

# REFOCUSING ON HERITAGE EDUCATION:

A NATIONAL SURVEY

*Produced by the*  
Center for Historic Preservation  
Middle Tennessee State University

*Funded in partnership with the*  
National Center for Preservation  
Technology and Training

National Park Service

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# THE BACKGROUND

In 1996, the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, with funding from the National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT), initiated a survey of state historic preservation offices and selected heritage organizations in each of the fifty states. This systematic inquiry asked "What's happening in heritage education in your state?" The results were published in 1997 in *Focus on 2000: A Heritage Education Perspective*.

As was the intent of the project, the publication was not the end product, but rather the basis for long-term efforts. *Focus on 2000* was disseminated widely and offered survey participants and a national audience the opportunity to understand the status of heritage education opportunities and challenges in each state. While providing a checklist of recommendations that could strengthen a preservation ethic in K-12 classrooms and at heritage sites, the project also identified specific needs and attainable tools to promote heritage education. Based on the findings of the survey, a national Web site on teaching with local heritage resources became a reality.

The Heritage Education Network (THEN) was launched in 1998. NCPTT again partnered with the CHP to fund the development of this Web site which has offered information to thousands of classroom teachers as well as heritage educators at museums and historic sites across the country. A massive site, THEN offers practical information on the use of local architecture, cemeteries, documents, photographs, family history, objects, archeology, and farms. If published, THEN would be over 400 pages and contain more than 200 photographs and images. It also features a selected listing of statewide organizations and agencies that provide heritage education materials and services along with links to related national organizations and agencies. The maintenance and expansion of THEN is an ongoing responsibility of the Center for Historic Preservation.

Another recommendation in *Focus on 2000*, and one that heritage practitioners and others have long

acknowledged as crucial to the creation of a truly nationwide preservation ethic, addresses the need to include local heritage education in teacher-training pro-

***“Practitioners have for years espoused the advantages of using the heritage education approach as a tool for teaching...”***

grams and courses in colleges and universities. Practitioners have for years espoused the advantages of using the heritage education approach as a tool for teaching across the disciplines, grades, and capability levels. However, these efforts tend to be more individual than collective. Usually, it is the experienced classroom teacher, looking for practical and meaningful teaching methods and accessible materials who, learning about heritage education through in-service, special workshops, or THEN, incorporates it into his/her classes. It is apparently the exception rather than the rule when professors and instructors in university and college departments of education introduce or engage their students, the nation's future teachers, in local heritage education studies.

In April 2003, the Center for Historic Preservation proposed the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training to assist with a further survey that might ascertain the accuracy of that conclusion and to explore how heritage education could become a viable option for teacher-training programs at institutions of higher learning in every state. With the approval of the project by NCPTT, the CHP spent the 2003-2004 academic year pursuing information from boards of education and from teacher-training institutions in all fifty states. The survey design, the methods used for dissemination of those surveys, and the compilation of the responses generated are all reported in the pages that follow. Comments, conclusions, and suggestions based on the results are included as well.

# THE PROCESS

The Center for Historic Preservation assumed the responsibility of developing two separate but related questionnaires to be sent to appropriate personnel at each state department of education and at institutions of higher learning with teacher-training programs. The list of addressees for the state board of education survey was relatively easy to assemble, and often it was the social studies coordinator or the curriculum coordinator who was contacted. The list of addressees for institutions of higher learning was a longer one, with usually two public and two private institutions in each state being approached.

The questionnaires were designed so that they would, when completed and returned, provide data that addresses topics including:

1. the status of state support, through its department of education, of heritage education techniques and materials;
2. the top teacher-training institutions in each state, as viewed by the state's board of education;
3. the status of teaching heritage education at those institutions;
4. the reasons it is or is not taught;
5. the knowledge of and use of THEN and other online and printed heritage education resources as teaching tools;
6. potential partnering with SHPOs and/or other statewide organizations to address the need for customized state and local materials; and
7. ways to begin to build effective programs that engage and teach future educators why and how to use heritage education resources in the K-12 classroom.

A significant resource in terms of questionnaire design and dissemination procedures was the book *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method*, by Don A. Dillman, 2nd edition. In it, the author emphasizes the importance of five elements for achieving high response results:

- 1) creating a respondent-friendly questionnaire;
- 2) making four contacts by 1st class mail or e-mail:
  - a) pre-notice letter,
  - b) questionnaire,
  - c) thank you note/replacement questionnaire,
  - d) final contact;
- 3) providing return envelopes (if using postal method) with 1st class postage included;
- 4) personalizing the correspondence; and
- 5) including token prepaid financial incentives.

The elements listed above were incorporated first into the preparation of a more localized survey of social studies teachers within Tennessee. This earlier questionnaire addressed the Civil War and Reconstruction eras as taught in American History classrooms in Tennessee. The survey's mailings were by regular U.S. mail and followed closely most of Dillman's suggestions. In place of a prepaid financial incentive, however, a CD ROM of THEN was mailed as a thank-you gift to respondents.

