Mormon Pioneers in Arizona

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Grade Level
High School

Duration
1 class period

Overview
Although students in Arizona have heard of Mormons—the commonly used term for members of the Church of the Latter-Day Saints, many are unclear as to how and when Mormons settled in Arizona. Most high school students gain a basic understanding of the Mormons as pioneers who settled in Salt Lake City as part of Westward Expansion. But why are Mormons in Arizona?

Purpose

Students will gain a better understanding of places and regions, as well as human systems, by studying the geographic, cultural, and economic characteristics of Mormon settlements in Arizona.

Materials
- Mormon Pioneer Pre-Test and Answer Key
- Mormon Pioneers in Arizona PowerPoint
- Arizona’s Topography and Rivers map
  https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/LessonFiles/Schmidt/108/supplemental/AZTOPO.PDF
Objectives
The student will be able to:

1. Describe the characteristics of early Mormon pioneer settlements.
2. Evaluate cities in Arizona to determine if they were settled by Mormons.
3. Analyze migration patterns of Mormon pioneers into Arizona.

Procedures
Prerequisite Skills: Students should have had prior instruction in pioneer groups when discussing Westward Expansion.

Prior Preparation: Teacher might want to print off the Arizona’s Topography and Rivers, Important River, Streams and Washes, and Mormon Exploration maps and staple them in a file folder—one set for each partner group. These can be used over and over again. This will also clarify which map to color and label (the loose one— the Arizona’s Topography and Rivers map)

SESSION ONE

1. Begin the lesson by asking students a series of questions such as: What do you know about the Mormons? What cities in the Phoenix area are known as being heavily populated by Mormons? What percentage of the population in Arizona are Mormons?
2. Pass out Pre-test on Mormon Pioneers. Give 1-2 minutes for students to finish the quiz.
3. Project the Mormon Pioneer PowerPoint. Encourage students to take notes regarding the characteristics of Mormon settlements. IMPORTANT: Stop at the Student Task Slide 18. The next slide has a link to the Google Maps site that has the actual Arizona pioneer sites labeled. This will be used at the end of the lesson.
4. After explaining Slide 18, have students find a partner and pass out copies of the Arizona maps and colored pencils.
5. Brainstorm what would be a good location for a settlement (availability of water, terrain of the land, trade possibilities, transportation potential, etc.)?
6. Ask partnerships to color and label 4 areas on the Arizona’s Topography and Rivers map that they think would be good locations for Mormon settlements. Have each partnership write a paragraph justifying their locations and providing latitude and longitude for their locations. (7) Collect student maps and paragraphs. Ask students to share their locations with the whole class.
8. Closure: Show map on Google Maps of the actual locations of early pioneer settlements and see if any student locations match.

Assessment
ELA and Social Science
The paragraph generated by the student can be graded according to the Partner Paragraph Scoring Guide. Mastery will be considered a score of 20 points or higher.

Extensions
Provide students with a list of cities from the Mormon Settlement Place Names handout. Have the students use Google Maps to locate a city on the list and then zoom in to examine the city layout and determine if there is a grid pattern that follows traditional Mormon city planning.

Students could also create their own Google Map labeling the cities they find in Google Docs and share it with the class.

Sources


http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormon_Corridor

Image: LDS as Percentage of State Population. 
http://www.adherents.com/largecom/com_lds.html

Image: John Lassen, President of Salt River Project. 
http://www.cooganphoto.com/john-lassen.html