Interdisciplinary Education

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Experiencing History: Integrating Cultural Artifacts into a Study of the Dust Bowl

History involves the study of people and the times and places in which they lived. Traditional instruction often is dominated by an emphasis on decontextualized facts, dates, and events. Too often, the study of history becomes lifeless and monotonous because it artificially separates people from the larger context of times and places in which they lived. Teachers can build meaningful contexts in which students experience history by using cultural artifacts as springboards into the study of people who lived in the past. Integrating the use of cultural artifacts, such as photographs, films, and music, allows teachers to create new entry points, new ways for students to connect to, and take ownership of, their learning. This article presents a rationale for including cultural artifacts in the study of history, which can promote a better understanding of the nature of history, personalize history, encourage student inquiry, and endorse the notion that history represents multiple perspectives. Cultural artifacts can be used to enrich instruction of any historical period, at any grade level. In this article, we provide examples of artifacts that can be used in a study of the Dust Bowl for the upper elementary and middle grades.

Key Words: Content integration, Cultural artifacts, History, Inquiry, Multiple perspectives, Student engagement

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Introduction

How do you get to know someone you have never met, for example, your grandmother who passed away when you were very young? Logic dictates that you look through materials she left behind: scrapbooks, report cards, toys, sheet music, books, letters, and diaries. Another strategy includes talking with people who knew her and hearing accounts of what she enjoyed and disliked. Photographs provide insights about the house where she grew up, clothing styles of the day, pets she may have owned, and even plants indigenous to the area where she lived. Newspaper and magazine clippings reveal clues about the larger historical, political, and economic times in which she lived; the important local, national, and international events that occurred during her life, and even the concerns and values of people who lived during that time. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (2008) suggests that the analysis and interpretation of cultural artifacts, such as those mentioned above, are effective means for creating and advancing students’ conceptual understandings of history. The integration of cultural artifacts into a study of history makes otherwise lifeless facts and dates come to life.

We begin by presenting a rationale for including cultural artifacts in the study of history. In this article, cultural artifacts refer to photographs, music, films, stories (both oral histories and creative writing), visual art, dance, and other evidences that represent people’s lives. In the last part of the article, we provide examples of cultural artifacts that may be integrated into a study of the Dust Bowl at the upper elementary and middle grade levels.

Why Use Cultural Artifacts?

Cultural artifacts enrich instruction of any historical period, at any grade level. They promote an understanding of the nature of history, personalize history, encourage student inquiry, and endorse the notion that history represents multiple perspectives. Each of these reasons for using cultural artifacts are explained below.

Promote an Understanding of the Nature of History

As it is conventionally taught, many students agree with Henry Ford when he described history as “one damn event after another” (Scotter, White, Hartoonian, & Davis, 2007, p. 231). If teachers want students to think about history as multifaceted, interdisciplinary, and as “the story of human experience” (Maxwell, n.d., para. 1), they can use cultural artifacts to introduce the social, political, economic, geographic, and religious complexities that define a historical period and shape people’s lives. As a result, students begin to experience history in ways that provide dimension to facts and dates, which are necessarily a part of history. When cultural artifacts, such as photographs, are viewed as aspects of people’s lives, students have much to think about as they closely scrutinize the details and complexities of people’s lives, within the broader context of the world in which they lived. Moreover, because cultural artifacts can present multiple and sometimes conflicting viewpoints instead of a condensed view of history (Lafaye, 2001), they have the power to depict history as an elaborate and multidimensional enterprise. Cultural artifacts, then, may be thought of as reflecting the proverbial heart and soul of a culture, moving the study of history beyond the typical unidimensional facts that so often dominate traditional instruction.
Personalize History

To personalize history, teachers need to help students make connections with the past, so they can relate their own experiences, feelings, and values with people who lived in the past. The charge of teachers may be likened to that of television producers who draw the audience into the Olympic games through the use of athletes’ personal stories. Even though spectators may have never heard of an athlete or cared about a sport, they are drawn to the stories of an athlete’s challenges and triumphs, daily routines, and family relationships. Despite previous ambiguity about an athlete, the stories make the unfamiliar seem familiar and the audience becomes intrigued and connected in a personal way. The background stories gain attention and then compel viewers to learn more.

