

Mail Order Brides and Bridges

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Grade Level 5
Duration 2-3 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY
Element 2: Places and Regions
 4. The physical and human characteristics of places.
Element 4: Human Systems
 9. The characteristics, distribution, and migration of human populations on Earth's surface.
Element 6: The Uses of Geography
 17. How to apply geography to interpret the past
 18. How to apply geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

AZ Standards

ELA
Reading
Key Ideas and Details
 5.RL.3 Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text.
Writing
Research to Build and Present Knowledge
 5.W.7 Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic and to answer a specific question.
SCIENCE
Physical Science
 5.P3U2.5 Define problems and design solutions pertaining to force and motion.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY
Human Population and Movement
 5.G3.1 Use key historical events with geographic tools to analyze the causes and effects of environmental and technological events on human settlements and migration.
HISTORY
Conflict and Cooperation
 5.H2.1 Use primary and secondary sources to summarize the causes and effects of social movements throughout the historical timeframe.

SIOP Elements		
Preparation Adapting content Linking to background Linking to past learning Strategies used	Scaffolding Modeling Guided practice Independent practice Comprehensible input	Grouping Option Whole class Small groups Partners Independent
Integrating Processes Reading Writing Speaking Listening	Application Hands on Meaningful Linked to objectives Promotes engagement	Assessment Individual Group Written Oral

Arizona English Language Proficiency Standards

Basic
Speaking and Writing
Standard 4: The student will construct grade appropriate oral and written claims and support them with reasoning and evidence.
 B-2: Supply a reason that supports the opinion and is based on some textual evidence.
 B-3: Use grade-appropriate words and phrases that are basic to a particular topic.
Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing

Standard 7: The student will conduct research and evaluate and communicate findings to answer questions or solve problems.

B-1: Gather information from multiple provided resources to answer a question.

Overview

Using our current forms of travel, students often do not understand the difficulties of building these transportation systems especially considering how landscape plays such an important role in any sort of land transportation.

Purpose

In this lesson, students will read Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan to learn about the American landscape and the motivation behind the migration of people who moved west by train in the 1800's.

Key Vocabulary

train: a connected line of railroad cars

bridge: a structure carrying a pathway or roadway over a depression

canyon: a deep valley with steep rock sides

region: a part of the country that is different or separate from other parts in some way

advertisement: a public notice especially published in a newspaper or magazine

bonnet: a hat that has strings that tie under the chin

mail-order: an order for goods that is received and filled by mail

Materials

- Sarah, Plain and Tall by Patricia MacLachlan
- Research Recording Worksheet
- Research Sites and Information
- Train Timeline and Sample Answer Key
- Team Bridge Building Challenge worksheet
- Grading Rubric for Team Bridge Building Challenge
- Vocabulary Cards and Vocabulary Test
- Notebooks or journals
- Chart paper and sentence strips
- Table top maps of Maine and Kansas
- 2 books for the edges of a canyon (or any other object that stands alone)
- Tape, string, or other materials for attaching bridges together
- Small objects to represent trains

Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Compare and contrast two geographic regions.
2. Discuss problems of movement by trains in the 1800's.
3. Work as a group to engineer "bridges" to span "canyons."

Procedures

*Prior to this lesson it is strongly suggested to complete the lesson: **Pushed and Pulled: Examining Factors that Lead to Migration** by Nicole von Prisk*
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/node/112>

SESSION ONE and TWO:

Engage:

- a. Before reading the first 3 chapters of Sarah, Plain and Tall, have students or classroom volunteer put together the tabletop maps of Maine <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/maps/maine-tabletop-map/> and Kansas. <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/maps/kansas-tabletop-map/>
- b. Write on the board these sentence frames:
I see _____ on the map of Maine.
I see _____ on the map of Kansas. Have students copy the sentences frames on notebook paper or in their journals. (**Scaffolding: Comprehensible Input**)
- c. Have students rotate around the maps and jot down differences and similarities that they see as they walk around the maps. Create a chart of similarities and differences between the 2 regions. (**Preparation: Linking to Background**)
- d. As a whole class, read Chapters 1-3 of Sarah, Plain and Tall. Enter new vocabulary words on a word wall by asking students what vocabulary words were new to them in their reading. Use the Vocabulary Cards provided for the words mentioned. For additional words mentioned, have small groups define the vocabulary words and add the definitions to the wall. (**Preparation: Adapting Content**)

Elaborate:

- e. After reading the first 3 chapters, distribute the Research Sites and Information and Research

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Recording Worksheet to students. Instruct students to research the timeline of trains and record key events with a focus on problems and difficulties of travel during the 1800's. They will record the information on the Research Recording Worksheet. In addition, they need to make a guess of when Sarah came to Kansas. Model by going to the first website and having the class find important information to write down. Model how to write down any dates and key events. **(Scaffolding: Independent Practice, Guided Practice)**

- f. Allow students to work in groups and decide on the five most important dates/events that they found.
- g. Distribute the Train Timeline template. Have students complete their timelines as homework, if necessary.

SESSION THREE:

Explain:

- h. Begin this session by rereading the letter from Sarah and introducing the term "mail-order bride."
- i. Review "push" (why people leave a place) and "pull" (why people chose a new place to settle). Ask the class for the push and pull reasons for Sarah to move. Then discuss her travels by train from America's Northwest to the Midwest.
- j. Go back to the tabletop maps of Maine and Kansas. How is the geography of these two states the same and different?
- k. Have students complete the following sentence starters: "Sarah left Maine because _____." She traveled to Kansas, because _____."

(Scaffolding: Comprehensible Input, Application: Promotes engagement)

Explore:

- l. Referring to the discussion about how Sarah traveled by train to Kansas, ask students if she had to cross any bridges? One obvious bridge would be one over the Mississippi River. Play The U.S. Railroad History map from YouTube (2.45 min).
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a8lX5A2q-Eo>
- m. Distribute the Team Bridge Building Challenge. Explain that each group will be creating a bridge that would span a canyon (space between 2 books) and yet hold the weight of a train (small object). Divide into groups. Explain each part of the worksheet.
- n. Give time for groups to collaborate and create a bridge using materials provided or their own materials to illustrate the difficulty and planning

required to provide train transportation.
(Grouping: Small groups)

Evaluate:

- o. Groups share their findings and results with the class. **(Integrating Process: Listening)**
- p. At the conclusion of the book, have students compare the landscapes of Maine and Kansas.

Assessment

Social Science

The timeline can be assessed for correctness and completeness. Mastery would be considered 4-5 dates accurately added to the timeline.

ELA and Social Science

Sentence starters on push and pull factors for Sarah can be graded for accuracy. Mastery will be considered 100%.

Written paragraphs comparing the landscape of Kansas to Maine can be graded for accuracy. Five or more correct comparisons will be considered mastery.

Vocabulary can be assessed using the Vocabulary Test. Mastery will be 80% or higher.

Science

The bridge building project can be assess with the Grading Rubric for Team Bridge Building Challenge. Mastery will be considered 80% or higher of the points possible.

Extensions

Students could create timelines on other forms of transportation.

Students could map the railroad tracks from Maine to Kansas or other destinations on a US map.

Students can look at orphan trains through 2 lesson plans on the Alliance website:

Orphan Trains: Journeys of Salvation and Sorrow

<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/orphantrainees>

All Aboard! The Orphan Trains

<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/orphan>

Sources

MacLachlan, Patricia. Sarah, Plain and Tall. Scholastic Inc, 1996.

Durbin, William. Until the Last Spike. Scholastic, Inc, 2013.

US table top maps from National Geographic
https://www.nationalgeographic.org/topics/state-mapmaker-kits/?q=&page=1&per_page=25