



The Birth of a Rocky Mountain City and Railroad: Georgetown and the Loop Railroad

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Grade Level 5
Duration 1 class period

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 population on earth's surface.

12. The processes, patterns, and functions of human settlement

Element 5: Environment And Society

14. How human actions modify the physical environment.

15. How physical systems affect human systems.

16. The changes that occur in the meaning, use, distribution, and importance of resources

Element 6: The Uses of Geography

17. How to apply geography to interpret the past

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

Reading Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

5.RI.2 Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

Writing

Production and

Distribution of Writing

5.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Examining human population and movement helps individuals understand past, present, and future conditions on Earth's surface.

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

Cycles of conflict and cooperation have shaped relations among people, places, and environments.

5.H2.1 Use primary and secondary sources to summarize the causes and effects of conflicts, resolutions, and social movements throughout the historical timeframe.

Key conflicts can include but are not limited to cultural conflicts, political conflicts, economic conflicts, military conflicts, and conflicts related to resource use and availability

Patterns of social and political interactions have shaped people, places, and events throughout history and continue to shape the modern world.

5.H4.1 Use primary and secondary sources to describe how diverse groups (racial, ethnic, class, gender, regional, immigrant/migrant) shaped the United States' multicultural society within the historical timeframe.

Overview

This lesson demonstrates how and why a city evolves. It is the story of the historic city of Georgetown, located on the western slopes of the Rocky Mountains.

Purpose

In this lesson, students will learn how humans use, adapt to and modify natural elements that define regions in the United States.

The Birth of a Rocky Mountain City and Railroad

Materials

- Letter writing materials
- Story: *The Birth of a City and Railroad in the Rocky Mountains*
- Letter prompt and checklist
- Building of a Railroad PowerPoint (optional)
- Map of Georgetown Loop

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- relate how and why the city of Georgetown and the Georgetown Loop Railroad were developed.
- write a friendly letter.

Procedures

1. Brainstorm reasons why towns/cities grew in the places that they did. Bisbee, Arizona is an excellent example of a town that was built because of rise and fall of the copper mining industry. Morenci and Jerome are other examples. Today's lesson looks at the rise and fall of Georgetown in the heart of the Rocky Mountains.
2. Discuss the physical features of the Rocky Mountains. Locate the Rockies on a map.
3. Then locate Georgetown, Colorado on a map.
4. Discuss the altitude and weather conditions including the short spring and summer seasons.
5. Read the Story "Birth of a Rocky Mountain City and Railroad." If time, show the PowerPoint on Building a Railroad so the students better understand the huge task of connecting the U.S. with trains.
6. In small groups, discuss what life must have been like for an early prospector, and list the events that took place in the development of the city and railroad.

7. Have each student write a letter home from the perspective of a silver miner explaining what it has been like to live in Georgetown from the time of the silver boom to its bust. The students will write from the following prompt: "You are a prospector in the silver mines writing a friendly letter home to your parents describing what it has been like to live in Georgetown during the silver boom to its bust."

Assessment

Geography, History, and ELA

The friendly letter can be used to assess knowledge of geography and history and writing skills. Mastery will be considered 4 out of 6 in area of Ideas and Content using the Six-Trait Writing Rubric.

NOTE: The checklist supplied with this lesson can serve as an assessment tool as well.

Extensions

Build a model of the Loop Railroad out of toothpicks and marshmallows.

Locate other mining towns in the Rockies and research one of them.

Research an Arizona mining town and compare it to Georgetown.

Sources

Georgetown, Colorado History
<http://www.georgetowncolorado.com>