



Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell, the One-Armed Explorer

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Grade Level 3
Duration 2 class periods

National Standards

GEOGRAPHY

Element 1: The World in Spatial Term

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, geospatial technologies, and spatial thinking to understand and communicate information

Element 2: Places and Regions

6. How culture and experience influence people's perceptions of places and regions.

AZ Standards

ELA

Reading

Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

3.RI.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

3.RI.7 Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. a. Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally. b. Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations. c. Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order. d. Provide a sense of closure.

Writing

Text Types and Purposes

3.W.4 With guidance and support from adults, produce writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task and purpose.

Arizona Social Science Standards

GEOGRAPHY

The use of geographic representations and tools helps individuals understand their world.

3.G1.1 Use and construct maps and graphs to represent changes in Arizona over time.

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

3.G3.1 Describe the movement of people in and out of Arizona over time.

HISTORY

The development of civilizations, societies, cultures, and innovations have influenced history and continue to impact the modern world.

3.H1.1 Utilize a variety of sources to construct a historical narrative exploring Arizona's cultures, civilizations, and innovations.



Overview

John Wesley Powell led an adventurous life. His journey took him from New York, all over the Midwest, to the Colorado Plateau and down the Colorado River. Many said he couldn't do it but he was a man who set goals and worked towards them until he achieved them.

Purpose

This lesson will study and map the life of an explorer. Students will use graphic organizers to understand and record the journey detailed in the biography of John Wesley Powell and learn how literature can inform and inspire its readers.

Materials

- The book, *Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell*, by Deborah Kogan Ray.
- United States 1841-1869 map (labeled) https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/LessonFiles/Guerrero/89/supplemental/CivilWar_1869_Labeled.pdf
- United States 1841-1869 map (unlabeled) https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/LessonFiles/Guerrero/89/supplemental/CivilWar_1869.pdf
- Projection device
- 1869 Expedition of John Wesley Powell map https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/Powell_1869.pdf
- Important Rivers, Streams and Washes of Arizona map <https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AZ-RIV-K.PDF>
- Journal paper
- A Timeline of John Wesley Powell's Journey in 1869 worksheet and Answer Key
- Background Information for the Teacher—Primary Source Materials

Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Track the journey of John Wesley Powell on a map while reading the book: *Down the Colorado*.
- Create a timeline of events.

- Write a journal entry about the most exciting part of his journey.

Procedures

SESSION ONE

Anticipatory Set: Introduce the lesson with two physical features that will be discussed during the lesson: a canyon and a river. Ask the students for a definition of a canyon: a long narrow valley with high cliffs that has water running through it. Draw a diagram for them. Ask the students for a definition of a river: a stream of fresh water. Then label the river in your diagram. Ask who has seen the Grand Canyon. What does the word "grand" mean in this case? (large) Where is the Grand Canyon? Show Important Rivers, Streams and Washes of Arizona map and then point out the Grand Canyon and the Colorado River. If the students have individual maps, they can color the Colorado River in blue and circle the area of the Grand Canyon in red.

1. Hand out United States 1841-1869 map (unlabeled) and 1869 Expedition of John Wesley Powell map. Project the same maps for students.
2. Read the book *Down the Colorado* to the students. As you read each section have the students keep track of John Wesley Powell's journey by recording points and dates on the map and connecting the points as he travels.
3. Distribute A Timeline of John Wesley Powell's Journey in 1869 worksheet. Have the students create a timeline by using the information from their maps.
4. Review and compare the timeline and map at the end of the book with the timelines and maps the students created.

SESSION TWO

1. Begin this session by projecting the primary source materials from Background Information for the Teacher.
 - Map of Expedition <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4332g.ct000172>
 - Boat used by Expedition <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s00756>
2. Tell students that these are two of the actual items from the expedition—a photo and a map. Have students share their comments about the items.

Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell

3. Next discuss what events the students thought were most exciting in the book. Write these events on the board.
4. Talk about the difference between a biography and an autobiography. This book is a biography.
5. In order to be an autobiography, it would have to be in the author's own words. Explain that a journal is a book when a person can write down his/her own thoughts on a daily or weekly basis. Model how to write an entry in a journal as if the writer was John Wesley Powell.
6. Refer back to board where the events that were thought to be the most exciting were listed. Have the students select one of these events and journal as if they were John Wesley Powell. Students might start their entry with the following sentence: "Today was the most exciting day so far." The first paragraph of the journal entry should have at least 4 sentences describing this exciting day in addition to the topic sentence. The second paragraph will begin with the following sentence: "After today, I _____ the Grand Canyon." The blank can be filled in with "am afraid in, hate, love, want to stay forever in, to leave, etc." Then there should be 2 to 3 sentences explaining why John Wesley Powell feels this way. This paragraph should show their perception of the place and acknowledge a feeling towards the place.
7. Have them share their entries within small groups. Encourage each group to select one entry and read it aloud as if they were John Wesley Powell.

Assessment

Assess the students' maps and timelines for accuracy. Mastery will be considered 80% or higher.

The Six Writing Traits can be used to grade the journal entries with emphasis on the trait of Content and Ideas. Students should have at least 4 descriptive sentences in their first paragraph with accurate supporting details. The second paragraph should be 3 to 5 sentences long and display a feeling about the Grand Canyon during the river trip. A score of 4 or higher will be considered mastery.

Extensions

The students could create a full journal by assigning specific parts of John Wesley Powell's journey and then putting them together into a class journal.

The students could do a story-telling of John Wesley Powell's life using the above extension.

The students could create a travel brochure to advertise the key locations of the Colorado River according to John Wesley Powell and do research on the Colorado River today.

The students could create a physical and political map of the United States by furthering their studies of the areas mentioned in the book.

The students could write their own journal including seven to ten entries about a journey they have taken including a map and a timeline.

Sources

Ray, Deborah Kogan. *Down the Colorado: John Wesley Powell, the One-Armed Explorer*. Frances Foster Books, 2007 ISBN 9780374318383

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https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/LessonFiles/Guerrero/89/supplemental/Civil_War_1869_Labelled.pdf

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1869 Expedition of John Wesley Powell map
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Important Rivers, Streams and Washes of Arizona map
<https://geoalliance.asu.edu/sites/default/files/maps/AZ-RIV-K.PDF>

Map of Expedition
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4332g.ct000172>

Boat used by Expedition
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/stereo.1s00756>