

1850 – 1874

HOMESTEAD ACT SIGNED: THE CHALLENGES OF THE PLAINS

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RESOURCES

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Activity 1: Great American Desert

Activity Grade Level:
4th - 8th Grades

Activity: Map Analysis

Have students view Long's map on the Great American Desert page in the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Great Plains section of the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0101.html

Have them discuss why families would want to live on the Great Plains.

More advanced students may want to use the National Archives *Map Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document to analyze the map.

[You can also read, "Where Is Nebraska, Anyway?" from *Nebraska History Magazine*. Spring. 1999 <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/>.]

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.5. Describe Nebraska's history, including geographic factors, from European contact to statehood.

Standard 4.1.7. Use higher level thinking processes to evaluate and analyze primary sources and other resources.

Standard 4.1.10. Identify and use essential map elements.

Standard 4.1.12. Identify the geographic and human characteristics of the regions of the United States and Nebraska.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.3.10. Know how to interpret economic and political issues as expressed in maps, tables, diagrams, charts, political cartoons, and economic graphs.

Nebraska State SCIENCE Standards

Standard 4.4.3. By the end of fourth grade, students will develop an understanding of living things and environments.

Nebraska State MATHEMATICS Standards

Standard 4.5.1. By the end of fourth grade, students will collect, organize, represent, and interpret numerical and categorical data and clearly communicate the findings.

Standard 8.5.1. By the end of eighth grade, students will collect, analyze, interpret, and display data.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.3. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 4.1.4. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 4.1.7. Identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 4.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 8.1.2. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 8.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 2: Geographic Factors of Settlement

Activity Grade Level:

4th - 8th Grades

Activity: Photo Analysis

What geographic factors would help or hinder settlement of the Great Plains? Have students examine the following two photographs on pages in the Homestead Act Signed: The Challenges of the Plains section of the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies to help them answer that question:

1. the photograph of the men cutting sod in the field on the Searching for Shelter: Building a Sod House page
http://nebraskastudies/0600/stories/0501_0108.html
2. the photograph of the John Curry sod house on The Challenges of the Plains page
http://nebraskastudies/0600/stories/0501_0101.html

Notice the birdhouse hanging in the doorway of the last photo. Why would settlers bring birdcages and birds to the frontier? Search for other photos with birdcages using the "Primary Source" search in the upper left hand corner of Nebraska Studies.

More advanced students may want to use the National Archives *Photo Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.7. Use higher level thinking processes to evaluate and analyze primary sources and other resources.

Standard 4.1.10. Identify and use essential map elements.

Standard 4.1.12. Identify the geographic and human characteristics of the regions of the United States and Nebraska.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.3.10. Know how to interpret economic and political issues as expressed in maps, tables, diagrams, charts, political cartoons, and economic graphs.

Nebraska State SCIENCE Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.4.3. Develop an understanding of living things and environments.

Standard 4.5.1. Develop an understanding of the characteristics of earth materials.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.3. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 4.1.4. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 4.1.7. Identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 4.1.8. Identify similar ideas across a variety of narratives and stories.

Standard 4.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 8.1.2. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 8.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 3: Snakes and Sod Houses

Activity Grade Level:
4th - 8th Grades

Activity: Discussion

Have students read the interview with Mr. H. S. Sample, that can be accessed the bottom of the Rain, Snow, Snakes, & the Roof Leaks page of the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section of the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies/0500/stories/0501_0112.html

Then lead a discussion with the following questions:

- How does the story about the snakes help show what life was like living on the frontier and in a sod house?
- Do you believe the stories about the snakes? Why or why not?
- Do rattlesnakes still live in Nebraska?
How would living in a sod house be different than living in the home you have today?

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.1. Compare communities and describe how United States and Nebraska communities changed physically and demographically over time.

Standard 4.1.7. Use higher level thinking processes to evaluate and analyze primary sources and other resources.

Standard 4.1.12. Identify the geographic and human characteristics of the regions of the United States and Nebraska.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.1.7. By the end of eighth grade, students will explain post Civil War changes in the United States, and the role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Nebraska State MATHEMATICS Standards

Standard 4.5.1. By the end of fourth grade, students will collect, organize, represent, and interpret numerical and categorical data and clearly communicate the findings.

Standard 8.5.1. By the end of eighth grade, students will collect, analyze, interpret, and display data.

Nebraska State SCIENCE Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.4.3. Develop an understanding of living things and environments.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.3. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 4.1.4. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 4.1.7. Identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 4.1.8. Identify similar ideas across a variety of narratives and stories.

Standard 4.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 8.1.2. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 8.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 4: Cow Chips

Activity Grade Level:
4th - 8th Grades

Activity: Photo Analysis

Have students look at the photograph of a woman with a wheelbarrow full of chips on the Keeping Warm page of the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section of the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies/0500/stories/0501_0110.html

What did pioneer families do with cow and buffalo chips?

More advanced students may want to use the National Archives *Photo Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.7. Use higher level thinking processes to evaluate and analyze primary sources and other resources.