Based on the state survey experience and with hopes for the best possible return rate on our national surveys, it was decided to send the heritage education questionnaires over the internet instead of using regular postal mail. This would allow those people contacted the means for a quick response at the same time that it would prove less costly than sending stamped return envelopes to them. The savings over postage costs for the four mailings was self-evident. It was decided as well to forego the pre-notice letter and instead explain the purpose of the survey in an e-mailed letter that linked to the survey itself. And since the survey could be received, answered, and returned without leaving one's chair, no token incentive was included or promised for the future. A thank-you message is to be e-mailed to all respondents and will include a link to the THEN Web site where the report based on the surveys may be viewed.

One clear pattern emerged with these e-mail questionnaires: those people who responded did so within a day or two of receiving the e-mailed survey and its explanation. Those who did not respond within 72 hours or so did not respond at all.

# STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION SURVEY

The survey designed for each state's board of education was sent first, in part to help define the list of addressees for the questionnaire for institutions of higher learning. The return of responses from 14 states represented a 28 percent return rate, with each section of the country being represented.

## Summary:

With 14 respondents from state boards of education ranging from Massachusetts to Hawaii and Alaska to Florida, some clear patterns emerged in that 28 percent return.

- 1) While Alaska (grades 10-12) and Hawaii (grades 7-9) offer state history in upper and middle school, the other 12 respondent states offer it in grades 4-6.
- 2) The length of the state history unit varies, with 5 of the 14 offering a year-long class.
- 3) Nine of the respondent states (=64%) do not have a statewide heritage education program...
- 4) but 11 of the states felt there were good heritage education programs run by local/state museums and/or local/state historical societies
- 5) and 10 states said their boards of education support heritage education workshop and partnering with historical societies, sites and colleges, but none seemed to do workshops with any frequency.
- 6) 10 of the respondents (71%) were not familiar with THEN... 
- 7) but six felt Web sites were good disseminators of heritage education materials, and another six found face-to-face contacts (whether by conferences, state teacher organizations, word of mouth, or bi-monthly meetings of social studies (specialists) their choice for disseminating materials.
- 8) As the suggestions below shout, the need to meet state-imposed standards dominates and drives the teaching.

## Suggestions from those responses

**From Alaska:** Tie the lesson plans into the National Standards and Quality Schools initiative.

**From California:** Strong connection with the state standards

**From Illinois:** The resources should be aligned to the Illinois' Learning Standards and Performance descriptors.

**From Indiana:** Teacher workshops, presentation at the ICSS annual conference

**From Kentucky:** The best ways to help teachers would be with historical resources, both Web based and print; examples of lessons within units of study based on the Grant Wiggins model; and different models of pedagogy. The network could also keep teachers up to date on different workshops or lectures to help enrich their content knowledge.

**From Massachusetts:** Explicit linkage to state standards; outreach to recipients of Teaching American History grants

**From Utah:** Tie the instructional units directly to state CORE requirements.

**From Washington:** Design lessons and activities specifically related and connected to our state-developed, classroom-based assessment models.

**From Wyoming:** Submit lesson plans for review. If approved at State level, they could be placed on the WEd Gate for the state's teachers to utilize.

## Comments from those responses

**From Alaska:** Until there are Social Studies Performance Standards (at present, only Content Standards exist) social studies will not be a priority item, particularly with assessment results.

**From California:** I am the former state archivist of California and have frequently advised teachers on the use of primary materials. Teacher training courses do not explore uses of these materials and teachers are ill-equipped to bring such materials into the classroom in a productive way. Yet these are the real substance of history and can motivate and inspire students better than anything else. Teachers need active training in their use. (I define primary materials broadly — archives, photographs, diaries, artifacts, oral histories, and even some of the built environment.)

**From Kentucky:** Thanks. And we like historic sites!

**From Wyoming:** Our state social studies standards contain many components of heritage education K-12 presently.

2004 e-mail survey of state boards of education (14 responses)

