

Teacher Tool 190: Passage to Progress

Program 1 Study Guide

Study Guide for Transportation 19: HEC-TV Live! Passage to Progress Program 1

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HEC-TV Live! Presents
The Gateway City: Passage to Progress
The Eads Bridge and Railroads
Financial support provided by Missouri Humanities Council

Original Air Date: November 13, 2008

Grade Levels: 4-9

Program Description:

A study of American progress from the 19th to 20th centuries would not be complete without looking at the impact made on people's lives by innovations in transportation. As the "Gateway to the West," St. Louis and transportation go hand in hand, dating from fur traders ascending the Missouri River in pirogues, to immigrants steaming up the Mississippi on ships, to its development as a railroad hub and the creation of a highly competitive automobile industry, to Lindbergh's historic flight in the Spirit of St. Louis, and into the future with the Boeing Company's aircraft. In this program we look at the impact that railroads brought to St. Louis and, through St. Louis, to the western United States, and we explore the engineering innovations and impacts made by James Eads and the building of the Eads Bridge over the Mississippi River at St. Louis.

Program Objectives:

1. The participant will explore the technological innovations in bridge engineering and construction, automotive engineering and construction, and airplane engineering and construction.
2. The participant will interact with primary source documents and historic experts and interpret how what they learn from those sources impacts his/her understanding of a particular historic subject.
3. The participant will engage in a discussion about transportation and its impact on the quality of people's lives and economic progress.

Program Format:

1. Welcome and Introduction—Student groups and experts will be introduced and welcomed to the program.
2. The Eads Bridge—During this segment of the program, we explore the engineering innovations of the Eads Bridge built over the Mississippi River at St. Louis in 1874. How did this bridge make a real difference in the progress of our nation?
3. The Impact of the Railroads—In this segment, we explore the impact of the railroads not only St. Louis' economic and population growth but also their impact on the entire western expansion of the United States.
4. Closing Segment--Including summary of topics discussed and final questions from students.

**Featured National Standards (History):
Grades 5-12:
Historical Thinking Standards**

1. Chronological Thinking

B. Identify the temporal structure of a historical narrative or story: its beginning, middle, and end (the latter defined as the outcome of a particular beginning).

E. Interpret data presented in time lines and create time lines by designating appropriate equidistant intervals of time and recording events according to the temporal order in which they occurred.

2. Historical Comprehension

A. Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility.

B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.

C. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.

D. Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations but acknowledge that the two are related; that the facts the historian reports are selected and reflect therefore the historian's judgment of what is most significant about the past.

E. Read historical narratives imaginatively, taking into account what the narrative reveals of the humanity of the individuals and groups involved--their probable values, outlook, motives, hopes, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.

F. Appreciate historical perspectives--(a) describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded--the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding "present-mindedness," judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

4. Historical Research Capabilities

A. Formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources, including: library and museum collections, historic sites, historical photos, journals, diaries, eyewitness accounts, newspapers, and the like; documentary films, oral testimony from living witnesses, censuses, tax records, city directories, statistical compilations, and economic indicators.

C. Interrogate historical data by uncovering the social, political, and economic context in which it was created; testing the data source for its credibility, authority, authenticity, internal consistency and completeness; and detecting and evaluating bias, distortion, and propaganda by omission, suppression, or invention of facts.

F. Support interpretations with historical evidence in order to construct closely reasoned arguments rather than facile opinions.

5. Historical Issues—Analysis and Decision-Making

A. Identify issues and problems in the past and analyze the interests, values, perspectives, and points of view of those involved in the situation.

Program-Related Activity Suggestions:

1. To learn more about the design, building, and use of the Eads Bridge have students view another video on our Educate.Today website, Engineering 13: You Are Here: The Eads Bridge and/or conduct additional research using any of the websites below:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eads/>--This NPS “American Experience” website has pictures, activities, biographical information, a teacher’s guide and numerous other resources.

<http://bridgepros.com/projects/eads/>--This BridgePros site has pictures, construction information, a short biography of Eads and links to additional resources.

<http://www.bridgehunter.com/mo/st-louis-city/eads/>--This website provides images of the bridge and a timeline of its construction.

2. In an essay, short story, and/or conversation have students hypothesize about how different America’s expansion west would have been if the railroads had not come to the country until the early 1900’s. How would it have affected population migration? Would it have had an impact on the Civil War? Would it have changed our policy toward Native Americans? What else might have been different? Were some things have been worse? Would some things have been better?

3. Have students write a letter from the perspective of a worker building the Eads Bridge. The worker should describe the nature of the bridge, how it’s being built, what they think about it, what their workload is like, w they like and not like about their job, etc. The letter could be written to a friend or family member.

4. Have students journal about new insights they have developed about how transportation affects their lives and the economy of our country after participating in the program.

Supplemental Materials:

Learn more about the building of the Eads Bridge in another video on our Educate.Today website, Engineering 13: You Are Here: The Eads Bridge