Standard 4.1.12. Identify the geographic and human characteristics of the regions of the United States and Nebraska.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.1.7. By the end of eighth grade, students will explain post Civil War changes in the United States, and the role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Nebraska State SCIENCE Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.4.3. Develop an understanding of living things and environments.

Standard 4.5.1. Develop an understanding of the characteristics of earth materials.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.3. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 4.1.4. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 4.1.7. Identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 4.1.8. Identify similar ideas across a variety of narratives and stories.

Standard 4.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 8.1.2. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 8.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 5: Pioneer Lunch

Activity Grade Level:
4th – 8th - 12th Grades

Activity: Discussion and Photograph Analysis

Have students read the three page of What's for Lunch? in the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section of the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

What's for Lunch? http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0113.html
Watermelons! http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0114.html
Analyze a Family Photo http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0115.html

Then, lead discussions with the following questions:

- How would the contents of the lunch you take to school differ from the contents of lunch taken by pioneer children?
- Read the recipe on how to cook rabbit. Ask you parents if they have ever eaten rabbit. Why are people living in Nebraska less likely to eat rabbit today?
Read the recipe for poverty cake. Why do you think it was given that label?
- Analyze the photographs of the sod houses of the Omar Madison Kem family and the Sylvester Rawding family. What types of food could you infer from the photographs were prepared and eaten by homesteaders?

More advanced students may want to use the National Archives *Photo Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.7. Use higher level thinking processes to evaluate and analyze primary sources and other resources.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.1.7. By the end of eighth grade, students will explain post Civil War changes in the United States, and the role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.3. Analyze the causes and effects of major events of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Standard 12.2.11. Demonstrate historical research and geographical skills.

Standard 12.4.7. Apply geography to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan the future.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of fourth grade, students will . . .

Standard 4.1.3. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 4.1.4. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 4.1.7. Identify and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 4.1.8. Identify similar ideas across a variety of narratives and stories.

Standard 4.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 4.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

By the end of eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 8.1.2. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 8.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 12.1.6. Read, identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 6: Reminiscences

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Written Document Analysis

Have students read the songs contained in the interview with Mrs. O. C. Bell, accessed from the Searching for Shelter: Living in a Sod House page in the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section in the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0109.html

Then use the following questions for discussion:

- What does she have to say about living in Nebraska?
- What "evidence" does she offer to support her conclusions?
- Analyze the historical value of an interview conducted in 1938 about life in Nebraska in the mid to late 1800s.
- Compare and contrast Mrs. Bell's interview with Mattie Oblinger's letter about living in Nebraska (accessed from the same page as above).

Students may wish to use the National Archives *Written Document Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Standard 12.2.11. Demonstrate historical research and geographical skills.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 12.1.3. Identify and use characteristics to classify different types of text.

Standard 12.1.6. Read, identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 7: Native American & European Views of Maps

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Map Analysis

Contrast and compare how Native Americans and Europeans viewed maps, such as the ones included on the Dividing the Land: How it was Divided page of the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section in the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0103.html

Students may wish to use the National Archives *Map Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.2. Analyze and explain the events and ideas of the Early National Period.

Standard 12.1.12. Explain and demonstrate relationships between the geographical and the historical development of the United States by using **maps**, pictures, and computer databases.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Standard 12.2.11. Demonstrate historical research and geographical skills.

Standard 12.4.7. Apply geography to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan the future.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 12.1.6. Read, identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 8: Geography & Sod Houses

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Discussion & Photo Analysis

Have students read the Searching for Shelter: Building a Sod House page of the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section in the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0108.html

Then have them discuss the following:

- Accept or reject the statement that geography dictates the type of house that was built on the frontier. Does the statement have more or less relevancy today?
- What were the advantages and disadvantages of living in a sod house? Review the photographs of the outside and inside of two sod houses for possible answers.

Students may wish to use the National Archives *Photograph Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.2. Analyze and explain the events and ideas of the Early National Period.

Standard 12.1.12. Explain and demonstrate relationships between the geographical and the historical development of the United States by using **maps**, pictures, and computer databases.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Standard 12.2.11. Demonstrate historical research and geographical skills.

Standard 12.4.7. Apply geography to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan the future.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 12.1.6. Read, identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Activity 9: Compare Diaries

Activity Grade Level:
12th Grade

Activity: Written Document Analysis

Have students read the Weather on the Frontier page (and its links) of the Homestead Act Signed: Challenges of the Plains section in the 1850-1874 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0111.html

- Have students compare and contrast the interview with Mrs. John Grosvenor and the John T. Gibson diary excerpts with reference to how weather affected life on the Great Plains.
- Have students compare and contrast the reliability of information gained from an interview with information gained from a diary.

Students may wish to use the National Archives *Written Document Analysis Worksheet* located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.2. Analyze and explain the events and ideas of the Early National Period.

Standard 12.1.12. Explain and demonstrate relationships between the geographical and the historical development of the United States by using **maps**, pictures, and computer databases.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Standard 12.2.11. Demonstrate historical research and geographical skills.

