



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Instructional Leaders and Social Studies Coordinators

FROM: Dr. Anne M. Pressley, Director
Office of Standards and Learning

DATE: September 6, 2016

RE: Literacy and Engagement with Historical Records
Partnering to Create Document-Based Questions with Digital Collections

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) is excited to announce, in partnership with the University of South Carolina (USC), the awarding of a federal grant from the National Historic Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). The grant provides funding for a collaborative project developing new partnerships to train teachers to use the USC Digital Collections and South Carolina Digital Library (SCDL) materials to create document-based questions (DBQs) for students to engage with historical records and develop their digital literacy skills.

Over the next two summers, three cohorts of 15 teachers each will meet on the campus of USC to explore its digital collection in order to build DBQs based on SC social studies standards in grades 3–12. The end project result will be 45 quality DBQs that will align with areas of need in the state standards and be widely available online.

We plan to hold three summer sessions, one in 2017 and two in 2018, for groups of 15 social studies teachers from around the state in grades three, four, five, and eight and in U.S. History and Constitution. Over the course of these two summers, a total of 45 teachers will be invited to the USC campus for a six-day training session conducted by the USC Digital Collections Coordinator, Kate Boyd; SCDE's Associates for Social Studies, Jeff Eargle and Elizabeth King; and a teacher trained in DBQs, and a member of the Education Advisory Committee of the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA). The directors of the South Caroliniana Library, Rare Books, and Moving Image Research Collections (MIRC) will also spend time with the teachers, giving tours of their libraries and answering any questions. Grades three and eight were chosen

because that is where South Carolina history is taught. U.S. history is taught in grades four, five, and high school.

Three teachers from each grade will be invited from all over the state, with attention to geographic location and school demographics. Teachers will be invited to stay on campus in an atmosphere conducive to academic research and collaboration. They will be given a four-day work week with a three-day weekend to return home for reflection and further work. The session will end with two days the following week in Columbia for a total of six days of training. These teachers will work in teams as experts on the state's social studies standards to identify materials within the digital collections that best supplement their grade-level content. Although they will work collaboratively, each teacher will be responsible for developing one DBQ. The teachers will spend the week learning about the USC Libraries' Special Collections available online and in the archives as well as the SCDL and DPLA. After each session, the DBQs the teachers create will be evaluated by three outside professionals in the education field and tested by the teachers themselves and their colleagues during the following academic school year. Once approved, the DBQs will be made available to teachers throughout the state and country from the SCDE's web site and the USC Digital Collections' *SC Digital Academy* site.

I am writing to ask for your assistance in identifying educators who would be willing to participate in the July 10–18, 2017, workshops. Each teacher will agree to

1. Participate fully in the six-day workshop.
2. Produce, edit, and field-test one DBQ based on a topic selected by the cohort.
3. Present the project through professional development.
4. Accept a \$1,000 stipend to help cover the cost of travel, meals, and work done. Overnight lodging will be provided by USC.

Please share this information with appropriate personnel to assist us in the identification of an outstanding group of social studies teachers to assist with this project. Interested teachers should complete <https://scde.formstack.com/forms/dbq> no later than November 30, 2016. (You may use the QR code below.) Selected participants will be notified by email.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth King, Social Studies Education Associate in the Office of Standards and Learning, via eking@ed.sc.gov or (803) 734-0322, or Jeff Eargle, Social Studies Education Associate in the Office of Standards and Learning, via jeargle@ed.sc.gov or (803) 734-8335.