In a similar way, cultural artifacts may heighten student interest in the study of people who lived in the past. Cultural artifacts often reflect the remnants of popular culture, from the time in which they were created. Teachers can expand conceptual understandings by providing students with opportunities to make emotional connections with the people of a historical period. When students actually touch, view, or listen to cultural artifacts from other’s lives, they often become motivated to learn more (History in the Raw, n.d.).

Teachers can use cultural artifacts not only as entry points into a unit of study, but also as introductions to new dimensions of a topic, and as ways to further develop or extend a unit. Furthermore, poignant artifacts can serve as vivid anchors, to which students can connect previous or subsequent learning. Like our connections with Olympiads, students may make personal connections with people who lived in the past. In effect, cultural artifacts provide a means for engaging not only the head (content knowledge), but also the heart (attitudes and feelings) (Easton, 1997), which compel students to learn more. These connections promote strong links between students and their study of history. History becomes relevant and alive when artifacts are used (Joseph, 2008; Wiersma, 2008).

Encourage Student Inquiry

The use of cultural artifacts also can encourage personal inquiry, which results in heightened student engagement, ownership in student learning, and student control of their learning. Cultural artifacts almost always evoke student questions. Nevertheless, some artifacts may interest students more than others. For example, because music is such an important aspect of some students’ lives, they may wonder about the music that was popular in a different time and place.

As students become accustomed to using cultural artifacts as resources, they will become more actively engaged in their own personal inquiries (Dutt-Doner, Cook-Cottone, & Allen, 2007). In effect, history unfolds from an authentic perspective (Mayer, 2006), one that is genuinely intriguing to a student, not a predetermined perspective determined by a textbook or a teacher. When students are encouraged to pursue their own questions, they better control their own learning; they are more intrinsically motivated to learn (Cantu & Warren, 2003); they are more likely to retain subject matter; and ultimately, they demonstrate higher academic achievement (Reardon, 2005).

Endorse the Notion that History Represents Multiple Perspectives

Cultural artifacts have the potential to provide multiple ways to experience the numerous facets, possibilities, uncertainties, and ambiguities characteristic of history, instead of looking at them purely in retrospect as a neatly tied series of events. Unlike many secondary sources, cultural artifacts promote thinking about history from multiple perspectives (Albers & Harste, 2007; Martin, 1998).
Cultural artifacts do indeed inform the historical record, but because they were produced by humans in a particular place and time under distinct circumstances, they contain unique strengths and shortcomings about which teachers and students need to be aware. A strength of cultural artifacts is that they illuminate perspectives typically missing from a textbook or other print accounts. On the other hand, a single artifact provides a particular interpretation or viewpoint, which potentially introduces biases, inappropriate conclusions, and misconceptions (Wooden, 2008). Therefore, it is important to use collections of artifacts to provide a powerful, multidimensional glimpse into a time or place, with all of the shades of gray that ultimately define history. Teachers can easily use cultural artifacts to show these nuances and reveal varying perspectives, so that students do not perpetuate the misconception that history is a neatly packaged series of causes and events.

To help students better understand how a limited number of cultural artifacts offers only a condensed historical record, we suggest engaging students in a Mindwalk Activity (n.d.). A Mindwalk is quite simple. Students list all the activities in which they were involved in the last 24 hours. Then they identify artifacts that provide evidence of those activities, such as text messages, receipts, blogs, photographs, traffic citations, and voice mail messages. By reflecting on these cultural artifacts, students begin to understand how a small collection of artifacts does not adequately represent the entirety of their lives. In order for students to use artifacts to develop a rich perspective on a historical period, teacher assistance will be needed as students sort through, evaluate, and organize collections of artifacts.

For the development of 21st century learners, it is important that students become accustomed to critically evaluating information from a variety of sources. When students learn how to make informed decisions about the value of particular information, they will be better equipped to “help shape democracy for the public good” (NCSS, para. 15, 2009). Five questions are suggested in the NCSS Position Statement on Media Literacy (2009) for analyzing media. We modified those questions slightly so they may be utilized for critically evaluating cultural artifacts.

1. What social, cultural, historical, and political contexts shaped the cultural artifact and its meaning?

2. How and why was the cultural artifact constructed?

3. How could different people interpret this artifact?

4. Whose perspectives, values, and ideologies are represented in the artifact and whose are missing?

5. Who (or what group) benefits and/or is hurt by the interpretation of the cultural artifact?

We suggest that by studying the past, students will be better prepared to make sense of varying points of view, nuances, and sometimes conflicting messages with which they are inundated throughout their lives. Cultural artifacts do, in fact, change what and how students think (Eisner, 2003) about history and how it relates to other content areas. By understanding the interconnectedness of disciplines and the complicated nature of a cultural context, students will be better prepared to participate in the complex, global society of which they are a part (Wooden, 2008).

