds, as well as by the company they keep. When we ask questions and follow leads, a simple promotional poster reveals itself to be the product of a rich, interconnected artists community in Philadelphia during the pre-war era.

TEACHING WITH PRIMARY SOURCES

POSTERS FOR THE PEOPLE

By **Ennis Carter**

Director, Social Impact Studios

In the 1930s, the United States was in crisis. The economy had collapsed and one-quarter of the population was unemployed. In an effort to rebuild the nation, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launched a series of programs in 1933 called the “New Deal.” The largest agency of this recovery program, the WPA, employed millions of jobless workers in an ambitious campaign to build roads, bridges, and public buildings and enhance community life through health, education, arts, and culture.

The WPA Poster Division (1936–1943), produced posters to raise awareness and promote programs, activities, and behaviors that the Roosevelt administration believed would improve people’s lives. From roughly 500 artists hired throughout the life of the project, more than 35,000 designs were created, with 2 million posters printed and distributed to the public. Sadly, most of the posters were lost after the WPA ended. Luckily, there is a large collection of more than 1,200 pieces in the Library of Congress and many local collections around the country that are gradually being digitized, making this a strong resource for the public to explore.

It is exciting to develop a teaching guide for WPA posters, especially at this point in our nation’s history, when promotional images are everywhere. WPA posters show us how official government promotion was leveraged to affirm the role of authority and encourage collective social behavior. Balancing between educational materials and calls to action, the posters can lead to powerful discussions about the nature and role of propaganda in the public realm.

As pieces of art, the posters help us dive into an inherently populist medium and explore how it functions in a democratic society. The means of production was designed for multiple copies, which meant that posters were seen in different places by a wide range of viewers. They lived in civic spaces where people came together or traversed their everyday lives, including public transportation, government buildings, and centers for community services such as schools and libraries. It’s hard to imagine in the 21st century – and intriguing to examine – how a common, recognizable, and beautifully designed narrative could tie people together in public. Finally, WPA poster subject matter exclusively publicized the well-being of our country and its people – both locally *and* nationally. Standing alongside commercial

advertising, these posters balanced public attention on what could be argued is most important for the upkeep of a strong society.

We are fortunate to have such a large national treasure of digitized WPA posters in the Library of Congress. Combined with local collections like those at HSP and the Free Library of Philadelphia – among others around the country – teachers and students of all ages have the opportunity to look, learn, and connect the dots to their own communities and lives. It’s critical work for anyone living in a democracy and made more enjoyable through the beauty and power of the art.



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

USE THESE STEPS TO GET STARTED:

1. Engage students with primary sources.

*Draw on students' prior knowledge of the topic.
Ask students to closely observe each poster.*

- Who created this poster?
- When was it created?

Help students see key details.

- Where does your eye go first?
- What colors and shapes are used?
- Is there print? How does the text connect to the image?

Encourage students to think about their personal response to the image.

- What feelings and thoughts does the poster trigger in you?
- What do you wonder about it?

2. Promote student inquiry.

Encourage students to speculate about each image, its creator, and its context.

- What was happening during this time period?
- What was the artist's purpose in making this poster?
- How does the artist get their point across?
- Who was the audience for this poster?
- What biases or stereotypes do you see?

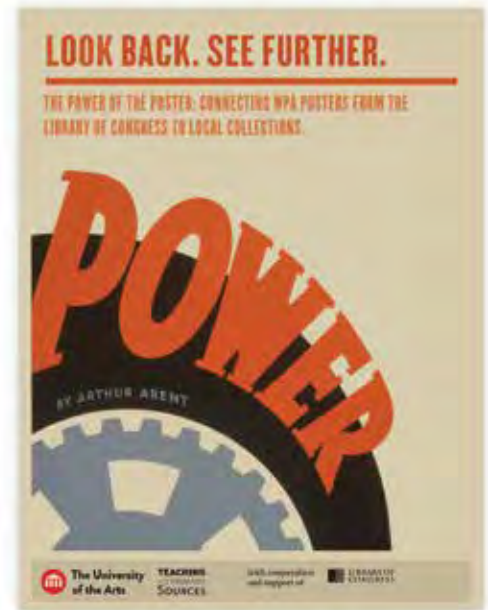
Ask whether this source agrees with other primary sources or with what the students already know.