Information Sought	Alaska	California	Florida	Hawaii	Illinois	Indiana	Kentucky
grade level for state history	10th-12th	4th-6th	4th-6th	7th-9th	4th-6th	4th-6th	4th-6th
length of state history unit	semester	year	a unit w/in US his educ		throughout	year	year
statewide heritage education program	yes	no	no	no	no	yes	yes
agency responsible for h.e. program						each school (see sheet)	KY Dept of Education
other effective h.e. programs	no	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
agencies responsible for these programs		Oakland Museum of CA	FL History Museum		Historical Societies Preservation agencies	IN Jr His Soc Historic Southern IN various local his. soc.	KY Historical Society
does your agency support h.e.workshops for those workshops, you partner with	no	no	no	yes Japanese Cultural Center HI Judiciary His. Center other museums, univ.	no	yes Title VI Centers at IN U Indiana His Society IN Coun for the Soc St	yes KDE sponsored Educ Acad
frequency of these workshops						varies by org & funding	summer
familiar with THEN web site	no	no	no	no	no	no	no
effective disseminators	website	other (state teacher org.)	conferences/meetings	conferences/meetings	all suggested	word of mouth	website
web addresses	www.eed.state.ak.us						KYSOCSTU@LSV.UKY.EDU
state's top teacher-training institutions: #1	U of Alaska-Fairbanks	CA State (26 campuses)	FL State Univ	Univ of Hawaii	ILL St Univ	IN State Univ	Western KY Univ
#2	U of Alaska-Anchorage		Univ of FL	Chaminade Univ	W. ILL Univ	Ball State Univ	Eastern KY Univ
#3			FL Atlantic Univ		E. ILL Univ	Purdue Univ	Univ of Kentucky
Information Sought	Massachusetts	Nebraska	New Hampshire	Oregon	Utah	Washington	Wyoming
grade level for state history	4th-6th	4th-6th	4th-6th	4th-6th	4th-6th	4th-6th	4th-6th
length of state history unit	see comments	year	local option	other: k-12	year	1st sem K-6 2nd sem 7-12	taught at elem level and assessed in 4th grade
statewide heritage education program	no, but	no	yes	yes	no	no	no
agency responsible for h.e. program	Mass His Comm does fund edu		Heritage St., Plymouth St Univ	OR Heritage Commission			
other effective h.e. programs	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
agencies responsible for these programs	SPNEA, NPS sites in st		Mus of NH His, Concord	OR Historical Society		WA State His Soc	WY Heritage Museum
does your agency support h.e.workshops for those workshops, you partner with	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
	many of sites from #5	NE State Council of SS	Plymouth State Univ Museum of NH History	OR His Soc; TAH grants	Utah State His Society	WA State His Soc	Univ of WY & museums
frequency of these workshops						starting this summer	whenever requested
familiar with THEN web site	yes	no	no	yes	no	other	yes
effective disseminators	website	website	conferences/meetings	website	bi-monthly meetins w/ social studies specialists	e-mail distribution list	website
web addresses	www.does.mass.edu/frameworks/cinstitute			www.ode.state.or.us/cifs/socialsciences			uwyo.edu/geog/wga/wga
state's top teacher-training institutions: #1	Boston Univ	Univ of Neb Lincoln	Univ of New Hampshire	Western OR Univ	UT State Univ		Univ of WY
#2	Univ of Mass Amherst	Univ of Neb Omaha	Plymouth State Univ	Willamette Univ	Brigham Young Univ		
#3	Lesley Univ	Univ of Neb Doane	Keene State College	Portland State Univ	Weber State Univ		

*Board of Education form letter, followed by questionnaire*

March 30, 2004

Dear

We know you are very busy and we respect your inclination to just delete this e-mail. Please take just a moment, however, to let us explain.

This brief questionnaire is being sent to each state Department of Education as the first phase of a national survey that will focus on "heritage education" as an approach to cross-disciplinary instruction in teacher-training classes in colleges and universities. You have received this communication because you are listed on your department's Web site as the social studies coordinator, the curriculum coordinator, or because you are in a position within your state department of education to respond knowledgeably to this inquiry. Your responses will help in planning state and national partnerships to provide practical and useful information and materials on heritage education.

**HERITAGE EDUCATION: A DEFINITION**

For the purposes of this project, heritage education is defined as "the use of local cultural and historic resources for teaching the required curricula of grades K-12. Activities, lesson plans, and units of study may focus on, but are not limited to, architecture, archaeology, cemeteries, documents, folkways, objects and artifacts, community and family history, photographs/portraits, historic sites, museums, and the urban and rural landscape."

**WHO IS CONDUCTING THIS SURVEY and WHAT IS THE POINT?**

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT), a program of the National Park Service, and the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) at Middle Tennessee State University are asking your cooperation. The NCPTT and CHP are continuing the work they began in 1996 to survey teachers and heritage organizations in all 50 states. The responses to that survey were published in "Focus on 2000: A Heritage Education Perspective" (1997).

Based on the results of the survey, NCPTT and the CHP partnered in 2001 to create The Heritage Education Network (THEN), a national Web site for teachers in K-12 classrooms. The Web site at <[www.MTSU.edu/~then](http://www.MTSU.edu/~then)> is a successful resource used by hundreds of educators across the country. If you are not acquainted with the site, we invite you to visit it and also to read the summary statement by clicking on "What is Heritage Education?" and "Focus on 2000."

The 1996 survey also revealed some challenges which we are continuing to address. Analysis of the survey responses concluded that few teacher-training programs incorporated heritage education materials and techniques as an approach to teach the required curriculum across disciplines and at various grade and capability levels, even though it has been successfully demonstrated as a productive teaching method for many years.

