

TRAVELING TRUNKS

The RESA 2 Teaching American History (TAH) Project teachers created four traveling trunks this year that represents a time period that engages students. Within each trunk are “Reading Strategies and Writing Strategies for Social Studies” that ensure teacher appropriate lessons.

1. “Children and The Civil War” contains books written by and for elementary age children, readers’ theater plays, and costumes. In addition, there are lesson plans to augment the books as well as other lesson plans. Furthermore, the trunk contains artifacts such as Confederate money and belt buckles. Finally, there are “hands-on” materials such as the American Girl, “Addy” and her books, a Harriet Tubman doll with various Underground Railroad activities, and even a Civil War soldier set.
2. “The Founding Four: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin” includes many types of books on the four men in a variety of reading levels. Included are sets of primary source readers with lesson plans, Readers’ Theater plays with costumes and wigs, and Mr. Franklin’s glasses! While attending the mini-institute with Dr. Denenburg, he encouraged the use of dolls in teaching; therefore, dolls of the four men (and Martha Washington) were included. In addition, there are many reproduction artifacts such as a drum and fife, Revolutionary War soldiers, compasses and spy materials that Washington might have used, and a reproduction of Mt. Vernon. Also, included are CD’s with period music, several DVD’s, and an animated DVD on Ben Franklin and his discovery of electricity.
3. “The Ohio River: It’s Place in American History” trunk can be used by both history and science teachers. There are several books specifically on the Ohio River and others on rivers in general. Some of the books have been written by local authors, signed, and donated to the trunk. Other books were obtained from the River Museum in Pt. Pleasant, WV. Again, there is a readers’ theater play complete with costumes, a binder full of lesson plans and games, as well as suggested websites where a teacher may go to get information or enjoy animation. Students will get a real feel for life on the Ohio River as there is a brass bell, a complete model of a tugboat and even rope to try your hand at tying knots!
4. “The Coal Industry: It’s Past, Present, and Future” These teachers combed their community and found amazing artifacts such as an antique phone actually used in a mine, a miner’s hat, and script among other things. In addition, several coal companies donated materials including pictures, DVDs’, and brochures on the process of

producing coal. Coal miners themselves also donated various items that they use in the mines to keep themselves safe. Each artifact includes a tag that explains its use. There are many books for both the teacher and students. For example, a kindergarten student wrote a book called, *Popeye Says* in which she tells the story of her grandfather and his work in the mine. The book was published and a signed copy is included. There are several DVDs and music CDs. But the crème de la crème is the trunk itself. It was designed and carved by a local artist and is shaped like the interior of a coal mine. On each side is a hand-painted scene with coal mines of the past, present, and future. This is a trunk not to be missed and can be used by history, science, and math teachers of any grade level.

These trunks will be available for loan to teachers across the state of West Virginia as well as the nation. This grant is funded through the US Department of Education.

THE PATHWAY PROJECT

The Pathway Project is a RESA 2 Alternative Certification Plan Statewide Initiative for English 5-Adult & Physics 9-Adult.

“It is not where we stand, but in what direction we are moving,” a quote by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, best supports the origin of the development The Pathway Project. RESA 2 developed this project as an alternative route to an on-line certification directive in two of West Virginia’s most challenged fields, English and Physics. As many teachers in West Virginia begin to retire and demographics change; our education needs are altered and prompt us to think about what is on the horizon.

A program like The Pathway Project offers a statewide opportunity for an additional certification in English 5-Adult or Physics 9-adult. The endorsements are designed to assist West Virginia certified teachers in adding commendations to their certificates in teaching shortage areas via an exclusively on-line opportunity. The partnering universities are Marshall University for the English cohort members and Fairmont State for the physics cohort initiative. We commend both higher education institutions for their commitment and dedication to teacher quality in building a curriculum for these educators.