- Ask students to test their assumptions about the past.
- Ask students to find other primary or secondary sources that offer support or contradiction.

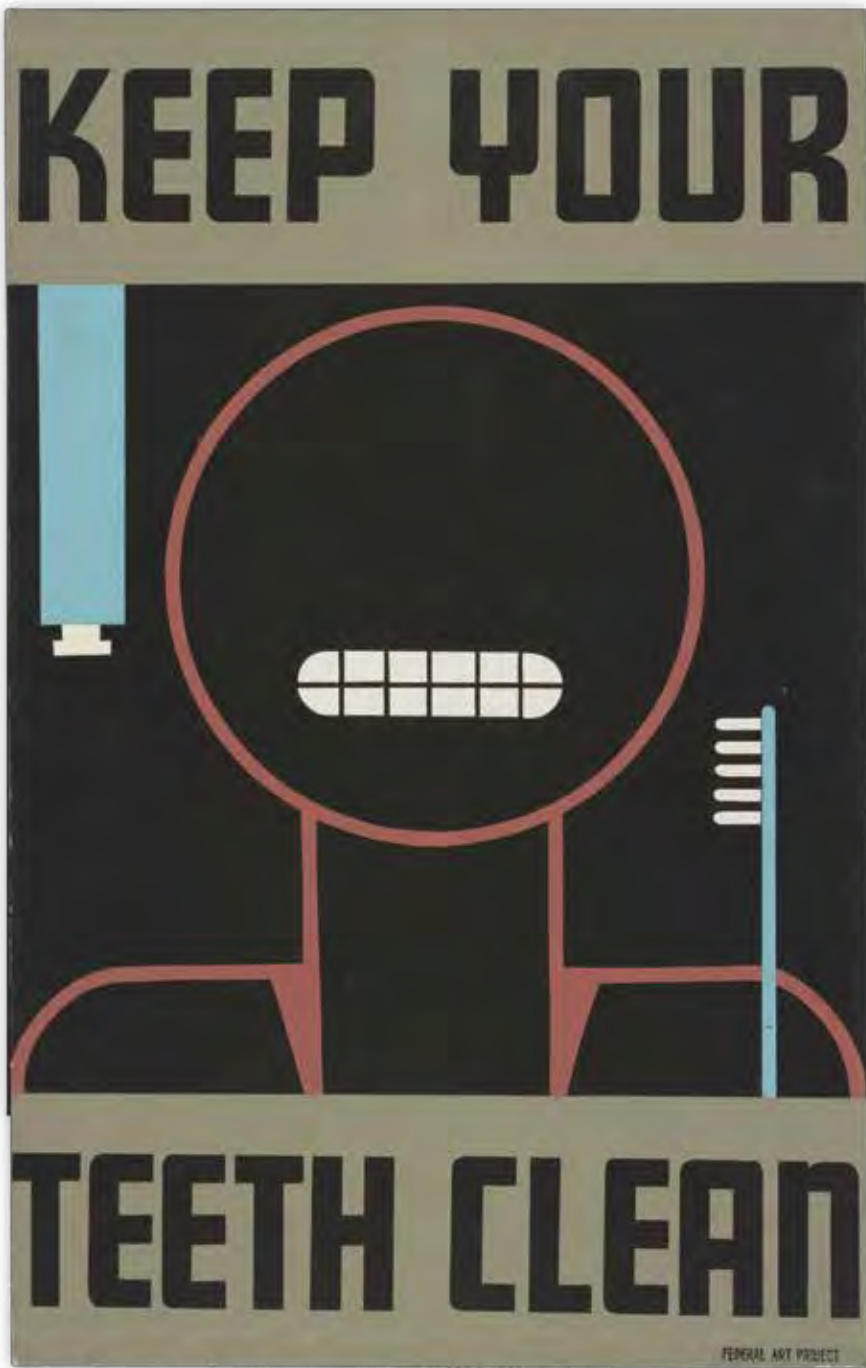
3. Assess how students apply critical thinking and analysis skills to WPA posters.

Have students summarize what they have learned.