Standard 12.4.7. Apply geography to interpret the past, understand the present, and plan the future.

Nebraska State SCIENCE Standards

Standard 12.7.5. By the end of twelfth grade, students will develop an understanding of natural and human-induced hazards.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of twelfth grade, students will . . .

Standard 12.1. Locate, access, and evaluate resources to identify appropriate information.

Standard 12.1.1. Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read or viewed.

Standard 12.1.6. Read, identify, analyze, and apply knowledge of the structure, elements, and meaning of nonfiction or informational material and provide evidence from the text to support their understanding.

Standard 12.2.4. Use a variety of forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 12.2.5. Use self-generated questions, note-taking, summarizing, and outlining to enhance learning.

Lesson Plan 1: Letters from the Plains

Lesson Grade Level:
8th Grade

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will research and analyze original documents of Nebraska history.
2. Students will present information on Nebraska history in a role-playing scenario.

Introduction:

Use a role-playing exercise to have students answer the question, "What did settlers think of living conditions in Nebraska?"



Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of the eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.1.7. Explain post Civil War changes in the United States, and the role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 8.2.5. Demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.4.3. Develop skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing by analyzing historical situations and events.

Standard 8.4.4. Evaluate different assessments of the causes, costs, and benefits of major events in recent American history to develop discussion, debate, and persuasive writing skills.

Standard 8.4.5. Interpret economic and political issues as expressed in various visuals.

Standard 8.4.6. Improve their skills in historical research and geographical analysis.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of the eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.3. Identify and classify different types of text.

Standard 8.1.5. Identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze nonfiction or informational text.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.1.7. Demonstrate the ability to analyze literary works, nonfiction, films, or media.

Standard 8.2.4. Demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.3.2. Use multiple presentation styles for specific audiences and purposes.

Internet Resources:

Nebraska Studies 1850-1874. Homestead Act Signed: The Challenges of the Plains section.

http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0100.html

100 Milestone Documents, National Archives.

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone>

PBS. New Perspectives of the West.

<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/program/>

Prairie Settlement. Nebraska Photographs and Letters. [Butcher photographs and Oblinger letters]
Library of Congress. American Memory Collection.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/nbhihtml/pshome.html>

Graphic Organizers

<http://www.graphic.org/venbas.html>

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/torganiz.htm>

Glencoe. Graphic Organizer

http://teachingtoday.glencoe.com/userfiles/file/graphic_organizer_affective.pdf

Nebraska Dept. of Education Academic Standards.

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/AcademicStandards.htm>

Nebraska Dept. of Education State Social Studies/History Standards.

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/DOCUMENTS/TheHistory-SocialStudiesStandardsPDF.pdf>

Nebraska State Historical Society.

<http://nebraskahistory.org/oversite/research.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska History magazine

<http://nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/index.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska Trailblazer

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/material/trailist.htm>

Rubrics: General Rubric

<http://www.socialstudieshelp.com/rubric.htm>

School Improvement in Maryland. Instruction. Social Studies Rubric.

http://www.md12.org/instruction/curriculum/hsa/critical_thinking/soc_std rubric.html

Starr, Larry. Nebraska State Dept. of Social Studies Education. Nebraska Social Studies Resource.

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/>

The American Memory Collection. All Collections.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amtitle.html>

The American Memory Collection. Library of Congress.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html>

The Library of Congress Learning Page: The Historians' Sources: Analysis of Primary Sources.
"Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources."

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/analyze.html>

The Process:

1. Divide the class into triads to play the roles of an interviewer, Mr. Oblinger, and Mrs. Oblinger.
2. Assign roles for students to play.
3. Instruct students to access the Nebraska Studies Website and do a search for the Oblinger Letters for both "Primary Sources" and "Stories".

4. Direct students to read and analyze the letters. Ask them to use the information they have learned from reading the Oblinger letters as a basis for questions and answers they might use in the interview stage of the lesson.
5. Provide students with *How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interview Skills* located in the Resources section at the end of this document.
6. Create a talk show format with students playing the role of the talk show host and the Oblingers. Instruct the talk show host that s/he will interview the Oblingers concerning their settlement experiences in Nebraska.

Learning Advice:

1. Review with students the teaching tool *How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interview Skills* in the Resources section at the end of this document.
2. You could videotape the interviews conducted by the students and use it to assist you and the students in evaluating the success of the activity.
3. Review talk show programs on the radio and /or television for ideas on how to conduct an interview and what format is used for talk show programs.
4. Review the Nebraska State Historical website at <http://www.nebraskahistory.org/> and familiarize students with the Nebraska History magazine located at:
<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/index.htm>
Teachers/students can order copies of the magazine from the NSHS or check with their local library to see if they have copies.
5. Review the contents of the Nebraska Department of Education Social Science Resource Home Page and review the links with students. <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/>.
6. Have students access the following websites and review with them the contents of each website:
 - Prairie Settlement Nebraska Photographs and Letters. [Butcher photographs and Oblinger letters] <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/nbhihtml/pshome.html>
 - Teaching with Documents. The Homestead Act of 1862. National Archives. Digital Classroom.
http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/homestead_act_1862/homestead_act.html

Conclusion:

Review with students what life was like for settlers living in Nebraska in the mid to latter part of the 19th century.