In the second phase of this current effort, we will contact professors in teacher-training programs to: (1) learn if they are aware of the benefits and opportunities for using heritage education as a successful teaching strategy; (2) learn the best venues through which we might offer practical and easily accessible materials and training so that they can incorporate heritage education into their overall teacher training, and (3) learn from, recognize, and partner with those professors who do include heritage education as part of the regular classroom training.

Our objective is to provide professors in teacher-training courses with both a rationale and materials to prepare educators in K-12 classrooms to use the historic and cultural resources of their community as effective teaching tools.

**WHY DOES MY RESPONSE MATTER?**

Your response will: (1) help us to understand the current status of heritage education resources in your state; (2) advise us of the top teacher-training institutions in your state; and (3) help us to develop a more useful questionnaire to send to professors in teacher-training programs. We will carefully note and consider all of your answers and comments.

**HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?**

The survey should take about 10 minutes. Follow the instructions and submit your answers online. If you have a few minutes, thanks for doing it now. If you do not have the time immediately, we would appreciate a reply by April 12, 2004.

Click on the address below to go to the survey.

<http://histpres.MTSU.edu/then/THENSsurvey.html>

Thank you for your assistance and for your time.

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1. The responses to the questions below apply to which state? Choose State
2. In what grade(s) is state history taught?
3. How long is the state history unit?  a year  a semester  other (please specify)
4. Is there a statewide heritage education program in your state and what agency or organization is responsible for it?  
 No, I do not know of any statewide heritage education program  
 Yes. The agency/organization responsible for heritage education in this state is:
5. Other than or in addition to a statewide program, are there heritage education programs in your state that are particularly effective, such as one administered by a local historical society or museum?  
 No  
 Yes  
If yes, please provide the name of the organization and the city or town in which it is located.
6. Does your agency support workshops on heritage education in partnership with colleges, universities, or other organizations such as the state historical society?  No  Yes, in partnership with:  
If yes, how regularly?  annually  every other year  other (please specify)
7. Please comment on how incorporating heritage education in the classroom could be a viable method to achieve curricula objectives:
8. Are you familiar with The Heritage Education Network ([www.mtsu.edu/~then](http://www.mtsu.edu/~then))?  
 Yes, I am familiar with THEN  
 Yes, I am familiar with THEN and I have advised teachers about this resource  
 No, I am not familiar with THEN but I will visit the website  
 Other

9. What method or combination of methods have you found to be most effective in disseminating information to teachers?

- Mailing list
- Inservice flyers
- Conferences or meetings
- Website (please give URL in box below)

Other (please specify)

10. Please list up to three colleges or universities you consider to be your state's top teacher-training institutions:

- i)
- ii)
- iii)

11. With The Heritage Education Network in place, please suggest ways such as expansion, additional lesson plans, etc., in which it could better benefit educators in your state in teaching required objectives.

12. We value your comments or questions on the use of heritage education in K-12 classrooms and in teacher-training courses.

# TEACHER-TRAINING INSTITUTION SURVEY

The survey for the institutions of higher learning with teacher-training courses also had a return of responses from 14 states, though only seven of the states represented by those responses were the same in the two questionnaires.

## Summary:

Responses came from institutions of higher learning offering teacher-training programs in 14 states ranging from Massachusetts to Hawaii and Oregon to Georgia. Some clear patterns emerged:

- 1) At least eight of the 14 states (57%) have a mandated state history course in K-12,
- 2) Fewer than half the respondents (six) said their institutions offer courses that address the teaching of state history, and of those six, some but not all include heritage education resources.
- 3) At the same time, nine respondents (64%) said their institutions offer a methods course that incorporates heritage education resources.
- 4) Half the respondents said that some state or local preservation agency sponsors heritage education workshops, and apparently those are annual events, but the respondents themselves were not regularly participants in state organized workshops, though they advise their students to attend.
- 5) Half the respondents use heritage education materials because they are a viable method for achieving curricula objectives, and more than half said they would use heritage education materials made available to them, either through a brief publication (three) or particularly through a Web site (nine).
- 6) But having said that, 13 of the 14 had not previously visited THEN, though they would do so now and would advise their students to do so as well.

## Comments from those responses:

Among the questions in the survey, #12 and #24/#25 sought more detailed answers. Below are comments from professors who responded. In the first grouping (#12), the

educators were asked why they like to incorporate heritage education resources in their classes. Next they were asked why they believe heritage education is a useful approach that can be effective in teaching the required curriculum (#24) or why they do not find it to be so (#25). Three respondents included final comments.

**#12. If you have incorporated heritage education resources in your class(es), do you agree that this approach is a viable method for achieving curricular objectives?**

**From Colorado:** "Heritage education helps my college students learn how to bring history alive for young learners. The term itself is somewhat confusing to me, however, because I have seen history instruction "as heritage education" criticized in the literature for blindly getting kids to simply memorize all the reasons why their country is the best, without learning how to critically interpret the historical evidence and, in so doing, appreciate multiple view points and perspectives. So for me "heritage education" carries with it a rather pejorative connotation."