- Ask for reasons and specific evidence to support their conclusions.
- Help students identify questions for further investigation and develop strategies for how they might answer them.



POSTERS THAT PROMOTE HEALTH



A CLOSER LOOK: KEEP YOUR TEETH CLEAN

- *Where does your eye go first when you look at this poster? Describe the objects or people you see. What colors or shapes did the artist use to get your attention?*
- *Describe the image. What do you think the purpose of the poster is? How does the artist communicate this purpose? How do the words and image work together? Imagine you cannot read the words: What message would you get from the poster?*
- *Who do you think this poster was meant for? Why would a poster focus on hygiene? Do you think a poster can help change people's behavior? Why?*

Keep Your Teeth Clean

Date: between 1936 and 1938.
Artist: Federal Art Project, Rochester, NY
Library of Congress.
<https://www.loc.gov/item/92517367/>

Promoting general health was a top priority during the Great Depression because of the poor economy, bad living conditions, and social challenges such as language barriers. A large percentage of WPA posters, like these examples, highlight hygiene, disease prevention, nutrition, and child care.

Rochester WPA poster division director and artist Erik Hans Krause began his career in Germany after graduating from the Academy of Decorative Arts and Crafts in Dresden. Following a move to the United States in 1923, Krause settled permanently in Rochester, New York, in 1932. In 1936 he was employed with the Federal Art Project and supervised ten artists and craftsmen who designed and printed posters for the WPA.

This “Keep Your Teeth Clean” poster is a classic example of the *Bauhaus* style – a German art movement spanning 1919-1933 – characterized by lack of ornamentation, abstract representations, and special attention paid to the connection of form and function within any given work. In posters, that often translates into the placement of shapes and words in an abstract way that moves the eye through the information in an intentional flow. Having come to the U.S. in the middle of that period, Krause carried this aesthetic into his role as designer and art director of the Rochester division that created this hygiene promotion poster.



Vitamins Pack A Punch Into School Lunch

Date: 1933-1941

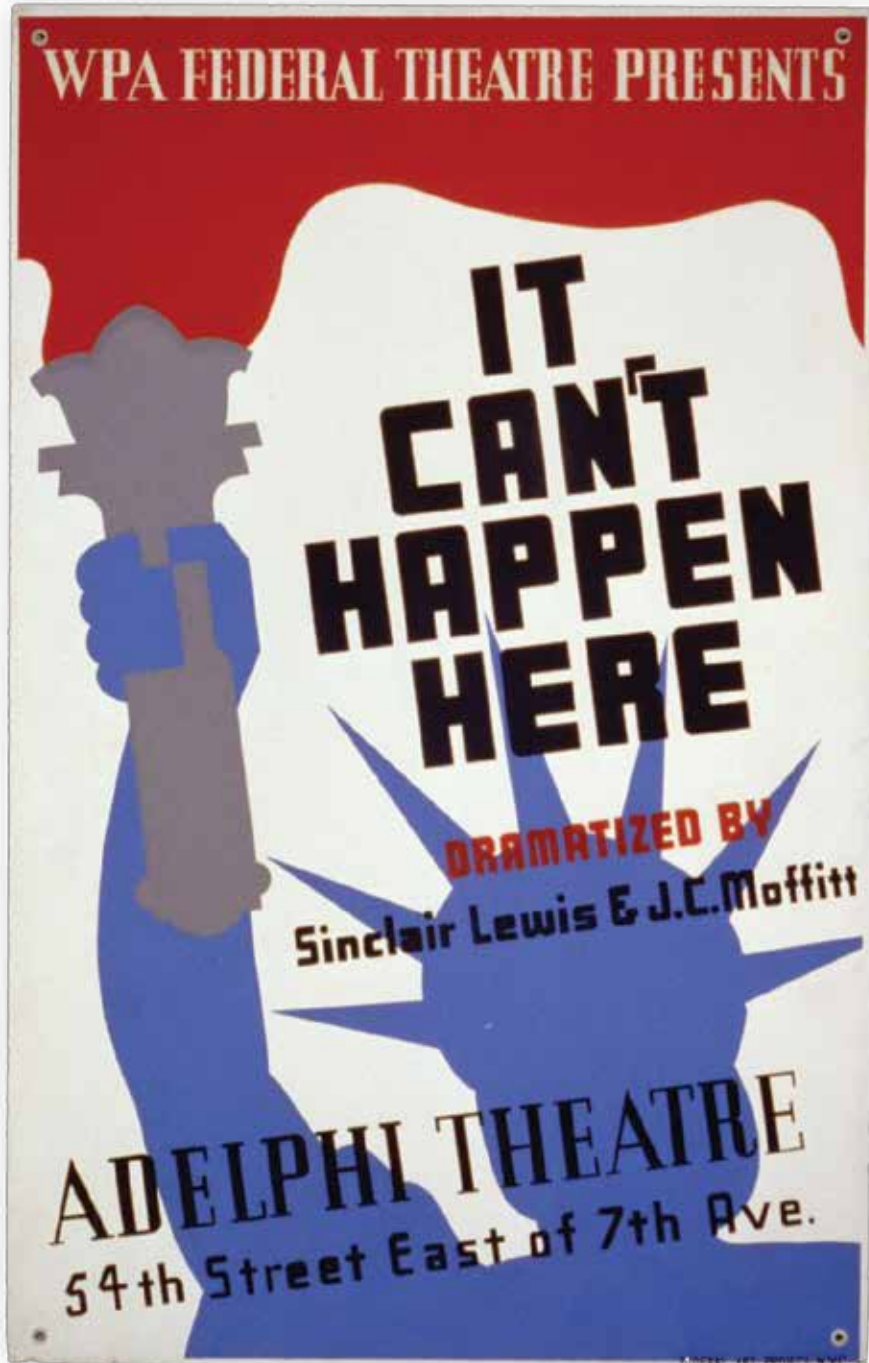
Artist: WPA Federal Art Project, Pennsylvania