The need for an alternative route to teacher certification has become evident as we jointly examined data concerning the staffing of shortage fields in the state. RESA 2 and the partnering universities believe this program addresses needs for several reasons:

- The program explicitly addresses teachers from diverse settings.
- Cohort participants form relationships that will persist after completion of the program.
- Research suggests that a strong mentoring component, such as the one this program will provide, is an important factor in helping individuals to persist in the endorsement path.

Trudy Parker, an educator from the Eastern Panhandle communicates, “The Pathways cohort organized by RESA 2 has provided me with the opportunity to make my dream a reality. I was afforded the opportunity to teach several different subject matters as a special education teacher. From that experience, I found my love for English/Language Arts; however, I knew I could never afford the cost for additional certification. When I read about the initiation of the Pathways cohort, I immediately contacted RESA 2. Through this program, I have met other English teachers from across the state that makes my classroom a better learning environment. My students' learning is deeper and more diverse thanks to the Pathways cohort.” Tammy Smith, cohort member from Mingo County, conveys, “The Pathway Project is giving me the opportunity to extend my certification to teach Middle School and High School which have always been a goal of mine.”

The marketplace for teacher training in shortage areas has changed dramatically in the past 30 years. Endorsements via Alternative-certification programs have proliferated, according to a recent analysis of federal data conducted by the National Center for Alternative Certification, according to a Washington-based nonprofit group. In order to be receptive to teachers' needs, The Pathway Project courses and programs conform to a solution to the hectic educator's schedule and support this cluster financially as well. We are exceptionally proud of these programs, and hope to develop new pathways in the future to address the ever-changing challenges of this group of esteemed professionals.

THE CIVIL WAR TRAIL

The RESA 2 Teaching American History cohort completed a trip to Pennsylvania where we took the Civil War trail that led to Gettysburg. Twenty-one teachers participated in this trip.

We began in Harrisburg where we received lessons on artifacts of the Civil War and then toured the National War Civil War Museum. Later that day, we toured the home of John Harris and Simon Cameron and learned how these two homeowners affected American History. The second day a local historian, Jim Schmick, joined us and gave us background information on Gettysburg that many don't know

about. Participants received a signed copy of his book. He traveled on the bus with us and took us to various sites in the Harrisburg and Mechanicsburg area where skirmishes and battles took place before Gettysburg. We were most excited about the role our own Gen. Jenkins played in the days before Gettysburg. That afternoon, we toured the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center where WWI re-enactors showed and explained the strategies behind Allied and German trenches and pillboxes. Next, we learned about WWII paratroopers from a re-enactor, and finally, a Vietnam re-enactor took us through a typical Vietnam army camp. This education center just opened in April and is truly phenomenal. We actually walked outside and went into a trench, pillbox, army barracks, and Vietnam camp. Then inside, is a nice museum where we saw an actual French tank that was used in WWI.

Day three we spent an exciting day at Gettysburg with tours of the battlefield and cemetery led by a licensed guide. We also toured the Schriver House, David Wills house, and the Jenny Wade house. We learned not only about the battle, but also about the people of Gettysburg and what happened to them before and after the battle.

The next day we arrived in Lancaster where we toured the Amish area with a Mennonite guide. One topic we explored this year was the idea of separation of church and state. Therefore, the Amish tour allowed us to better understand the Amish and Mennonite people and their role in American history. Next, we experienced a play by a local AME church on how slaves were taught to act free once they acquired freedom through the Underground RR. It was an interactive play and we played the part of recently free slaves. Each of us left that day with a new respect for those who gained their freedom through the Underground Railroad.

Finally, we spent two days in Philadelphia where we toured Christ Church and burial grounds and then worked with National Park Ranger Jeffery Collins in an all day professional development session. The teachers returned home with a deeper understanding of the content around the Civil War and the beginning of U.S. government as well as many new ideas and resources for their classrooms.

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For additional information on the Traveling Trunks please contact Brenda Stevenson at 304.529.6205 ext. 33 or bstevens@access.k12.wv.us. For information regarding the Pathway Project please contact Kelly Watts at 304.529.6205 ext. 24 or kwatts@access.k12.wv.us.