Evaluation Activity:

Use the Rubric located in the Resources section at the end of this document, or develop your own rubric to meet individual needs.

Lesson Plan 2: Has the Look of Nebraska Changed from 1819 to the 21st Century?

Lesson Grade Level:
8th Grade



Lesson Objective:

Students will analyze and compare maps of early Nebraska.

Introduction:

Show the students a physical map of Nebraska. Ask, "Have maps of Nebraska always looked like this one?" Have students use the information they gain from researching the Nebraska Studies website and other sources to compare and contrast maps of Nebraska from three different time periods.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of the eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.1.7. Explain post Civil War changes in the United States, and the role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 8.2.4. Demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.4.3. Develop skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing by analyzing historical situations and events.

Standard 8.4.4. Evaluate different assessments of the causes, costs, and benefits of major events in recent American history to develop discussion, debate, and persuasive writing skills.

Standard 8.4.5. Interpret economic and political issues as expressed in various visuals.

Standard 8.4.6. Improve their skills in historical research and geographical analysis.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of the eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.3. Identify and classify different types of text.

Standard 8.1.5. Identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze nonfiction or informational text.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.1.7. Demonstrate the ability to analyze literary works, nonfiction, films, or media.

Standard 8.2.2. Write compositions with focus, related ideas, and supporting details.

Standard 8.2.3. Revise and edit descriptive compositions.

Standard 8.2.4. Demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.3.2. Use multiple presentation styles for specific audiences and purposes.

Internet Resources:

Nebraska Studies 1850-1874. Homestead Act Signed: The Challenges of the Plains section.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0100.html

A. E. Sheldon's *History and Stories of Nebraska*

<http://www.older-times.com/oldtimenebraska/n-csnyder/nbstory/contents.html>

Illustrations in A. E. Sheldon's *History and Stories of Nebraska*

<http://www.older-times.com/oldtimenebraska/n-csnyder/nbstory/graphics.html>

County Map of Nebraska in 1856 within A.E. Sheldon's *History and Stories of Nebraska*

<http://www.older-times.com/oldtimenebraska/n-csnyder/nbstory/graphics/conty1856.gif>

Nebraska Department of Roads: Historical Maps

<http://www.nebraskatransportation.org/maps/#antique>

Nebraska Digital Map Library

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~usgenweb/maps/nebraska/>

100 Milestone Documents, National Archives.

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone>

PBS. New Perspectives of the West.

<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/program/>

Prairie Settlement. Nebraska Photographs and Letters. [Butcher photographs and Oblinger letters]

Library of Congress. American Memory Collection.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/nbhihtml/pshome.html>

Graphic Organizers

<http://www.graphic.org/venbas.html>

<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/torganiz.htm>

Glencoe. Graphic Organizer

http://teachingtoday.glencoe.com/userfiles/file/graphic_organizer_affective.pdf

Nebraska Dept. of Education Academic Standards.

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/AcademicStandards.htm>

Nebraska Dept. of Education State Social Studies/History Standards.

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/DOCUMENTS/TheHistory-SocialStudiesStandardsPDF.pdf>

Nebraska State Historical Society.

<http://nebraskahistory.org/oversite/research.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska History magazine

<http://nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/index.htm>

Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska Trailblazer

<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/material/trailist.htm>

Rubrics: General Rubric

<http://www.socialstudieshelp.com/rubric.htm>

School Improvement in Maryland. Instruction. Social Studies Rubric.

http://www.md12.org/instruction/curriculum/hsa/critical_thinking/soc_std rubric.html

Starr, Larry. Nebraska State Dept. of Social Studies Education. Nebraska Social Studies Resource.

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/>

The American Memory Collection. All Collections.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amttitle.html>

The American Memory Collection. Library of Congress.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html>

The Library of Congress Learning Page: The Historians' Sources: Analysis of Primary Sources.

"Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources."

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/analyze.html>

The Process:

1. Have students read the Homestead Act Signed: The Challenges of the Plains section of the 1850-1874 timeline on Nebraska Studies. http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0100.html
2. Instruct students to search the Nebraska Studies website, or other Internet resources, for maps of Nebraska. Have them compare and contrast the maps. Encourage students to review:
 - Long's map on the page, The Challenges of the Plains
http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0101.html
 - the Kansas Nebraska Territories on the page, The Kansas Nebraska Act
http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0502_0100.html
3. Ask students to locate maps of Nebraska from three different time periods, and have them use the National Archives *Map Analysis* Worksheet located in the Resources section at the end of this document as a basis for evaluating each map. This is a good activity to help them learn how to analyze maps.
4. Have students write an essay discussing the reasons for the changes in the boundary lines of the Nebraska map.
5. Alternative activities:
 - a. Have students draw the outline of present day Nebraska on Long's Map.
 - b. Ask students to read Long's account of Nebraska:
 - Why did he consider Nebraska "The Great American Desert"?
 - What were some of the reasons he listed?
 - c. Have students locate today's ten most heavily populated cities on three maps you have selected. Ask them to indicate if they notice a pattern of where these cities are located and why.
 - d. Instruct students to compare and contrast maps of Nebraska you have selected.

