



Take Me to the River: The Mojave Indians and the Colorado River

By reading an article from the Heard Museum, students learn about the effects of the Hoover Dam on the Mojave Indians.

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Grade Level	4-5
Duration	1 class period

National Geography Standards

ELEMENT FIVE: ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY

14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

Arizona Geography Strand

Grade 4 Strand 4 Geography Concept 5 Environment and Society

PO 1 Describe human dependence on the physical environment and natural resources to satisfy basic needs.

PO 3 Describe the impact of human modifications on the physical environment and ecosystems (e.g., dams, mining, air conditioning, irrigation, agricultural).

Concept 6 Geographic Applications

PO 1 Describe the impact of geographic features (rivers, mountains, resources, deserts, climate) on migration and the location of human activities (e.g., exploration, mining, transportation routes, settlement patterns).

Grade 5 Strand 4 Geography Concept 5 Environment and Society

PO 1 Describe the ways European colonists and Native Americans viewed, adapted, and used the

Other Arizona Standards

Grade 4 Strand 1 American History Concept 1: Research Skills for History

PO 4. Describe how archaeological research adds to our understanding of the past.

Concept 2: Early Civilizations

PO 1. Describe the legacy and cultures of prehistoric people in the Americas: characteristics of hunter-gatherer societies development of agriculture
PO 3. Identify other groups (e.g., Patayan, Sinagua, Salado) residing in the Southwest during this period.

Concept 7: Emergence of the Modern United States

PO 1. Describe the economic development of Arizona:

- a. mining
- b. ranching
- c. farming and dams

PO 5. Recognize the formation of Native American communities and reservations in Arizona (e.g., Gila River Reservation, Yaquis, Colorado River Indian Tribes).

Concept 10: Contemporary United States

PO 2. Discuss the connections between current and historical events and issues from content studied in Strand 1 using information from class discussions and various resources (e.g., newspapers, magazines, television, Internet, books, maps).

Grade 5 Strand 1 American History Concept 1: Research Skills for History

PO 5. Describe how archaeological research

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environment.
Concept 6 Geographic Applications
PO 1 Describe how geographic features influenced events in the past

adds to our understanding of the past.
Concept 3: Exploration and Colonization
PO 1. Recognize that Native American tribes resided throughout North America before the period of European exploration and colonization.
Concept 5: Westward Expansion
PO 2. Describe the different perspectives (e.g., Native Americans, settlers, Spanish, the U.S. government, prospectors) of Manifest Destiny.
Concept 10: Contemporary United States
PO 2. Discuss the connections between current and historical events and issues from content studied in Strand 1 using information from class discussions and various resources (e.g., newspapers, magazines, television, Internet, books, maps).

ELA Common Core Standards

Reading

Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

4.RI.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

4.RI.3 Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

5.RI.1 Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

5.RI.3 Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Craft and Structure

4.RI.5 Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

Overview

The descendants of the Ahamacave or Mojave Indians have lived along the Colorado River for thousands of years. The natural environment of the Colorado River changed with the completion of Hoover Dam in 1931. Students will read an article from the Heard Museum, then compare and contrast living conditions before and after the dam.

Purpose

Students will learn how the Mojave Indians live along the Colorado River and see how the

building of a dam can impact one's culture and way of life.

Materials

- Information sheet, "The Ahamacave"
- Map of AZ Indian Reservations
- Transparencies of Important Dams in Arizona and Arizona's Indian Reservation maps
- Photographs of the Colorado River Delta at different scales

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- Blue marker, colored pencil, or crayon
- Picture of Hoover Dam
- Ahamacave Worksheet
- Highlighter

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- discuss Arizona river environments and the effect building a dam has on people.
- discuss the impact of dietary changes on people.
- write complete sentences.
- distinguish cause and effect.
- distinguish fact and opinion.

Procedures

1. Ask if anyone knows what a dam is and what it does. Mention that there are many in Arizona, but perhaps the most famous one is Hoover Dam. Show the transparency of the Important Dams in Arizona map.
2. Show a picture of Hoover Dam.
3. Have students locate the Colorado River on a wall map, if available, and then on the Arizona Indian Reservations map. On an overhead of this map, have students trace the river from the mountains to the Sea of Cortes.
4. Ask students what impact a dam might have on people living along that river. Distribute the article to each student. Read it aloud, emphasizing

important details. Encourage children to use highlighters.

5. Discuss the article, then have students complete a T chart noting the lifestyles of the Mohave people before and after the building of Hoover Dam.

6. Distribute assessment worksheets to the students.

Assessment

Assessment Worksheet: Items 1-7 assess geography knowledge. Sentences 1-7 can be graded on the 6 Trait Writing Rubric for Sentence Fluency. Items 8, 9, and 10 assess reading standards in an objective test format. Eighty percent or higher will be considered mastery.

Extensions

The Heard Museum provides traveling suitcases to schools on various Native Americans of Arizona. For a more in-depth unit on the Ahamacave or Mojave, complete with artifacts and information on present day Ahamacave, a suitcase may be checked out.

Sources

Hoover Dam website
<http://www.usbr.gov/lc/hooverdam/>

Project Wet <http://cals.arizona.edu/arizonawet/>

The Heard Museum
<http://www.heard.org/education/index.html>