WASHINGTON IN THE ' 70s
ACTIVITY GUIDE

The following activities, designed for all age groups, provide engaging opportunities to explore Washington D.C. history and culture. To learn more about the *Washington in the '70s* television program, produced by WETA TV 26, visit us at www.weta.org/70s

Let's Vote: The People's Popular Playlist for Music from the 1970s

It is often hard to convince people from different generations to listen to each others' music. This group game is designed to open people's ears to the music of the 70s which was diverse and distinctive. The goal is to create a playlist of five songs that everyone can agree on. Each person in the group gets to choose one song to listen to featured on the website http://digitaldreamdoor.nutsie.com/pages/best_songs70s.html, and the others in the group vote as to whether on not to include it on the People's Popular Playlist for 70s Music. Continue choosing songs until the group reaches consensus on the top five choices. Once the playlist is complete, use the Read.Write.Think Cover Creator Tool to make a cover that captures the spirit of 70s music.

Dress The Decade

A fun way to learn about popular culture is to look at it through the lens of fashion. If you have family photograph albums, scroll through them to see what was in fashion during the 70s. If you don't have photographs, browse through the following sites:

- http://www.fashion-era.com/1970s.htm

- http://kclibrary.lonestar.edu/decade70.html
(Scroll to Fads & Fashions)

Create a collage of fashions on a large poster board or piece of construction paper. This can be a fun activity to do with people from different generations. While you make the collage, ask each person to share a favorite item of clothing and the story behind it. Compare the looks that are popular today with those that were popular in the 1970s. You may also want to use a software program such as Adobe Photoshop to mix up old photographs and faces and see what different people look like in clothes from the 70s.

Politics and Podcasts

In **WASHINGTON IN THE '70s**, many pivotal events that occurred during the 1970s were highlighted. Two of the most important were the Vietnam Protests in Washington and Watergate. Using the information from the film and the resources listed below, create a podcast explaining how one or both of these impacted people's lives. Try to connect the impact of these events with life today. You can learn how to create podcasts at the Reading Rockets website.

Vietnam

- http://www.pbs.org/teachers/connect/resources/101/preview/
  Click on "Watch the Video"

- http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/weatherunderground/movement.html

Watergate

- http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/special/watergate/

- http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/white_house/jan-june97/watergate_6-17.html
(RealAudio segment also available)

Postcards from D.C.

The film showed many powerful images of Washington, D.C. in the 70s. Create a series of postcards showing your favorite scenes. You can sketch your postcards on paper or online. For inspiration, visit the Chicago Postcard Museum or Vintagepostcards.org.

Comparing Facts: Then & Now

Sometimes people are surprised to learn how many things were different only forty years ago. The film showcased life in the 1970s from many different perspectives. Give the following survey *What Do You Know About the 70s?* to at least ten people.

1. What do you think the price of a quart of milk was in 1970?
2. What do you think the price of a loaf of bread was in 1970?
3. What do you think the average salary in the United States was in 1970?
4. What were some of the most popular books in the 1970s?
5. What were some of the most popular movies in the 1970s?
6. Who were the presidents of the United States in the 1970s?
7. What movement was launched with the celebration of Earth Day?
8. Who was the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1972?
9. What movie first came out in 1972 that is still very popular today?
10. What are some of the television programs that were popular in the 1970s?

Share the **answers** below and see how much people know about this amazing decade.

1. 33 cents
2. 24 cents
3. $7,564.00
4. Love Story, The French Lieutenant's Woman, QB VII, Rich Man/Poor Man, Travels With My Aunt, The Secret Woman
5. Rocky, Star Wars, Jaws, Annie Hall, Saturday Night Fever, Deer Hunter, Apocalypse Now, The Poseidon Adventure, American Graffiti, Grease and The Towering Inferno
6. Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter
7. The Environmental Movement
8. Shirley Chisholm
9. Star Wars
10 All in the Family, Saturday Night Live, Roots (the mini-series), Sesame Street, Happy Days, The Brady Bunch

Black & White: A Conversation on Race

There is a lot of conversation today about race, and there was a lot of conversation about race in the 1970s. Write (or act out) a brief dialogue that might have occurred between two black people talking about race, two white people talking about race, and a white and a black person talking about race in the 70s. Use what you learned from the film in your dialogue. Then create a current day dialogue. Talk about the differences and what they suggest about how people have or have not changed they way they talk about race. You may wish to videotape your skit and share it with others in your community to spark continuing conversations about these important issues.

Frank Kameny: A Gay Rights Activist

Frank Kameny is one of the most significant figures of the American Gay Rights Movement. Create a mock Facebook page for Frank Kameny. Use the resources listed below for inspiration:

- http://www.metroweekly.com/feature/?ak=2341

- http://www.bnl.gov/bera/activities/globe/kameny.htm

- http://washington.org/visiting/experience-dc/pride-in-dc/our-history-in-dc

Comic Life

Create a comic strip based on what you learned about Washington, D.C. in the 1970s from the film. As you build your story line, think about what surprised you the most from the film, what your learned about the 1970s, and how the film connects to your life experiences today. You can also choose to use one of the following online comic creation tools:

- BBC Schools

- Comic Creator

- Make Beliefs Comix

WHFS Blog

Radio stations were an important cultural connector in Washington, D.C. in the 1970s. Write a mock blog post About WHFS and why it was important to the people of the city. Use the resources listed below and what you learned from the film.

- Cross Town Arts: http://www.crosstownarts.com/wama/whfsbio.html

- The Washington Post: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A4252-2005Jan12.html

- Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WHFS_(historic)

Then, compose a mock Twitter post (a tweet) about WHFS, but remember, you only have 140 characters to capture its essence. You can work alone or in a team. Share your creations and discuss the importance of radio stations during this important decade in history.

Mock Sports Center Update

Sports have always been an important part of life in Washington, D.C. Create a "Sports Center" update capturing these stories of Washington. D.C. in the 1970s. Make props and act out your broadcast for an audience. You may also want to create a YouTube video showcasing your work. Include the teams listed below:

- Washington Redskins (football)
- Washington Caps (hockey)
- Washington Senators (baseball)

Exploring the Arts in Washington, D.C.

Choose an arts institution that was profiled in the film in Washington and create an informational illustrated brochure. Use the resources below to begin. Try to capture

both the history of the organization and why it was so important to the culture of Washington, D.C. in your brochure.

The Kennedy Center

- http://www.kennedy-center.org/about/history.html
- http://www.jfklibrary.org/Historicol+Resources/Archives/Reference+Desk/History+of+the+Kennedy+Center.htm

The Wolf Trap

- http://www.wolftrap.org/Learn_About_Wolf_Trap/History.aspx
- http://www.wolftrap.org/en/Learn_About_Wolf_Trap.aspx

The Washington Zoo and the Pandas

The story of the pandas at the Washington Zoo captivated the world in the 1970s. They were a gift to the United States from the Chinese government as a gesture of peace and friendship. The gift fostered public awareness of the danger of the panda becoming extinct. Write and illustrate a children's picture book capturing this story. Use what you learned from the film and the resources below for inspiration.

- http://animal.discovery.com/convergence/pandas/meet/ling_hsing.html
- http://www.peoplepets.com/news/cute/saying-goodbye-is-hardest-thing-for-d-c-panda-s-superfans/1

About the Author: Maureen Carroll is cofounder of Line Design AssociatesBay Breeze Educational Resources, a company that develops K-12 educational projects that promote creativity and critical thinking through the use of technology, the arts, popular culture and media.