Learning Advice:

Have students reproduce various maps of Nebraska on transparencies. This will help students better visualize the changes in the Nebraska landscape over the last two hundred years. Students can access

Conclusion:

Review various maps of Nebraska with students to indicate why there were changes made in the boundary lines.

Evaluation Activity:

Use the Rubric located in the Resources section at the end of this document, or develop your own rubric to meet individual needs.

Lesson Plan 3: Watermelons!

Lesson Grade Level:
6th – 8th Grades



Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will understand the origins and different uses made of watermelons by pioneer children and children today.
2. Students will conduct an Internet search for photographs of watermelons.
3. Students will plan a community activity, contacting a local watermelon vendor for watermelon information or inviting family members to class to participate in a student-led watermelon presentation.

Introduction:

Present the scenario to the students that one of their parents has purchased a watermelon from a roadside vendor. Students become curious about why watermelons are grown in Nebraska and decide to see if the Internet will help them discover the answer to the mystery of how watermelons came to Nebraska.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of the eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.5. Describe growth and change in the United States from 1801-1861.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.2.5. Demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.4.3. Develop skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing by analyzing historical situations and events.

Standard 8.4.6. Improve their skills in historical research and geographical analysis.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of the eighth grade, students will . . .

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.3. Identify and classify different types of text.

Standard 8.1.5. Identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze nonfiction or informational text.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.1.7. Demonstrate the ability to analyze literary works, nonfiction, films, or media.

Standard 8.2.2. Write compositions with focus, related ideas, and supporting details.

Standard 8.2.3. Revise and edit descriptive compositions.

Standard 8.2.4. Demonstrate the use of multiple forms to write for different audiences and purposes.

Standard 8.2.5. Demonstrate the ability to use self-generated questions, note taking, summarizing and outlining while learning.

Standard 8.3.2. Use multiple presentation styles for specific audiences and purposes.

Internet Resources:

- Nebraska Studies 1850-1874. Homestead Act Signed: The Challenges of the Plains section.
http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0100.html
- Cambridge World History of Food
<http://www.cup.org/Books/kiple/cucumbers.htm>
- National Watermelon Promotion Board
<http://watermelon.org>
- The Online Advice and Shoppers Information System: Selecting, Preparing and Using Vegetables and Fruits
<http://produceoasis.com>
- The Food Timeline
<http://www.gti.net/mocolib1/kid/food.html>
- 100 Milestone Documents, National Archives.
<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone>
- PBS. New Perspectives of the West.
<http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/program/>
- Prairie Settlement. Nebraska Photographs and Letters. [Butcher photographs and Oblinger letters]
 Library of Congress. American Memory Collection.
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/award98/nbhihtml/pshome.html>
- Graphic Organizers
<http://www.graphic.org/venbas.html>
<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/score/actbank/torganiz.htm>
- Glencoe. Graphic Organizer
http://teachingtoday.glencoe.com/userfiles/file/graphic_organizer_affective.pdf
- Nebraska Dept. of Education Academic Standards.
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/AcademicStandards.htm>
- Nebraska Dept. of Education State Social Studies/History Standards.
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/DOCUMENTS/TheHistory-SocialStudiesStandardsPDF.pdf>
- Nebraska State Historical Society.
<http://nebraskahistory.org/oversite/research.htm>
- Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska History magazine
<http://nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/index.htm>
- Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska Trailblazer
<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/material/trailist.htm>
- Rubrics: General Rubric
<http://www.socialstudieshelp.com/rubric.htm>
- School Improvement in Maryland. Instruction. Social Studies Rubric.
http://www.mdk12.org/instruction/curriculum/hsa/critical_thinking/soc_stdts_rubric.html
- Starr, Larry. Nebraska State Dept. of Social Studies Education. Nebraska Social Studies Resource.
<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/>
- The American Memory Collection. All Collections.
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amtitle.html>
- The American Memory Collection. Library of Congress.
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html>
- The Library of Congress Learning Page: The Historians' Sources: Analysis of Primary Sources.
 "Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources."
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/analyze.html>

The Process:

1. Have students read the Homestead Act Signed section of the 1850-1874 timeline on Nebraska Studies, paying special attention to the following pages:

Pioneer Children	http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0207.html
What's for Lunch?	http://nebraskastudies.org/0500/stories/0501_0113.html