**From Kentucky:** "I do as much as possible incorporating [heritage education resources] in my art education methods course as I can ... and in staff development. More needs to be done in other methods courses, especially ss [social studies]."

**From Massachusetts:** "They [heritage education resources] offer ways for new teacher candidates to bring history alive for their students, opening up discussions of people and their lives, revealing the complexities of the past."

**From New Hampshire:** "As a former secondary social studies teacher, I used these [heritage education] resources extensively. I certainly appreciate the relevancy that heritage education provides and I pass this enthusiasm and strategies on to my pre-service teachers."

**From Vermont:** “My students earn licenses K-6. We believe that humanities study begins with the child and his/her heritage and grows outward to the wider world. Heritage studies therefore are the foundation at the elementary level.”

**From West Virginia:** “It [heritage education resources] broadens a teacher education candidate’s perspective.”

**From Wyoming:** “It has been my experience that our students respond well to these types [heritage education] of resources. Many of them draw on these materials (and other heritage resources) in developing teaching units that they use during student teaching.”

**#24. Why do you believe heritage education is a useful approach that can be effective in teaching the required curriculum — or why do you not find it to be so (#25).**

**From Arkansas:** “Students need to know their own history; they need roots before they develop wings.”

**From Colorado:** “It can help students develop a “dynamic” as opposed to a “static” view of history. In so doing, heritage education facilitates students’ efforts at using our collective past experience to provide relevant and meaningful contexts for understanding present experience, and that is what history is all about.”

**From Kentucky:** (to #24): “It covers so many local and national issues and requires a variety of thinking skills and strategies. (to #25): It also involves politics and values, which some educators shy away from. Not me.”

**From Massachusetts:** “Teachers of history in middle and high schools need to engage their students in “doing history.” The study of primary sources organized around local and family history is an effective instructional strategy. It elevates the teaching of history beyond just the facts to the meanings of those facts, and makes possible connections between past, present and future.”

**From New Hampshire:** “It is relevant and it is of high interest. It helps students to understand the past when they actually get involved with stories, artifacts, etc. from the past.”

**From Oregon:** “It provides opportunities to integrate students’ cultures and experiences as they develop skills, knowledge and dispositions. If those materials are broadly representative of the diversity and the contributions of diverse constituents to our society, students will develop an appreciation for diversity and skills for working with people whose backgrounds are different from their own.”

**From Vermont:** “At the elementary level we have to begin with the child and move outward. My courses integrate the arts with social studies, so we look at how to help children learn from the familiar and how to connect with the less familiar. Because we are a small state, community, etc., we need outside sources to move us to understanding heritages other than our own. Resources listed above help. The internet is hugely valuable to our students. They have used virtual field trips to help Vermont children understand their similarities and differences and other connections.”

**From West Virginia:** “It [heritage education] increases a student’s background knowledge to promote success in reading.”

**From Wyoming:** “It is relevant and engaging for students, draws on materials that are widely available, and can be a marvelous means through which topics can be integrated across the curriculum.”

### **Final comments:**

**From New Hampshire:** “We have a strong heritage education program in our state—co-sponsored by Plymouth State University.”

**From West Virginia:** “Good luck in your work.”

**From Wyoming:** “Thank you for contacting me with the survey. I will definitely spend some time getting acquainted with the Web site [THEN]. This is an important part of the curriculum and we need to spread the word, especially in these times when studying history, geography, social issues, etc. are being squeezed out by a curriculum that emphasizes test scores in literacy and math.”

*Teacher-training institution form letter, followed by questionnaire*

May 13, 2004

Dear Professor \_\_\_\_\_:

We know you are very busy and we respect your inclination to just delete this e-mail. Please take just a moment, however, to let us explain.

This brief questionnaire is being sent to selected professors of education in colleges and universities in all fifty states. The purpose of this inquiry is to determine "if" and "how" heritage education is being used as an approach to cross-disciplinary instruction in teacher-training classes. You have received this communication either because you were recommended by your state department of education or you are listed on your institution's Web site as being in a position to respond knowledgeably to these questions.

Your responses, which should take about 10 minutes to complete, will help to plan state and national partnerships that can provide practical and useful information and materials on heritage education for classroom teachers and for those who teach the teachers.

Following is a brief explanation of this effort and the questions that we hope you will take the time to answer and submit now or by May 28. We sincerely appreciate your time and your responses. If you have question about this project, please be in touch.

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Based on the results of the survey, NCPTT and the CHP partnered in 2001 to create The Heritage Education Network (THEN), a national Web site for teachers in K-12 classrooms. The Web site at <[www.MTSU.edu/~then](http://www.MTSU.edu/~then)> is a successful resource used by hundreds of educators across the country. If you are not acquainted with the site, we invite you to visit it and also to read the summary statement by clicking on "What IS Heritage Education?" and "Focus on 2000."

