



Westward Expansion

Overview

In this activity, students will learn about the impact of the Oregon Trail and the importance of the covered wagon during the pioneers' trip. They will explore a variety of supplies families packed for the journey west to determine needs versus wants.

Objectives

Upon completion of the activity, students will understand how pioneers prepared to migrate west in order to survive the long journey along the Oregon Trail.

Standards

C3 Framework

D2.Geo.7.3-5 Explain how cultural and environmental characteristics affect the distribution and movement of people, goods, and ideas.

D2.Geo.8.3-5 Explain how human settlements and movements relate to the locations and use of various natural resources.

D2.Geo.7.6-8 Explain how changes in transportation and communication technology influence the spatial connections among human settlements and affect the diffusion of ideas and cultural practices.

D2.Geo.8.6-8 Analyze how relationships between humans and environments extend or contract spatial patterns of settlement and movement.

Duration of Activity

15-20 minutes

National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

Early Grades

People, Places, and Environments

- Learners will understand cultural patterns and their interactions within and across places, such as migration and settlement, changes in customs or ideas, and in the ways people make a living.

Middle Grades

People, Places, and Environments

- Learners will understand patterns of demographic and political change, and cultural diffusion in the past and present (e.g., changing national boundaries, migration, and settlement, and the diffusion of and changes in customs and ideas)

CCSS ELA

Reading Standards for Informational Text

RI.6.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

RI.7.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

RI.8.6 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.

Materials

- Smartphone or tablet with the McGraw Hill AR Application installed
- Flat, non-patterned surface



Launch

Scanning The device needs a variety of perspective information to understand the space.

- Slowly move the camera throughout the space.
- View surfaces at an angle.
- Aim the camera at multiple points throughout the space.

Exploration

- Move the phone closer in to increase the size of the objects in AR.
- Move the phone around the objects to view them from different angles.

Environment Ideal spaces for AR should feature the following

- a flat open space;
- a surface with non-patterned visual texture and contrast;
- a matte or minimally reflective surface;
- a static environment, where nothing in the space is in motion; and
- a well-lit space, where detail is visible in the darkest and brightest parts of the space.

During the Activity

Teacher Tips

- Make sure students understand that they can rotate the figures during the Explore, so they can view them at different angles.
- Point out the hotspots on the wagon. They are the wagon and packing supplies.
- Discuss how pioneers were leaving their homes to migrate west to an unknown land. They could only bring what would fit in the wagon. This meant making difficult decisions about what to take and what to leave behind.

Evaluate

Students will be presented with five randomly selected exercises from the following set.

1. During the mid-1800 settlers in the United States were rapidly moving _____.
A. east
B. north
C. south
D. west
(D.) west
2. The Oregon Trail changed depending on the weather and different land features.
A. True
B. False
(A.) True



3. About how long would it take most pioneers to travel the whole way on the Oregon Trail?
- A. Over a year
 - B. About a month
 - C. Close to half a year
 - D. Under three months
- (C.) Close to half a year**
4. Pioneers faced rough terrain, _____, and accidents on the Oregon Trail.
- A. too much food
 - B. diseases
 - C. short distances
 - D. pirate ships
- (B.) diseases**
5. When pioneers arrived at their destination they found
- A. land that was very dry and had very few trees.
 - B. land that was very mountainous.
 - C. land that was dense forest.
 - D. land that was a wetland.
- (A.) land that was very dry and had very few trees**
6. What was the most important thing pioneers needed to survive the Oregon Trail journey?
- A. Shovel
 - B. Covered wagon
 - C. Ship
 - D. Guidebook
- (B.) Covered wagon**
7. Since each wagon could only carry about _____ pounds, travelers had to be careful not to overload their wagons.
- A. 100
 - B. 1,000
 - C. 200
 - D. 2,000
- (D.) 2,000**
8. The author's intended audience is people interested in
- A. traveling on a prairie expedition.
 - B. making clothing.
 - C. repairing boots and shoes
 - D. riding horses
- (A.) traveling on a prairie expedition.**
9. What is the author's purpose?
- A. To entertain
 - B. To instruct
 - C. To persuade
 - D. To describe
- (B.) To instruct**
10. Which statement reflects the author's point of view about prairie traveling?
- A. Only cotton will keep travelers dry and protected from the sun.
 - B. Travelers should dress however they choose.
 - C. It is better to travel in the spring or summer.
 - D. Dressing appropriately is important to health and comfort.
- (D.) Dressing appropriately is important to health and comfort.**



After the Activity

Extension

These are more challenging exercises to extend the activity.

1. Imagine your family decided to emigrate or leave your home for another part of the country. What would be the most important things you would take and why? What would you leave behind and why?

(Answers will vary, but students should mention what they would take with them and why. Sample answer: The first thing I would take is my grandmother's favorite cookbook, so I would be able to make all our favorite family meals no matter where we lived. I would also take my bike so I can get out and explore my new neighborhood when we get to our new home.)

2. The term *pioneer* does not refer just to those who settle in a new place. A pioneer is anyone who develops or is the first to use or apply something. Give an example of a modern-day pioneer in technology, science, business, education, or politics. How have their efforts led to major achievements in our world today? In what ways can today's pioneers prepare for their journeys?

(Answers will vary, but students should name a modern-day pioneer and their important achievements. Sample answer: Malala Yousafzai is an example of a modern-day pioneer. Malala became the youngest person to win a Nobel Peace Prize. She is an activist for human rights, education, and women. Her efforts have helped women and children earn the right to receive an education. Today's pioneers, like Malala, can prepare for their journeys by not giving up when things get challenging and standing up for what they believe in.)



Enrichment

Enrichment content beyond what is learned in the activity.

Living off the Land Pamphlet

Pioneers who traveled on the Oregon Trail supplemented their diet with plants found along the way both for themselves and their livestock. Learning to identify plants was an important part of surviving on the trail.

Investigate which plants found along the trail were used for cooking or eating. Which ones were used for medicinal purposes? Which plants did one need to stay away from? Then, create an informational guide or pamphlet that could have been used to help pioneers as they traveled west. Be sure to tell where the plant is located on the trail, a description of what it looks like, if it's edible or poisonous, what it can be used for, and an image.