Historical Society of Pennsylvania

http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id1303

In a 1935 speech about the WPA School Lunch Program, Ellen Woodward, WPA Assistant Administrator, explained that 1 million undernourished children had benefitted from having hot lunches in the first year and a half of the program: “...80,000,000 hot meals have been served at the rate of 500,000 daily in 10,000 schools throughout the country.” This poster combines classic comic-style illustration that would appeal to children – who benefitted from the program – with a message for adults that encourages participation by stressing its value.

POSTERS THAT PROMOTE ARTS & CULTURE



A CLOSER LOOK: IT CAN'T HAPPEN HERE

- *Do you recognize the image in this poster? What does it represent? Is this a view you have seen before or is it new to you? Do you recognize it anyway? Why?*
- *Notice the text. Why is some slanted and some straight? What do you wonder about the play this poster advertises?*
- *Consider the colors and the statue represented in the poster. Where do you think the “Here” in the title is? Does the layout of the words and images together give you any sense of what the “It” is? Is the “It” positive or negative? Why do you think so?*

It Can't Happen Here

WPA Federal Theatre presents "It Can't Happen Here" dramatized by Sinclair Lewis & J.C. Moffitt, Adelphi Theatre, 54th Street, East of 7th Ave

Date: 1936 or 1937

Artist: Richard Halls, Federal Art Project, New York, NY
Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/item/92516051/>

In addition to infrastructure and social services, arts and culture were a high priority for the Roosevelt administration. From 1935 to 1939, the Federal Theatre Project hired more than 15,000 actors, musicians, writers, and other theater professionals to bring local and regional live performances to millions of Americans. In addition to classic theater, the project presented contemporary original works, African-American theater, dance, and foreign-language drama.

In 1936, Sinclair Lewis adapted his semi-satirical anti-fascism novel *It Can't Happen Here* for stage with John Moffitt for production at 21 theaters in 17 states as part of the Federal Theatre Project. The nationwide effort needed publicity posters, including this example designed by Richard Halls from the NYC Poster Division – and at least 18 other documented poster designs by other WPA artists across the country.