"The integration of cultural artifacts into a study of history makes otherwise lifeless facts and dates come to life."
Glimpses into the Dust Bowl

*Cultural artifacts have the power to explain the nature of history, personalize learning, promote student inquiry, and endorse multiple perspectives. To demonstrate this, we asked three students, ages 10, 12, and 13, to examine two photographs from the Dust Bowl period. (All student names are pseudonyms.)*

Christian (age 10) and Carly (age 12) attend a parochial school in a suburban neighborhood in a small coastal town in the southeast United States. Ben (age 13) attends a public school in a large, metropolitan city in the southern region of the United States. Although Ben had limited knowledge of the time period, no students had substantial knowledge of the Dust Bowl, and no one had studied the time period using cultural artifacts. In addition, they had not previously viewed the photographs nor did we identify the photos as related to the Dust Bowl.

**Student Responses to Cultural Artifacts**

Students were asked to first view the photograph and then tell the authors what they saw.

**Figure 1**

![Photograph of the Dust Bowl](image)

Christian, age 10, said,

The family looks like they live in a tent. Maybe there are two moms or a mom and her daughters. There seems to be a trunk full of belongings—clothes are inside. Strings and stakes are holding up the tent. Is there a dead body or maybe someone sleeping back there? They probably sleep on the ground or maybe someone sleeps in that rocking chair. There’s a sign on the ground. I would like to know what it says. Does it say “onions” or does it say “caution” or have a flame? I think I’d like to know more about that.

Carly, age 11, said,

I see a fence in the background. They look like they live next to a road or a forest, or maybe it be a concentration camp or something? But I don’t think they would be in a tent. There looks to be junk and litter around, not that much grass. There’s just a bunch of dirt and rocks. Probably during the day they sit around and look for food and money, try to get work, and find materials for a bed to help with the shelter. They look like they live all by themselves—they look all alone. I wonder what the people are thinking and how they are feeling.

“Cultural artifacts have the power to explain the nature of history, personalize learning, promote student inquiry, and endorse multiple perspectives.”
Ben, age 13, said,

They are in a tent and it has a lot of holes. Probably they can’t afford a home. The clothes are raggedy. They look unhappy, like they have a hard life. They look tired. I’m wondering if they have work—it looks like it’s in the country—like there is not a lot to do. There’s not a lot of furniture or anything. Probably they sleep on a cot or something, or maybe on the ground? The daughter is sitting in a chair. There is a suitcase or a trunk to store clothing. I’m wondering if they have a bathroom or anything. It seems like they are short on food and water, like they are barely making it by. The land looks like it’s dried out, except for the trees.

These responses illustrate the strong emotional connection photographs can evoke. In this case, the three students enthusiastically responded to the initial question by describing what they saw. Such observations help students describe and understand the historical context at the most basic, literal level. The students continued by making inferences—combining their existing knowledge and their observations of the unfamiliar photograph. Furthermore, student responses indicated their deep concern about the level of poverty and the living conditions represented in the photograph. Ultimately, their examinations of the photograph led them to ask questions, which they considered noteworthy. In a classroom context their questions could be used to guide personal inquiry.

Next, because one photograph or cultural artifact can portray only a limited perspective, we showed students an additional photograph about the same subject, utilizing a close-up perspective.

Christian said:

I’m not sure if the kids are related to the lady because you don’t see their faces, so you’re not sure, but probably it’s their mom. The baby looks like his face is dirty or maybe even bloody. This picture could have been taken a long time ago. You can tell because their clothes look different and it’s in black and white.

“When cultural artifacts, such as photographs, are viewed as aspects of people’s lives, students have much to think about as they closely scrutinize the details and complexities of people’s lives, within the broader context of the world in which they lived.”
Carly said:

I see a mom with two children. You can tell by her expression on her face and how she has her hand up to her face that she is worried or thinking about something, like maybe there is a war or something going on outside. The kids are turned away. They are upset and maybe they don’t want to look. The kids feel scared. Maybe they’ve just seen some soldiers. They might be in a tent or a blanket. They’re kind of dirty; their clothes are rugged. They could be in a barn. Probably they’re poor.