2. Students should then do a Search by typing in watermelon in the entry box in the upper left corner and then clicking on Primary Source. Students can look at the pictures in detail by clicking on each thumbnail sketch. Tell students to be prepared to discuss what these pictures have in common.
3. Make copies for each student of the National Archives *Photograph Analysis Worksheet* located in the Resources section at the end of this document. Tell the students to use the worksheet as a basis for analyzing one or more of the photographs.
4. Indicate to students that they can conduct further watermelon research by giving them a list of the additional websites located in the Internet Resources on the previous page.
5. Have students list ten new facts they have learned about watermelons.
6. Tell students to write a letter of inquiry to a local watermelon vendor and/or a local grocery store asking questions about watermelon production and availability in Nebraska. Invite the vendor or grocery store owner to class to conduct a discussion about watermelons:
 - pounds produced
 - if they are perishable
 - location of farm or supplier, etc.Invite other students, family, and friends to listen to these presentations.
7. Tell students to be prepared to do an oral classroom presentation utilizing the information they have learned about watermelons. Encourage students to invite their family members to the presentation.
8. Have students write a summary paragraph in which you compare and contrast the values placed on watermelons by their modern culture and by the pioneer culture.

Extended Activity:

Have students use the Venn Diagram located in the Resources section of this document to compare and contrast the values placed on watermelons by their modern culture and by the pioneer culture.

Learning Advice:

- You may wish to conduct a small group discussion on the reasons why watermelons are grown in Nebraska and their relationship to pioneers. A key question to ask is, "Who taught pioneers on the Plains how to grow watermelons?"
- You may want to view watermelon pictures with the students and teach them how to analyze photographs. Point out to the students that other fruits and vegetables appear in some of the photographs, i.e. pumpkins. You could search for additional information on the food timeline source listed in the Internet Resources on the previous page.
- Have students compare how watermelons were used in pioneer times to how watermelons are used now.
- Encourage the students to ask their grandparents for "watermelon memories" to share with the class.

Conclusion:

Students will have learned how watermelons came to Nebraska and why they are important today. They will also have discovered the importance of watermelons to pioneer families. They will have had the opportunity to communicate with a local vendor or grocery store owner about watermelon production and sales.

Evaluation Activity:

1. Student will list ten new facts about watermelons they did not know before.
2. Use the National Archives *Photograph Analysis* Worksheet in the Resources section at the end of this document as a guide for evaluating student understanding.
3. Evaluate the form and construction of student letters to vendors and grocery store owners.
4. Students will write a summary paragraph in which they compare and contrast the values placed on watermelons by their culture and by the pioneer culture.
5. Use the Rubric located in the Resources section at the end of this document, or develop your own rubric to meet individual needs.

1850 – 1874

HOMESTEAD ACT SIGNED: THE CHALLENGE OF THE PLAINS RESOURCES

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How to Conduct an Oral Interview	28
Written Document Analysis Worksheet	31
Venn Diagram	32
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Nebraska Department of Education Academic Standards

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/AcademicStandards.htm>

Nebraska Department of Education Social Studies and History Standards

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/DOCUMENTS/TheHistory-SocialStudiesStandardsPDF.pdf>

National Archives

<http://www.archives.gov/index.html>

Library of Congress Learning Page Lesson Plans

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/index.html>

Six Trait Writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Sentence Fluency, Word Choice, and Conventions.

<http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/concord/teacherlinks/sixtraits/sixtraits.html>

RESOURCES

National Archives Map Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF MAP (check one):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Raised relief map | <input type="checkbox"/> Bird's-eye view |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Topographic map | <input type="checkbox"/> Artifact map |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Political map | <input type="checkbox"/> Satellite photograph/mosaic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contour-line map | <input type="checkbox"/> Pictograph |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural resource map | <input type="checkbox"/> Weather map |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Military map | <input type="checkbox"/> Other () |

2. PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE MAP (check one or more):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compass | <input type="checkbox"/> Name of mapmaker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten | <input type="checkbox"/> Title |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Date | <input type="checkbox"/> Legend (key) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notations | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scale | |

3. DATE OF MAP:

4. CREATOR OF MAP:

5. WHERE WAS THE MAP
PRODUCED?

--	--	--

6. MAP INFORMATION

A. List three things in this map that you think are important:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Why do you think this map was drawn?

C. What evidence in the map suggests why it was drawn?

D. What information does the map add to the textbook's account of this event?

E. Does the information in this map support or contradict information that you have read about this event? Explain.

Write a question to the mapmaker that is left unanswered by this map.

RESOURCES

National Archives Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE

OBJECTS

ACTIVITIES

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

B. Where could you find answers to them?

RESOURCES

How to Conduct and Utilize Oral Interviews

By Michael Young, former History Department Chair, Omaha Burke High School

Oral history is the process of collecting an individual's spoken memories of his or her life, of the people he or she has known, and the events which he or she witnessed or participated in. Oral history is another primary source technique historians use to help them interpret the past. Oral histories can be used to supplement written records, complement secondary sources (what has been written by historical scholars), and to provide information that would exist in no other form.

But, using oral histories as a source can also pose problems. Interviewees are human. They can forget things. Their memories can play tricks on them. You have to be very careful as a historian when you use oral history as a source.