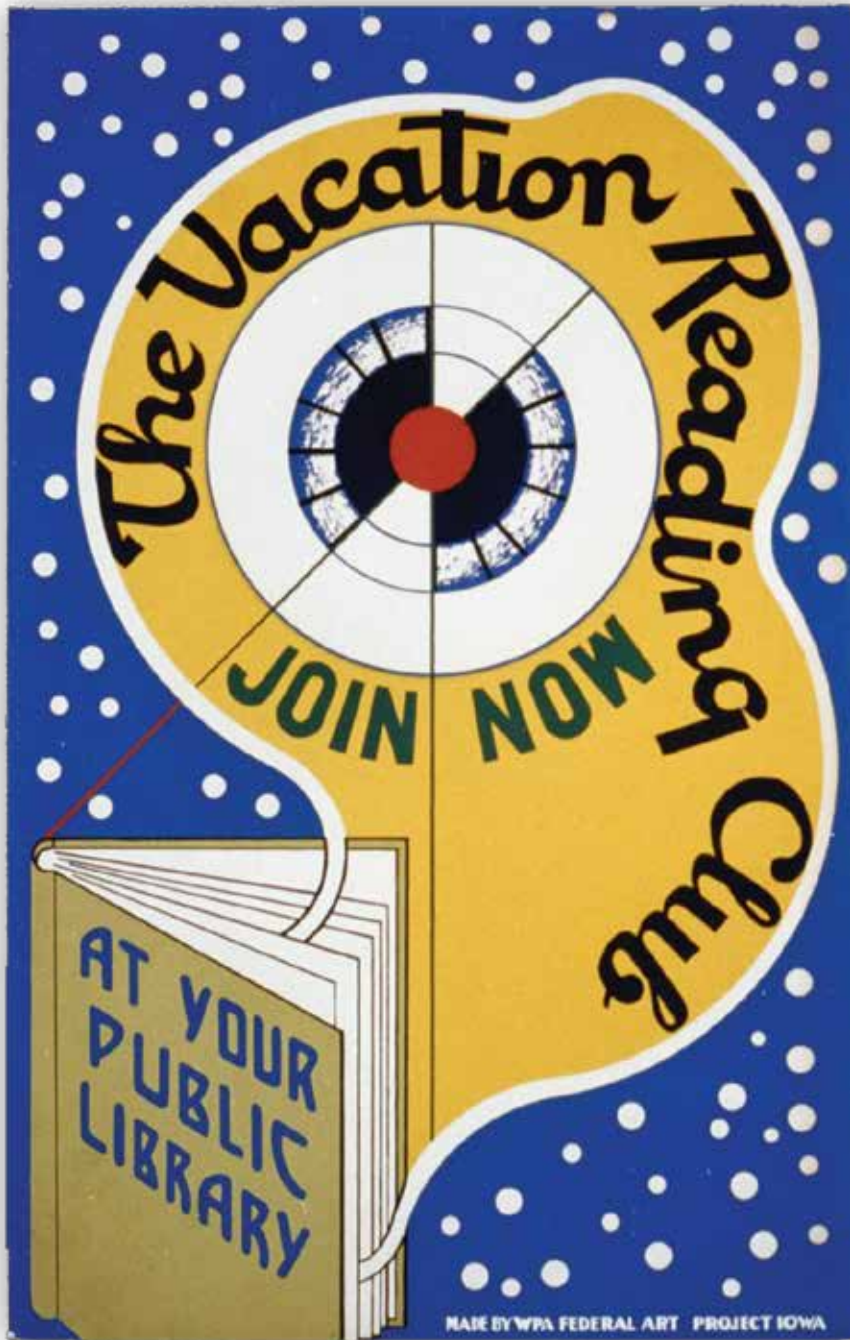


Rural Pennsylvania

Date: Between 1936 and 1941
Artist: Katherine Milhous, WPA
Pennsylvania Art Project
Free Library of Philadelphia

Katherine Milhous created some of the most artistic and recognizable posters of the WPA. After a successful career as an illustrator and gaining esteem as a Cresson Traveling Fellow, Milhous broke ground as an arts administrator during the New Deal acting as the Philadelphia supervisor of the Federal Art Project. In addition to creating her own posters to promote Pennsylvania life, culture, and art, she oversaw a team of artists in the local poster division, including Robert Muchley, Isadore Possoff, Charlotte Angus, Hugh Stevenson, Harry Ballinger, Nathan Sherman, and William Tasker. This “Rural Pennsylvania” poster is one of many Milhous designs depicting folk traditions of Amish and Mennonite communities in the state. This poster was created using silkscreen reproduction technology, but many other Milhous posters were produced using lithography, a more advanced and resource-intensive process that was rarely used during the lean economic times of the WPA.