The 1996 survey revealed some challenges which we are continuing to address. Classroom teachers in K-12, when introduced to this approach, find it a viable way to teach the required curriculum across disciplines and at various grade and capability levels. In the final report, however, responses indicated that few teacher-training programs incorporated heritage education materials and techniques.

In this project, we are contacting professors in teacher-training programs to: (1) learn if they are aware of the benefits and opportunities for using heritage education as a successful teaching strategy; (2) learn the best venues through which we might offer practical and easily accessible materials and training so that they can incorporate heritage education into their overall teacher training, and (3) learn from, recognize, and partner with those professors who do or would like to include heritage education as part of the regular classroom training.

Our objective is to provide professors in teacher-training courses with both a rationale and materials to prepare educators in K-12 classrooms to use the historic and cultural resources of their community as effective teaching tools.

### **WHY DOES MY RESPONSE MATTER?**

Your response will: (1) help us to understand the current status of heritage education resources in teacher-training curriculum; and (2) inform us of the best ways to provide useful and practical materials that will assist those who choose to incorporate heritage education into teacher-training classrooms for K-12 educators.

### **HOW LONG WILL THIS TAKE?**

The survey should take about 10 minutes. Follow the instructions and submit your answers on-line. If you have a few minutes, thanks for doing it now. You may reply directly to the questions on your computer and return them via e-mail. If you prefer, however, you may print the survey, write your responses and reply by fax to (615) 898-5614 or by mail to: Center for Historic Preservation, Box 80, MTSU, Murfreesboro, TN 37132.

Click on the address below to go to the survey

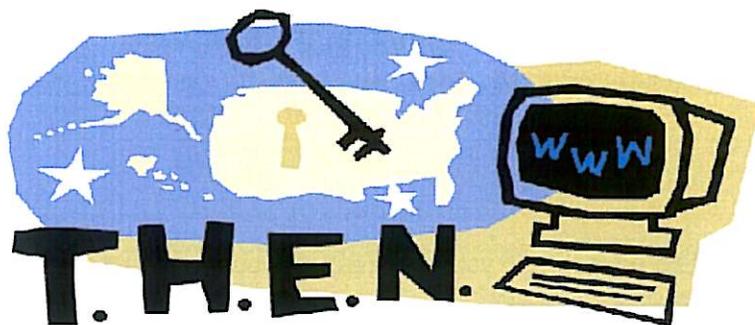
<http://histpres.MTSU.edu/then/THENSURVEY.html>

Thank you for your assistance and for your time.

2004 survey of teacher-training professors on heritage education  
(14 states responding)

Questions	Arkansas	Colorado	Georgia	Hawaii	Indiana	Kentucky	Maryland	Massachusetts
number of years teaching educ courses?	12	10	30	35	20	17	35, 11	24
your state mandates state history?	y	y	y	don't know	don't know	n	n, n	n
if yes, at what grades?	4, 8	5, 8, 11	9 to 18					
do classes address state history?	y	y	n	n		n	n, n	y
if yes, which classes?	Ark. History	Soc St Methods			don't know			new dev in history Methods - history
do they include her educ resources?	don't know	y	n	y	don't know	don't know	n, n	y
does methods course include h.e.resources?	don't know	y	y	y	don't know	y	n, n	y
if yes, for what levels?		K-6	all methods courses	und. & grad.		see response		mid & upper
list her. educ. resources you include:		materials	classes			materials		materials
do they help achieve curricula objectives?		y	y	don't know	don't know	y	don't know	y
comment on #12		y				y		y
state orgs sponsor her. educ. Wkshp?	don't know	y	y	don't know	don't know	y	don't know	y
if yes, how often?			annually			annually		annually
do you attend st. org. wkshps?		sometimes	y			sometimes		
advise students to attend wkshps?		y	y			y		n
ever visited THEN?	n	n	y	n	n	n	n, n	n
will you visit?	y	y	y	n	y	y	y, y	y
will you advise others to try THEN?	y	y	y	y	y	y	y, y	y
would you use her. educ. materials?	sometimes	y	y	sometimes	y	y	sometimes	
best format for receiving info re teaching?	website	website	conf sessions	website	website	brief publ.	brief publ.	website
I believe her. educ. is useful: comment	y	y				y		y
final comments:								