Teachers need to explore activities that help students strengthen their abilities to develop good interviewing techniques. The teacher might conduct a personal interview with a person representative of whomever the students will be interviewing (an elderly person, etc.) in the classroom.

Students could then practice interviewing one another in the classroom as part of a paired activity. The practice interviews can help students develop awareness of key techniques that will help them when they conduct an actual interview. The teacher and/or students can offer suggestions on what the characteristics of a good interview are. The teacher may also want to review passages from actual transcripts of interviews to illustrate key attributes of successful interviews.

Caution students that oral history (conducting interviews) is not a substitute for basic research. Students should research printed and electronic resources for background information and historical accounts of the issue, event, or personality being studied.

Consider the following suggestions on how to how to conduct and utilize oral interviews.

Preparing:

1. **Decide which individuals would be most appropriate to interview.** There are many ways to find someone to interview. Ask your family members. Contact veterans' organizations, church groups, civic organizations etc. Put a request in your local newspaper. It's a good idea when you find someone to have them complete a brief preliminary questionnaire to give you some background on the person.
2. **Schedule the interview as soon as possible and by telephone if possible.** Confirm the meeting time and date a day before conducting the Interview.
3. **Learn as much as possible about the topic of your interview before conducting the interview.** Contact the local media reporters for suggestions on related topics, sources, etc. Carefully read the person's completed questionnaire. Make up a list of questions from things on the questionnaire. Do enough preliminary research so that you are able to ask intelligent questions. Prepare a brief outline of questions you will be asking.
4. **Make sure you are familiar with your recorder.** Make sure any equipment you will be using is working properly (camcorder, tape recorder, etc.) and secure the interviewee's permission to record the interview. Practice to make sure you can operate. Have an extra tape in case the interview is longer, or in case the tape would break.
5. **When selecting the location for the interview, ask the interviewee where he or she would be most comfortable.** Choose a place that is quiet, where there won't be a lot of distractions.

RESOURCES

Oral Interviews (continued)

Conducting the Interview:

1. **Dress appropriately and create a good impression.**
2. **When you get to the interview, chat briefly with your interviewee to get him or her feeling relaxed and comfortable with you.** Explain, again, to the interviewee your purpose for the interview. Do not begin the interview abruptly. Introduce yourself, make the interviewee as comfortable as possible, and review the interview process you will be using. Be sure to let them know how much you appreciate getting the chance to talk with them.
3. **During the interview, keep things moving.** Express an interest in what the interviewee is saying and listen carefully. Make a conscious effort to be unbiased and try not to influence how the interviewee will answer your questions. Have your questions ready, but do not rely totally on them. By listening carefully to what the person is speaking about, you can come up with additional questions. Avoid too many open-ended questions that require long complicated answers.
4. **Use a tape recorder or camcorder to more accurately record the interview.** In addition, take notes and accurately record the correct spelling of name, places, etc. Silence can be productive. Do not rush the narrator to respond.
5. **You may need to have the interviewee sign a legal release form** enabling you to use any information gained through the interview for research purposes.
6. **Know the physical limitations of the person you are interviewing.** If the person has a hard time hearing, make sure you speak up loudly and clearly. Don't let an interview drag on endlessly. If you still have areas to cover, you might want to take a short break.
7. Have a good closing question that helps the interviewee summarize his/her statements and helps bring closure to the interview.
8. **Be sensitive.** Indicate to the interviewee that his/her answers will be reported anonymously if requested. Some subjects may provoke an emotional response. If a person starts to cry, you might turn off the tape recorder for a few minutes.
9. **After the interview,** send a thank you note to the person being interviewed within one week of the interview. If you transcribe the tape, send your interviewee a copy of the tape, or if you don't transcribe the entire tape, send them the paper you wrote.

Examining:

1. Prepare a written summary, note cards, and/or outline of the key points discussed in the interview that are relevant to your topic.
2. What perspective did the interviewee give you about the topic?
3. What did the interviewee tell you about the lifestyles, culture, political atmosphere, economic issues, education, etc. of the time period being studied?
4. Is the interviewee a dependable source of information? Did the interviewee have a difficult time remembering dates, places, and events?
5. Compare/Contrast the information given to you by the interviewee with the factual information you have learned from researching other primary and secondary sources.

RESOURCES

Oral Interviews (continued)

Determine Its Usefulness:

1. What information from this interviewee is useful for the development of your topic?
2. What does this information contribute to the development or analysis of your topic? How can incorrect information or biased viewpoints be used?
3. How can the information gained from your interview be most effectively used in your research project?
4. Oral history can be used to validate other data, to collect opinions reflecting different points of view, to acquire background or perspective, and to collect "up-to-date" data.
5. In summary, oral history can also demonstrate cause and effect, objectivity versus subjectivity, reality versus abstraction, fact versus opinion, and attitudes then and now.