POSTERS THAT PROMOTE BOOKS & LIBRARIES



A CLOSER LOOK: THE VACATION READING CLUB

- *What do you see in this poster? Are objects represented, or is it abstract?*
- *What do you notice about the text on the poster? How would you describe it? How many different fonts are used? How do the words relate to the image?*
- *What is the message of the poster? What do you think a reading club is, and why would anyone want to promote reading? Think about how you feel when you read a great book. How would you communicate that feeling in a poster?*

The Vacation Reading Club

The Vacation Reading Club: Join now at your public library.

Date: Between 1936 and 1939

Artist: WPA Federal Art Project, Iowa
Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/item/98510373/>

Even in the midst of difficult economic times, books, reading, and education were featured prominently in WPA posters throughout the country. Many posters, like this “Vacation Reading Club” example from Iowa, celebrated the local public library as a center for knowledge and social engagement, but also as a source of entertainment. The design of this poster conveys several different perspectives by combining an actual representation of a book with a symbolic rendering of the experience of being on vacation. In a time when many Americans could not afford to travel, this poster promotes multiple ways of “getting away from it all.”



Young and Old Visit the Library on the Parkway

Date: 1936 or 1937

Artist: Nathan Sherman, WPA Federal Art Project, Pennsylvania
Free Library of Philadelphia

Very few works from the Pennsylvania Federal Art Project are attributed to Nathan Sherman, but they all provide a glimpse into the Modernist art style that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In contrast to most WPA posters that have a flat feel, Sherman’s work portrays a complexity unusual for the program and the medium. Here, he intentionally breaks from traditional structure and uses a variety of techniques and type styles to achieve a piece with layered perspectives and depth. Some examples include the angle of the columned facade of the library, which creates a 3-dimensional effect, aligning text to the left at the top and the right at the bottom, and adding the “stippled” black shading on top of the figures to give them more dimension.

POSTERS THAT PROMOTE WORKERS



A CLOSER LOOK: CAREERS AHEAD

- *Examine the image carefully. What objects do you see in the foreground? What colors did the artist choose? Why? What do the colors and shapes of the background make you think of?*
- *This is a screen print, a technique that results in flat areas of color. How did the artist convey a sense of depth while using this technique?*
- *Do you think the tools pictured in this poster are used by artists today? What tools would you add to this poster for the 21st century?*

Careers Ahead

Date: Between 1936 and 1939

Artist: Beard

WPA Federal Art Project

Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/item/98517916/>

The number one motivation behind the Works Progress Administration was to give an out-of-work nation jobs, during a time when between one-third and one-quarter of the entire country was out of work. With work and workers at center stage, it is not surprising that many of the posters created by the Division featured glorified images of workers and artistic symbols that represented the potential and power of work itself. This “Careers Ahead” poster, created by an Illinois WPA poster artist, depicts shapes that connect tools of drafting, art, and design with results in the natural world. The techniques of overlapping and creating “knockouts” give the limited color palette a sense of movement common in many WPA posters of the time.



