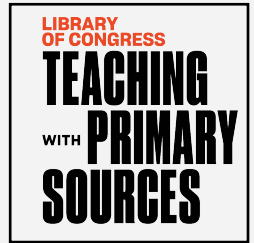




Using Film for Project Based Learning



Essential Understandings

- **Select** a high-quality, relevant film
- **Identify the essential understandings** the film explores (e.g. Civic Action, Environment, History, Equity)
- Use the film's themes to **anchor cross-curricular learning goals** (e.g. connecting social studies standards with research and media literacy skills).
- Have students **locate primary sources that deepen understanding** of a key theme raised in the film (photos, articles, oral histories, Library of Congress archives)

Driving Question & Inquiry

- Encourage learners to **pull key takeaways from the film for close analysis** (e.g., community impact, personal narratives, data visuals).
- Work with learners to **identify an open-ended driving question** that connects the film's central issue to their own world.
- **Research mapping:** What questions emerge? What evidence do learners need next?
- Use the Library of Congress archives and other vetted online sources to **find documents, maps, or interviews** that help learners investigate this question historically or comparatively.

Authentic Student Voice & Choice

- Films naturally introduce **authentic human experiences and social issues**.
- **Students choose a theme, person, or issue** from the film that resonates with them and design a project that connects to their personal lives or communities.
- The project allows for **choice in topics, tools, resources, and presentation formats**, which supports diverse interests and learning styles.
- Provide opportunities for learners to **independently explore LOC digital collections and other archives** to support their personal line of inquiry.
- Allow learners to **brainstorm "real-world" projects** that they could create (e.g., a community story map, a service project, a mini-documentary, or a curated digital exhibit combining film clips, photos, and archives.)
- Teach learners to **cite materials properly**, treating them as authentic research evidence.

Reflection & Revision

- Learners and educators **reflect on learning, quality, and the process**. (e.g. "How did the film, your research, and your project expand your view of the issue?")
- Have learners reflect on **how primary and secondary sources differ** and what they reveal about truth and storytelling.
- **Encourage fact-checking:** Have learners verify that each source used is authentic, cited, and relevant.
- Create opportunities where learners **give warm/cool feedback** and provide learners with time and opportunities to **apply improvements to their process and projects**

Showcase & Share

- Learners **share their project work beyond the classroom**.
- Host a **public showcase**, digital gallery, or schoolwide "Community Inquiry Night" featuring learner-curated projects inspired by the film.
- Include **annotated researched artifacts or short written analyses** with learner exhibits.