Ben said:

The mom’s sleeves look rugged. Her face looks like she’s cross or concerned, I guess you’d say. She’s thinking about something. It’s tough times for them. She’s concerned about money and food and maybe her children and raising the kids and their futures. The kids might know she is worried. The children are huddled up by her. Her kids probably know why she is worried. Probably they live in a poor area. You can tell because their clothes look ragged, and maybe dirty, or maybe that’s because it’s in black and white. The picture looks like it’s in the past, but I’m not sure why other than the clothes. They look like they are outside near an encampment. Maybe that is a pole or a limb of a tree holding up the tent.

One theme in the students’ responses indicated their acute awareness of the economic realities of the people in the photographs, which were in stark contrast to their own lives. Students also addressed the geographic context by situating the photographs in a rural and desolate area. Carly spontaneously hypothesized that the people in the photograph might be living in a time of war. In this example, students’ responses demonstrate how even a few cultural artifacts may help introduce the social, political, economic, and geographic contexts that define a period and shaped people’s lives. Furthermore, Carly’s response demonstrates how cultural artifacts may provide opportunities for teachers to connect a unit of study (such as the Dust Bowl) with larger concepts of history, including issues from the past and present.

Resource List

Cultural artifacts are incredible tools to promote an understanding of the nature of history, personalize learning, encourage student inquiry, and endorse multiple perspectives of history. To exemplify how cultural artifacts can bring richness to historical study, we have crafted a study of the Dust Bowl highlighting specific cultural artifacts, appropriate for use with elementary and middle level learners. Each resource is numbered or bulleted. For the numbered resources, please see the Dust Bowl Web Resources section for live links to websites containing artifacts. A brief description of each artifact is provided as well as an explanation about why the contents are helpful in a study of the Dust Bowl. The resources provided here are in no way exhaustive, but provide a glimpse into the depth and breadth of artifacts that are available on the world wide web for both teacher and student use. At the conclusion of the list, we include suggestions for assessing student learning. Each suggestion provides students with opportunities to use cultural artifacts (or renditions of artifacts) to demonstrate their understandings of different perspectives of the Dust Bowl. Resources are grouped in two categories. The first category is Teacher Resources for Planning and Building Content Knowledge and the second category is Resources for Use with Students, which includes the following subsections: oral histories, music
and lyrics, photographs, film, books, entertainment of the time, and assessments.

**Teacher Resources for Planning and Building Content Knowledge**


*What you will find*: Follow the link to “Teaching with Documents Lesson Plans” to view lesson plans organized by era and analysis worksheets for photographs, written documents, physical artifacts, political cartoons, maps, motion pictures, posters, and sound recordings.

*Why it is helpful*: The National Archives website is teacher-friendly and includes a comprehensive collection of cultural artifacts, guides, and lesson plans.


*What you will find*: Seven lesson plans that address important information about the Dust Bowl.

*Why it is helpful*: This website provides basic information about the Dust Bowl for teachers who have not taught this topic before. Having all the information in one place makes it a good starting point.


*What you will find*: On this PBS website, from the American Experience series, is a comprehensive timeline of events related to the Dust Bowl. Not only are important facts included, but photographs are also displayed.

*Why it is helpful*: The timeline provides a chronological view of multiple events surrounding the Dust Bowl period. This resource helps build background knowledge for the teacher and provides a succinct overview of the people and events for students.

**Resource 4**: [http://lcweb2.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_greatdepression_kit.php](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_greatdepression_kit.php)

*What you will find*: This site from the Library of Congress provides another collection of photographs and audio elements. The Learning Page features a Teacher’s Guide, which provides a narrative of related components (e.g., a section on agriculture and natural disasters and a discussion of the westward movement during this time). Additionally, suggestions about how to organize teaching around sets of cultural artifacts are included.

*Why it is helpful*: The site is well-organized and accurate. Teachers who have limited resources and are looking for a starting point will find this site useful.

**Resources for Use with Students**

**Oral Histories**

**Resource 5**: [http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_02.html](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_02.html)

*What you will find*: A collection of interviews with men and women who survived the Dust Bowl. Primary source images accompany the interviews, in which survivors discuss everything from chickens roosting in the middle of the day because of the darkness, to how school was cancelled because of the dust. Viewers can go directly to [Web Reference 5.1](http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/movies/thompson_water_06.html) to hear an interview with Florence Thompson, the woman shown in the photographs that we presented to the students. More recent photographs of her are included on the site.