Work With Care WPA Safety Poster

Date: 1933 -1941

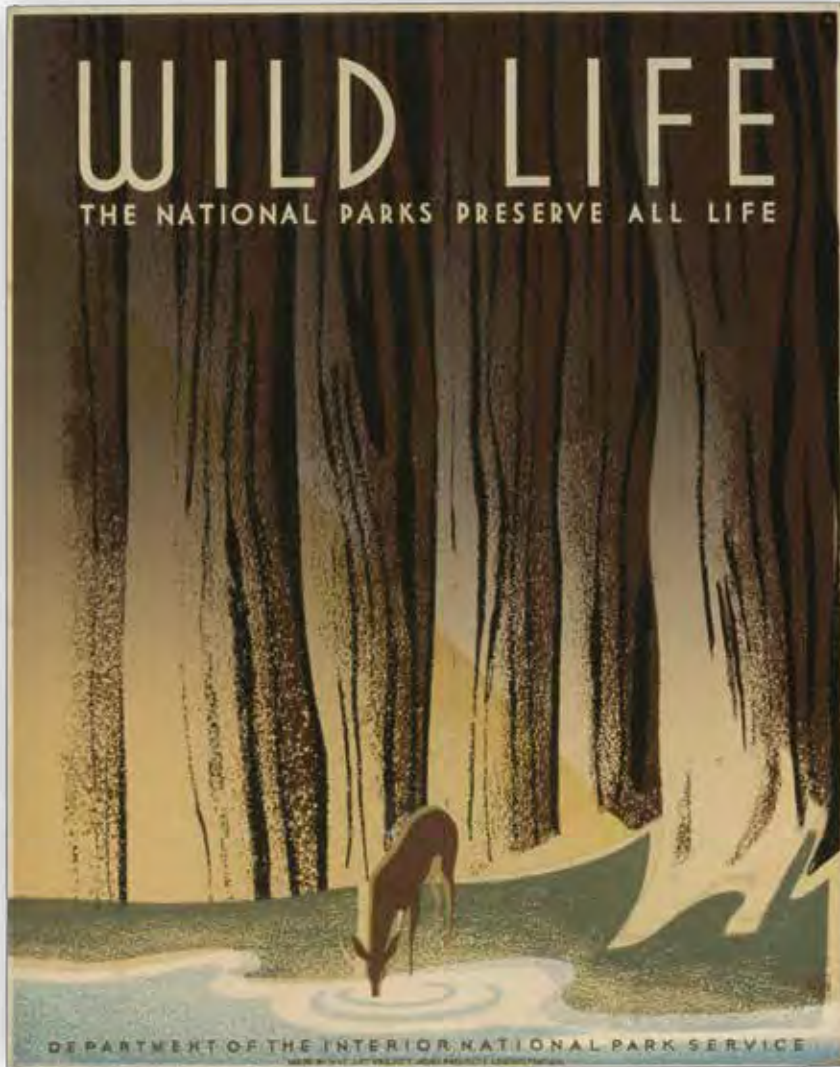
Artist: Isadore Posoff

Historical Society of Pennsylvania

http://digitallibrary.hsp.org/index.php/Detail/Object/Show/object_id/1297

When artist Isadore Posoff died in 1972, his daughters found his original WPA worker I.D. card in his wallet. “He was so proud of being in the WPA,” daughter Jane Weiss said. But not all WPA workers remembered that time so fondly. As a relief program, the WPA received harsh criticism as a wasteful “make-work” use of public resources. Many skilled workers who were given jobs under its mantle later denied their involvement altogether. Despite the controversy, there was an unwavering value placed on hard work and workers themselves through the New Deal. The WPA posters’ main purpose was to promote the values and programs of the administration. This poster, designed by Posoff, celebrates a manual laborer, while conveying a message of safety for that same group of workers on the job.

POSTERS THAT PROMOTE NATURAL RESOURCES



Wild Life

WILD LIFE The National Parks Preserve All Life.

Date: between 1936 and 1940

Artist: Frank S. Nicholson, U.S. National Park Service. NYC Art Project, Works
Projects Administration

Library of Congress <https://www.loc.gov/item/92522682/>

A CLOSER LOOK: WILD LIFE

- *Notice the scene depicted in this poster: What people or animals do you see? What else do you recognize? What don't you see in this poster? Where do you think this might be?*
- *This poster focuses on preservation, rather than tourism. What do you think is being preserved in this park? How would you describe the font used for the text? Does it seem "wild?" Why or why not? Why do you think the artist used text in that way?*
- *Have you been to a national park? Was your experience like this poster or different? How would you describe the mood of this poster? How did the artist use color or line to create this mood? Have you ever had a similar feeling in a natural place?*

Protecting natural resources was a high priority for the New Deal government, with many national and state park headquarters, trails, and clearings being built by WPA workers during the time. Posters like this example by New York City poster division artist Frank Nicholson promoted the inherent value of the serenity of wildlife itself. Other well-known national park posters were part of a “See America” campaign that invited visitors to explore protected land at a time of increasing global unrest, when Americans could rarely afford to travel outside their own country.



