



Source Sets

Use source sets in a curriculum unit to engage all kids and provide a range of entry points for accessing information.

WHY

We believe that all kids should learn and enjoy the compelling content offered in social studies, science, and language arts. Striving readers need and deserve to have equal access to that content. Source sets—multi-level, multimedia, multi-genre, multi-perspective, multi-cultural collections of information on a common topic—ensure that. Filled with artifacts, videos, and images as well as text, they are highly engaging and interactive—and offer the widest range of entry points for accessing information, making them perfect for striving readers.

WHEN

We use source sets in curriculum units, introducing them at the start of the unit and adding to them throughout the unit. Source sets are appropriate for any topic, but we find they lend themselves especially well to habitats, space, transportation, animals, weather, immigration, and culture studies. You may want to start with a unit on one of those topics. One source set for the entire class can work, but it may become unwieldy. So we suggest multiple source sets on subtopics of your main topic—perhaps one that will accommodate four or five kids at a time in inquiry circles. When studying a specific culture, for instance, you may have a source set for education, history, science contributions, famous monuments, and so forth.



❄ HOW

Images and videos abound on the Internet, and most are free. The classroom libraries we describe in this book should be rife with all kinds of texts at multiple levels. Teachers are the most creative folks we know when it comes to gathering artifacts. Once you've thought about your unit topic, look for objects at stoop sales and garage sales. Check out sale items in stores throughout the year. Invite people in the community who have expertise in the topic under study to come in and share with the class. And most importantly, once source sets take hold in your room, recruit your students to help you gather materials!

Source set materials include but are not limited to:

- picture books, chapter books, graphic books, novels, short nonfiction, long nonfiction, short stories
- magazine, newspaper, and Internet articles
- brochures and catalogs
- poems
- images, graphics, videos
- maps
- artifacts, realia, toys
- websites, web cams
- editorials, essays, interviews, press releases
- posters
- recordings of music, speeches, public service announcements