*Why it is helpful*: The interviews allow students to hear about the challenges of the Dust Bowl on a personal level. Students can
use the webcam to visit a contemporary farm in Nebraska. By viewing the photographs and listening to the audio of Florence Thompson, students may have some of their questions answered, or they may develop new ones.

**Music and Lyrics**

**Resource 6:** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkAxuqrVNB&M&feature=related

**What you will find:** Singer and song-writer, Woody Guthrie, sings *Talkin’ Dust Bowl Blues*. Photographs and moving pictures from the period accompany the song.

**Why it is helpful:** Every era has its own music, which reflects society, its trials, tribulations, and reasons for celebrations. Guthrie, who became known as the folk singer of the people, wrote music that reflected the life of migrants who traveled west during the Dust Bowl. Guthrie was a migrant himself and experienced some of the hardships of the people.

**Resource 7:** http://www.metrolyrics.com/talking-dust-bowl-blues-lyrics-woody-guthrie.html

**What you will find:** Lyrics to *Talkin’ Dust Bowl Blues*

**Why it is helpful:** Students can analyze the lyrics to determine characteristics of people’s lives during the time. Listening to the music, reading the lyrics, and viewing the images provide a richer perspective than a single medium.

- 7.1. Additional images of Guthrie and photographs of the times set to music may be found at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XaI5IRuS2aE

**Resource 8:** http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/afcmem/afctshtml/tmte.html

**What you will find:** On this page you will find a complete description of “The Migrant Experience.” While the entire site is informative, scroll almost to the bottom of the page to find information specific to the music of the Dust Bowl period. Follow the links and select “listen to this recording” to hear samples of the music.

**Why it is helpful:** Examining the music of the times allows students to see that each composer and singer viewed events from a particular point of view. Listening to several songs and viewing the lyrics provide students with a sense of the multiple perspectives that exist for every time or event.

**Photographs**

Each photograph reveals different perspectives from which to think about the conditions of the Dust Bowl.

**Resource 9:** http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/dustbowlpics.html

**What you will find:** An entire collection of photographs pertaining to the Dust Bowl.

**Why it is helpful:** Educators can visit this site to obtain many photographs that will build context for learners as they engage in a study of the era. Because photographs are memorable, they serve as hooks to help children remember new information.

**Resource 10:** http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZHEkU__Ijw
**What you will find:** A presentation of photographs depicting various images from the Great Depression by Dorothea Lange. Accompanying the photographs is a recording of Bing Crosby singing the song, *Buddy, Can You Spare a Dime?* Crosby was a popular singer and entertainer during the 1930’s.

**Why it is helpful:** The photographs and lyrics of the song reflect a multi-modal presentation that represents issues during the Great Depression.

*Other photographs are available at the following websites:*

- **Resource 10.2:** http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/big/cimarron_ok.jpg
- **Resource 10.3:** http://www.shorpy.com/files/images/3c29107u.preview.jpg

**Film**

- **Resource 11:** *The Grapes of Wrath*, the movie based on the book by John Steinbeck. Clips of the film can be found and previewed on YouTube by doing a Google video search for “Grapes of Wrath movie.”

- **What you will find:** John Ford’s 1940 movie about an Oklahoma family who traveled to California because of the promise of plentiful jobs.

- **Why it is helpful:** This film depicts the difficulties of a migrant family. Although the story is fictional, it provides glimpses into the lives, struggles, and tenacity of Oklahomans.

- **We suggest dividing the movie into several parts and providing students with particular purposes for viewing each part. At the end of each part, discuss topics such as the following:**
  - Why did people leave their homes/farms?
  - What sacrifices did people make?
  - Why did migrants have increasingly terrible living conditions as they got closer to California?
  - Why did the owners of the farms in California advertise for so many people when they weren’t needed?
  - What misconceptions did people have about those who migrated to California?

**Books**


- **What you will find:** A historical fiction picture book featuring three generations of farmers who lived in the Great Plains. The story is set in the 1980s when the family farm is threatened by a drought, much like the 1930s Dust Bowl. Matthew’s grandfather tells him about life during the Dust Bowl.

- **Why it is helpful:** This book could be read aloud and then students compare the 1930s Dust Bowl to more recent times.


