

LESSON FIVE: USING THE WEB TO STUDY HISTORY

Enduring understandings:

The Internet (or World Wide Web) serves as an excellent tool in the study of history. Historical knowledge on the Internet may take many forms, including both primary and secondary sources comprised of images and text.

Essential questions:

How is the Internet helpful in the study of history?

How can we locate reliable historical information on the Internet?

How is historical information structured online?

TEKS:

- 7.7 understand how individuals, events, and issues shaped the history of Texas during the 20th century
- 7.21(A) differentiate between, locate, and use primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas
- 7.21(G) evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author

Materials:

1. A computer for each pair of students with Internet access. [Note: While this lesson is designed to be completed with students working in pairs to study the Russell Lee Web site, the teacher may modify the lesson to guide the students through the site]
2. Computer with Internet access and screen projector for guided learning portion of the lesson. Teacher may bookmark the Russell Lee home page for easy access during the lesson (<http://www.cah.utexas.edu/ssspot/index.php>)
3. Exploring *The Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas* Web site handout [1 for each pair of students]

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify ways that the Internet can be used to study history
- Identify the key components of a Web site
- Demonstrate understanding of the organization of *The Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas* Web site
- Students will become familiar with images on *The Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas* Web site

Anticipatory set:

Ask students:

When was the last time you used the Internet? What sites did you visit? What Web sites are your favorites?

Procedure:

Explain to students:

While we often use the Internet for recreational purposes such as e-mailing friends, we can also use the Internet as an academic tool. There are many great Web sites that we can use to study history.

Briefly review Web sites of historical interest with students, including:

- Texas Archives and Manuscripts Texas Treasures: <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/treasures/index.html>
- The Library of Congress American Memory: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/>
- The Handbook of Texas Online: <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/>

After Web site review, discuss the sites with students, asking:

- When would you use these sites to study history? What kind of information would you find on the sites?
- Are the Web sites a reliable source for accurate information? How do you know?
- How are the sites different? How are they similar?
- Was there a way to easily search the Web sites for information?
- Do the Web sites contain primary or secondary historical sources?
- Did the sites include text or images? Both?
- Which site was your favorite? Why?
- Can you think of other Web sites that you would use to study history? Which ones?

Explain to students:

In today's lesson you will become familiar with a Web site we will use to study the history of Mexican-Americans in Texas. As a class, we will examine the site's home page. Afterwards, you will explore the rest of the site with a partner.

Bring up the home page of the Russell Lee Web site on the classroom screen and review the page with students. This review should provide an overview of Web terminology, including:

- URL (Uniform Resource Locator) - the Web address for the page
- Header - the top part of a Web page that includes the URL
- Title bar - the title of a page
- Toolbar - the browser buttons used to navigate a Web site. Includes refresh, forward and backward. The toolbar will change according to the Web browser used by your class.
- Body - text and other content of a Web page
- Footer - the bottom part of a Web page that includes information about the page's author and page updates
- The search box

Discuss the home page, asking students:

- What content does the body of the Web page include?

- Who created the Web site? Do you think that the information on this site is accurate? Why or why not?
- What is the URL of the page? How do I bookmark the page so I can access it later on?
- How will I navigate to other sections of the Web site? What are the titles of the other sections of the site?
- What do you think will happen if I click on one of the pictures with the city name?

Assign students into pairs and distribute copies of Exploring *The Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas* Web site. Allow students at least 20 minutes to explore the site before completing the handout.

When students have finished the handout, call the group back together and discuss their answers.

Closure:

Review the importance of the Internet in studying history. Explain to students that they will have more opportunities to explore the Russell Lee Web site in upcoming lessons.

Evaluation:

Check responses to handout for comprehension.

Exploring *The Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas* Web Site

Names:

Instructions: Spend 20 minutes browsing the Russell Lee *Study of the Spanish-Speaking People of Texas* Web site, and then answer the following questions. Be prepared to share your answers with the class. The home page of the Web site is located at <http://www.cah.utexas.edu/ssspot/index.php>.

What is the title of the Web site?

How many images are on the Web site?

What menu options are given on the home page? (Hint: The first menu option is Why Russell Lee?)

What menu option would you choose if you wanted to find out more about the Russell Lee photograph collection? What is the URL of this page?

What menu option would you choose if you wanted to learn more about the life of Russell Lee? What is the URL of this page?

Do the header and footer change throughout the site? How?

How do you navigate to the four image galleries on the site?

How would you locate pictures from the study that were taken in El Paso?

How do you search for images on the site?

How many thumbnail images are provided on each of the search return pages? How do you navigate to the next search return page?

Practice using the search box located at the top right corner of the home page. Search for these terms: teacher, hospital, student. How many returns did you get for each search?

Make up two search terms: _____
How many returns did you get for these searches?

Did your search produce the results you expected? Explain.

What happens if you click on one of the thumbnail images on the search return page?

What information is provided for each of the images? Who wrote this description of the picture?

Was there any information not provided in the description that you would like to know? What?

How is each image identified? What do you think this number means?

Find image rw114233r3_0026. What is the subject of this picture? How could you search for similar pictures?

Did you find the Web site easy or hard to use? Explain.

What would you change about the site?

How does this Web site help us understand history?