Bibliography:

American Memory. Life History Manuscripts from the Folklore Project. WPA. Federal Writer's Project 1936-1940. Summary of Resources. U.S. History Content.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/wpaintro/wpahome.html>

Lanman, Barry A. and Mehaffy, George L. *Oral History in the Secondary Classroom.* Oral History Association, 1988. "Pointers How to Prepare for and Use an Oral Interview". Indiana History Day. Indiana: Historical Bureau, 1989. Located in Magazine of History. Summer 1990. p. 54.

RESOURCES

National Archives Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Map | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Telegram | <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional record |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patent | <input type="checkbox"/> Press release | <input type="checkbox"/> Census report |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum | <input type="checkbox"/> Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting letterhead | <input type="checkbox"/> Notations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handwritten | <input type="checkbox"/> "RECEIVED" stamp |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Typed | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seals | |

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT: _____

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT: _____

POSITION (TITLE): _____

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN?

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Why do you think this document was written?

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

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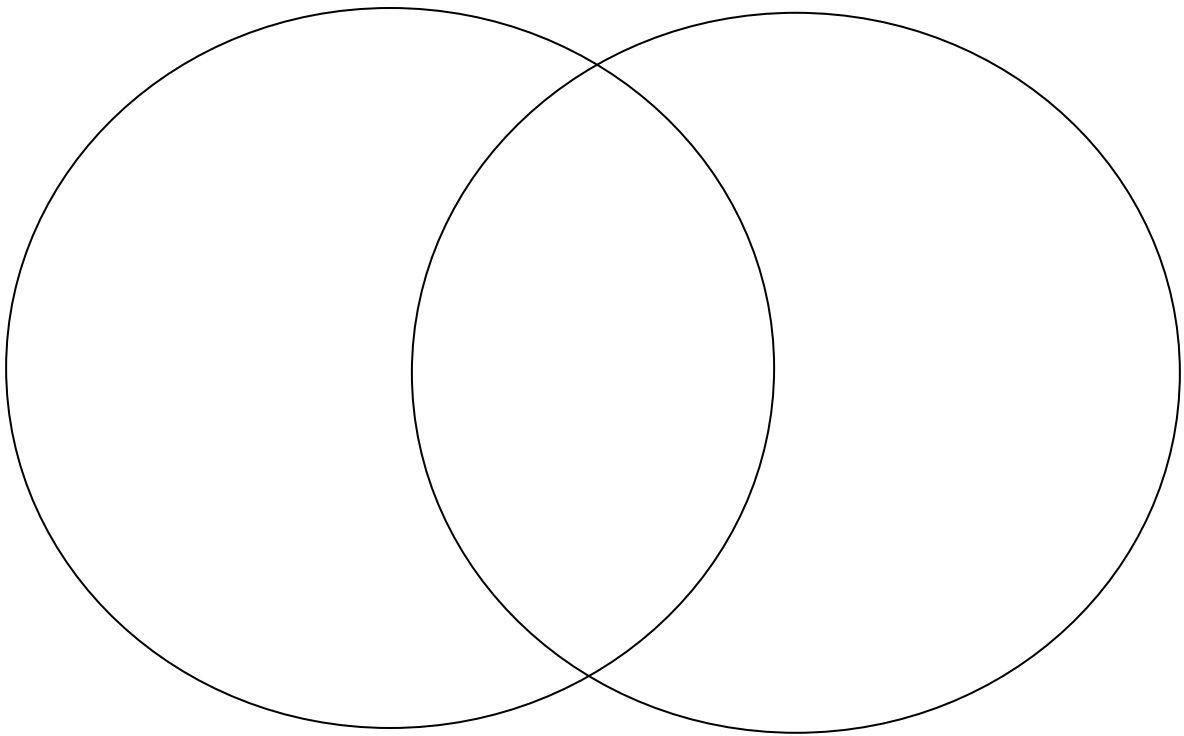
RESOURCES

Venn Diagram

This is a Venn Diagram. You can use it to write down factors that are unique to one item in the left hand sector. Then plot those factors that are unique to another item in the right hand sector. Then look for factors that are present in both and plot those in the middle.

The Venn Diagram is made up of two or more overlapping circles. It is often used in mathematics to show relationships between sets. In language arts instruction, Venn Diagrams are useful for examining similarities and differences in characters, stories, poems, etc.

It is frequently used as a prewriting activity to enable students to organize thoughts or textual quotations prior to writing a compare/contrast essay. This activity enables students to organize similarities and differences visually.



RESOURCES

Rubric for Lesson 1: Letters from the Plains

Name _____

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Oral Discussion			
Analyzing Documents			
Role-playing and Interviewing Skills			

RESOURCES

Rubric for Lesson 2: Has the Look of Nebraska Changed from 1819 to the 21st Century?

Name _____

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Discussion of the similarities and differences of the Nebraska maps			
Map Analysis Worksheet			
Map Essay			

RESOURCES

Rubric for Lesson 3: Watermelons!

Name _____

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
List ten new facts			
Complete Photo Analysis Worksheet			
Student Letter			
Summary Paragraph			
Oral Presentation			