- **What you will find:** A nonfiction chapter book, appropriate for grades 4-8, tells of the challenges faced by Oklahoman migrants. The book features Leo Hart, an educator, who spearheaded the development of the Weedpatch School, a nontraditional school for the Okie children. The book includes many cultural artifacts, including black and white photographs, maps, advertisements, and interviews with former teachers and students.
Why it is helpful: This book can be used to explore themes such as how one person can make a difference and issues of discrimination.

What you will find: A coming-of-age, historical fiction novel written in verse, appropriate for fifth through eighth grades. The story of a 15-year-old girl tells about her personal tragedy and hardships related to the dust storms in Oklahoma.

Why it is helpful: In contrast to other sources, this book provides insights into the lives of those who chose to stay in Oklahoma during the Dust Bowl.

Entertainment of the Time

What you will find: Information about popular culture in the 1930’s.

Why it is helpful: Provides glimpses into entertainment (e.g., music, film, dance) of the time.

Resource 15: [http://memory.loc.gov/afc/afcts/audio/414/4146b1.mp3](http://memory.loc.gov/afc/afcts/audio/414/4146b1.mp3)  
What you will find: A recording of a square dance caller.

Why it is helpful: Square dancing was one form of entertainment that many people in the western part of the country participated in during the 1930’s.

Assessments

Teacher for the Day: Students develop their own multi-media presentations (e.g., PowerPoint, video) that highlight important information related to the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression. To understand the impact of the Dust Bowl on all aspects of life (and integrate other content areas), groups of students could develop presentations that view the Dust Bowl from various perspectives: an agricultural perspective, an artist’s perspective, a geographical perspective, a meteorological perspective, a political perspective, an economic perspective, a sociological perspective, an ecological perspective, and many more.

Creative Connections: Students can develop presentations that link some of the issues related to the Dust Bowl with similar issues today. Examples of such creative presentations can be found on YouTube. Do a Google video search using “Great Depression” as the descriptor. Although many cultural artifacts can be found, examples of student enactments are also available.

Picture This Exam: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gplaqa2yRgg&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gplaqa2yRgg&feature=related)  
Students can visit the website above to find a collection of images related to the Dust Bowl and Great Depression. A slideshow set to contemporary music displays a powerful series of photographs depicting images of the human condition in urban and rural settings. Teachers may ask students to choose five images, write a description of each, and provide a paragraph to convey the significance of the images in relation to their understanding of the Dust Bowl.

“By understanding the interconnectedness of disciplines and the complicated nature of a cultural context, students will be better prepared to participate in the complex, global society of which they are a part.”
References


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*History in the Raw*

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“Cultural artifacts have the potential to provide multiple ways to experience the numerous facets, possibilities, uncertainties, and ambiguities characteristic of history, instead of looking at them purely in retrospect as a neatly tied series of events.”
Dust Bowl Web Resources

Teacher Resources for Planning and Building Content Knowledge

Lesson plans, artifact analysis worksheets
http://archives.gov/education/

Lesson plans, basic information about the Dust Bowl
http://edsitement.neh.gov/view_lesson_plan.asp?id=300

Timeline
http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/timeline/index.html

Photographs, teacher’s guide, tips for teaching with cultural artifacts
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/learn/community/cc_greatdepression_kit.php

Resources for Use with Students

Oral histories

Collection of interviews with survivors of the Dust Bowl
http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/water_02.html

Interview with Florence Thompson, the woman in Dorothea Lange’s memorable photograph
http://www.livinghistoryfarm.org/farminginthe30s/movies/thompson_water_06.html

Music and Lyrics

Woody Guthrie recording of Talkin Dust Bowl Blues with accompanying slide show
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkAzuqRVNBM&feature=related

Lyrics to Talkin Dust Bowl Blues

Woody Guthrie recording of This Land is Your Land with accompanying slide show
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xal5IRuS2aE

More musical recordings
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/afct.shtml/tsme.html

Photographs

Large collection of photographs
http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/dustbowlpics.html

Slide show with Bing Crosby singing Buddy, Can You Spare a Dime?
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZHEkU__lJw
Other Photographs

Car loaded with children and belongings

Family running to a house during a dust storm
http://www.weru.ksu.edu/new_weru/multimedia/dustbowl/big/cimarron_ok.jpg

Family living conditions
http://www.shorpy.com/files/images/3c29107u.preview.jpg

Entertainment of the Time

Information about popular culture of the time

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