Drive Carefully Safeguard Wildlife

Date: c. 1936

Artist: Pennsylvania Art Project, WPA
Free Library of Philadelphia


Although this example has a very similar visual design to the Wild Life poster on the facing page, the message and tone are completely different. This striking image of the deer-in-headlights was designed by a Philadelphia-based WPA poster artist and emphasizes the viewer’s—not the government’s—responsibility for protecting this natural resource. It is common to see both types of messages in WPA posters. As a body of work, they portray a relationship between the role of government and the responsibility of its citizens to uphold a set of shared, democratic values.

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS TOOL

The Library of Congress provides teacher's guides that help to analyze primary sources. Helping students analyze primary sources can guide them toward higher-order thinking and better critical thinking and analysis skills. The Library provides a variety of these guides based on primary source material. On the Library of Congress website one can find a variety of these tools, which help to analyze photographs and prints, books and other printed text, manuscripts, maps, political cartoons, motion pictures, sheet music and song sheets, oral histories, and sound recordings. Each teacher's guide asks questions to help students construct knowledge as they form reasonable conclusions based on the evidence they see, hear, or read. Then students can connect primary sources to the context in which they were created. When viewing a poster, students should be able to answer these probing questions.

The analysis tools are not linear; teachers should encourage students to go back and forth between the columns to answer the questions.

TEACHER'S GUIDE ANALYZING PHOTOGRAPHS & PRINTS



Guide students with the sample questions as they respond to the primary source. Encourage them to go back and forth between the columns; there is no correct order.

OBSERVE

Have students identify and note details.

Sample Questions:
Describe what you see · What do you notice first?
· What people and objects are shown? · How are they arranged? · What is the physical setting?
· What, if any, words do you see? · What other details can you see?

REFLECT

Encourage students to generate and test hypotheses about the image.

Why do you think this image was made? · What's happening in the image? · When do you think it was made? · Who do you think was the audience for this image? · What tools were used to create this?
· What can you learn from examining this image? · What's missing from this image? · If someone made this today, what would be different? · What would be the same?

QUESTION

Have students ask questions to lead to more observations and reflections.

What do you wonder about...
who? · what? · when? · where? · why? · how?

FURTHER INVESTIGATION

Help students to identify questions appropriate for further investigation, and to develop a research strategy for finding answers.





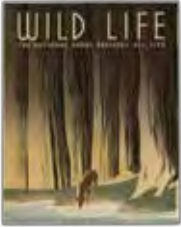
Sample Question: What more do you want to know, and how can you find out?

A few follow-up activity ideas:	Beginning Write a caption for the image.	Advanced Have students expand or alter textbook or other printed explanations of history based on images they study.	For more tips on using primary sources, go to http://www.loc.gov/teachers
	Intermediate Select an image. Predict what will happen one minute after the scene shown in the image. One hour after? Explain the reasoning behind your predictions.		

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | LOC.gov/teachers

Extension ideas are available for each teacher's guide. www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/guides

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

Image from the Library of Congress	Objective	Common Core State Standard
	<p>Comprehension and collaboration of text</p> <p>Presentation of ideas</p>	<p>Grade 1</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.5 Add drawings or other visual displays to descriptions when appropriate to clarify ideas, thoughts, and feelings.</p>
	<p>Identification of key ideas and details</p>	<p>Grade 11-12</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.11-12.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.</p>
	<p>Identification of craft and structure of language</p>	<p>Grade 3</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.</p>
	<p>Research to build and present knowledge</p>	<p>Grade 8</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.</p>
	<p>Comprehension and collaboration of media</p> <p>Identification of key ideas and details</p>	<p>Grade 6</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.</p> <p>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.6.2 Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.</p>



The University of the Arts

loc.gov

tps.uarts.edu

This undated image shows Hamilton Hall at the University of the Arts when the school was known as the Philadelphia College of Art. The building was originally part of the Pennsylvania Institution of the Deaf and Dumb.

Photo Credit: South (Front) Elevation - Pennsylvania Institution of the Deaf & Dumb, 320 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, PA. <https://www.loc.gov/item/pa1043/>

Teaching with Primary Sources

The University of the Arts | 320 South Broad Street | Philadelphia, PA 19102

215.717.6006 | tps@uarts.edu