First Contact:  
Students & Primary Sources

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Libraries will work with educators to promote the use and integration of primary sources in the classroom. Appropriate collections will be identified and made available for use. The primary sources may be available either in the original format or as digital surrogates and will be fully integrated into the curriculum as an integral part of learning and research. Projects should also include visits to the repository, if possible, to introduce students to original research using special collections and to teach the proper care and handling of these original materials. While working with an individual teacher is most common, working with several teachers in the same grade would expand the impact and experience. The development of lesson plans, curricula, and other long-term projects that can be used year after year will help ensure the sustainability of the project. A letter of commitment from the school will be required as part of the application.

BACKGROUND

There is a growing movement throughout the country to introduce students to the use of primary sources during their studies. This process stimulates critical thinking and allows students to experience the thrill of learning about history by consulting the original documents. Using Massachusetts’ rich past, librarians and educators can partner with one another to create opportunities for learners.