Questions	New Hampshre	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Vermont	West Virginia	Wyoming	totals
number of years teaching educ courses?	5, 12	30	18	20	2	4	
your state mandates state history?	y, y	y	n	y	y	y	8 y, 4 n
if yes, at what grades?	4			4	4, 8	4	6 elem
do classes address state history?	n, n	y	n	n	y	y	6 y, 7 n
if yes, which classes?		soc st I & II			W VA history children's lit	WY history	
do they include her educ resources?	n	don't know	n		y	don't know	4 y, 4 n
does methods course include h.e.resources?	y, n	don't know	n	y	y	y	9 y, 3 n
if yes, for what levels?	sec, at least			3rd yr ss	elem & sec	elem	
list her. educ. resources you include:	classes			materials	materials	materials	
do they help achieve curricula objectives?	y, don't know			y	y	y	
comment on #12	y			y	y	y	
state orgs sponsor her. educ. Wkshp?	y, y	don't know	don't know	y	y	don't know	7 y
if yes, how often?	annually			annually	annually		
do you attend st. org. wkshps?	sometimes, n			sometimes	sometimes		1y, 1n, 5sometimes
advise students to attend wkshps?	y, y			n	y		
ever visited THEN?	n, n	n	n	n	n	n	
will you visit?	y, y	n	y	y	y	y	
will you advise others to try THEN?	y, y	n	y	y	y	y	
would you use her. educ. materials?	y, n		y	y	sometimes	y	7 y, 4 sometimes
best format for receiving info re teaching?	website		brief publ.	website	website	website	
I believe her. educ. is useful: comment	y			y	y	y	
final comments:	y	y			y	y	



Please do not hit "Enter" or "Return" to move between fields. This will cause your survey to be submitted prematurely.

1. The responses to the questions below apply to which state?

Choose State

2. I have been teaching education for (please answer in years):

3. Does the state in which you teach mandate a state history course in K-12?

Yes  No  Don't Know

4. If yes, at what grade(s)?

5. Within your department's curriculum, do any classes specifically address and prepare teachers to teach the state history course?

Yes  No  Don't Know

6. If yes, please list the title of the course(s):

7. Are heritage education resources (please refer to the definition provide in the introductory material) integrated into the(se) course(s)?

Yes  No  Don't Know

8. Within your department's curriculum, is there a methods course which incorporates heritage education resources?

Yes  No  Don't Know

9. If yes, for what level(s)?

10. If you have incorporated heritage education resources in your class(es), please list them:

11. If you have incorporated heritage education resources in your class(es), do you agree that this approach is a viable method for achieving curricula objectives?

Yes  No  Don't Know

Your comments on your experience in using heritage education resources would be appreciated:

12. Does your state historical society, state historic preservation office (SHPO), or other agency sponsor heritage education workshops?

Yes  No  Don't Know

13. If yes, how often?

Annually  Every two years  Other (please specify)

14. If you answered yes to 12, do you attend or participate in these workshops?

Yes  No  Sometimes

15. If you answered yes to 12, do you advise your students to take advantage of these workshops?

Yes  No

16. Have you ever visited the The Heritage Education Network (THEN) web site?

Yes  No

17. THEN is a web site for teachers specifically directed towards incorporating heritage education into the required curriculum. The address for THEN is <http://www.mtsu.edu/~then>. Are you likely to visit the web site to see if it is a teaching resource you can use?

Yes  No

18. Are you likely to advise your students and colleagues that THEN is a resource that might be of use to them?

Yes  No

19. Would you use heritage education materials in your class(es) if they were accessible and practical?

Yes  No  Sometimes

20. If you use heritage education materials or would consider doing so, what would be the best format for you and your students to receive ideas, lesson plans, and information on teaching with heritage education topics?

Conference Sessions  Distance Learning  Web Site  Brief Publications  Other (please specify)

21. Complete only one of the following statements based on your experience as a professor who trains K-12 teachers:

A. As a professional educator, I believe heritage education is a useful approach or tool that can be effective in teaching the required curriculum because:

B. As a professional educator, I do not believe that heritage education is a useful approach or tool that can be effective in teaching the required curriculum because:

Please add any final comments here:

Submit

# WHAT NEXT?

Should we put much stock in surveys? Many reasons could be put forth that would argue any survey is flawed from beginning to end. Even if the questionnaire might be perfectly designed, the person who receives it may be having a bad day or the right person to answer the survey may be on vacation. Most people, including the authors of this report, don't like spending their time answering surveys. And how can one know when in the calendar is the best time to reach the optimum numbers? Fully aware of these various hurdles, we chose to create a survey anyway, because we believed that those individuals we reached who took the time to respond would, by their answers, provide us state- or institution-specific information. If enough responses were returned, those particular points collected together might suggest larger patterns. So too might gaps in their answers.

*“From the teacher-training survey responses, it seems apparent that most professors in colleges of education, that is, those who are responsible for training teachers to teach, are not aware of the viability of heritage education as a teaching tool.”*

The smaller-than-hoped-for number of responses from teacher-training institutions proved disappointing. The surveys were sent in late April and through May and into summer term. Perhaps recipients of the e-mail questionnaires were away from the office then, though most teacher-training programs have full-blown programs year-round. Perhaps the selected recipients, carefully plucked from Web page descriptions of education departments and faculty positions, were not always the best persons to receive a survey on heritage education. That could help to explain “don't know” responses like those from the person in Indiana who apparently was not aware of the excellent and

decades-old heritage education services and programs of the Indiana Historical Bureau, the Indiana Historical Society, Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, and the Indiana Junior Historical Society.

From the teacher-training survey responses, it seems apparent that most professors in colleges of education, that is, those who are responsible for training teachers to teach, are not aware of the viability of heritage education as a teaching tool. Those professors may be continuing a long-standing omission, dating from their own training and classroom experience, that tended to ignore the resources around them as teaching tools and topics. And, either not knowing about them or else feeling unprepared and uncomfortable in using them, they do not introduce their students to heritage education methods and its approach. In fact, the use of accessible nearby sources can help teachers and students to achieve not only acceptable scores on tests but actual knowledge and the positive comments turned in by those respondents who know and use heritage education methods support that statement.

An observation based on searching education department Web sites seems appropriate and even helpful here. The definition of heritage education as sent with the survey's explanation is one that has been used for decades in reference to teaching with local cultural and historic resources. “Activities, lesson plans, and units of study may focus on, but are not limited to, architecture, archaeology, cemeteries, documents, folkways, objects and artifacts, community and family history, photographs/portraits, historic sites, museums, and the urban and rural landscape.” In recent years, apparently, some academic institutions have used the term “heritage education” in a slightly different way, one associated with ethnic or racial characteristics of groups within our culturally diverse population. The teaching theories and tools involved in “heritage education” within communities work equally well in classrooms made up of students whose families have been settled in the area for generations or for neighborhoods in transition. Heritage education activities can assist all students: 1) to appreciate the efforts of past residents of their community; 2) to become aware of architectural elements or folkways and recognize different styles as reflections of varying tradi-

tions or environmental conditions; and 3) to learn to observe cultural expressions through their myriad outlets surrounding us. Activities available through The Heritage Education Network [THEN] Web site are designed to meet each of these expectations and more besides.

It is telling that few of those who responded on the two national surveys were aware of THEN. Now they are, and that is good. Another reaction to the few responses or negative responses on this survey could be: "That's it. There's nothing to be done. Let's just quit or do whatever we think best." But while it seems that, generally speaking, administrators and professors of education are not aware of THEN as a teaching resource, classroom teachers are. Perhaps that is because K-12 educators are trying very hard and are always on the lookout for practical ideas and materials, ones that have a track record of success and can be easily adapted to their teaching situation. THEN is in place and is "hit" often. It is maintained with twice-yearly checks on links and additions to it are made. Even so, improvements can be made and the site can benefit from some additional lesson plans and ideas. At the same time, perhaps a new push needs to be made to let educators know about THEN.

Beyond THEN, opportunities abound for offering special classes on heritage education through regular video conferencing and distance learning programs of many colleges and universities. The advent and expansion of national heritage areas throughout the country is another excellent way to reach educators. As those national heritage areas develop an increased coordination in their efforts to utilize and publicize heritage education activities over the next decade, teachers and students alike will have new learning opportunities.

Proponents and practitioners of heritage education include personnel at historic sites and historical societies as well as teachers. They know from first-hand experience how well the approach can work in the field-trip experience and in the classroom, and they have some good opportunities to share their knowledge and techniques. Traditional avenues—in-service, publications, conferences—will continue to be used. Web sites, video conferencing, distance learning, and CD-ROMs can work too. Perhaps an "activist" group to spearhead further study and suggestions could be formed from interested teachers, historic sites educators, national heritage areas personnel, and the successful agencies named in responses on the surveys. Through whatever means we have, we must aim to ensure that, at some point in every educator's career, he or she learns the benefits of "heritage education" and acquires information in order to make it a part of the classroom teaching experience.

In *Focus on 2000*, we used the words of educator Clifford Lord in his seminal work, *Teaching History with Community Resources*, as a theme throughout the report. As we "refocus on heritage education," we can return to his words, first published 40 years ago, and Lord's closing thoughts:

*Community resources put life into history. Localized history puts history into the life of the pupil. The materials are legion and of infinite variety; the possibilities are numberless; the horizons unlimited. And so to work.*

# CREDITS

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) advances the application of science and technology to historic preservation. Working in the fields of archeology, architecture, landscape architecture and materials conservation, the Center accomplishes its mission through training, education, research, technology transfer and partnerships. NCPTT partners with non-profit organizations, universities, and government agencies throughout the United States to complete critical preservation work and lends significant support to cutting-edge developments in the conservation and preservation community.

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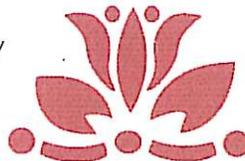


The Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University is a research and public service institute committed to the preservation, protection, interpretation, enhancement, and sensitive promotion of our historic environment. Heritage education has been a primary initiative of the Center since it was established as a Center of Excellence in 1984. The Center maintains The Heritage Education Network and regularly produces heritage education materials for schools, historic sites, communities, and heritage organizations.

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