

Centennial: A Day In The Life Of Children - Then And Now

Summary

by Mari Domanski - adapted from lesson submitted by Sonya Nelson. The daily activities of children show the culture of the time.

Materials

Uptime, Downtime by John Peel. This story tells how things have changed and may change. The experiences are revealed through time travel.

A field trip to historical sites with children's perspective on life. The school house in Fruita, This Is The Place State Park, and the like would make good choices.

Any Utah history textbook lessons on childhood in historic Utah. 'Schools: Then and Now.'

Background for Teachers

Children today believe that their life is difficult and that much is expected of them. Many today, youngsters and adults, expect to get something if they give or do something. Rights and responsibilities need to be revisited in daily life of the past and in the present.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will compare and contrast a day in their lives with a day in a child's life in history.

Students will identify the responsibilities of their counterparts in history.

Students will identify their present responsibilities.

Students will determine the rights that their historic counterparts and they should have based on their responsibilities.

Instructional Procedures

See preface material for the Utah Centennial Lesson Plans book. Have students write out a day in their life, a bed-to-bed list. Work with the students to make detailed lists.

This is the time for the field trip or other presentations to make the past 'alive' for the students.

Work to make a second list of the day in the life of a child in Utah's past. Maybe interview grandparents about their lives. Try for details.

Compare the two lists that have been created. Setting them up in parallel format will help the students to more easily make comparisons:

I wake up at 6:30 to a radio alarm clock.

I woke up at 4:30 on my own. The cows need to be milked.

Have students share their lists.

Discuss what responsibilities current children have in common. Make a list of those the class can agree to.

Discuss what responsibilities historic children had in common. After agreement is reached list these.

Decide who had greater responsibility. Be able to give good reasons for your decision.

Talk with the class about the relationship of rights and responsibilities. The right to vote and the responsibility to be informed, the right to drive and the responsibility to do so safely, the right to go to school and the responsibility to learn, etc.

In light of the preceding discussions, which group of children should have more rights?

Extensions

Have the student draw comic strips or story boards of their routines and the routines of historical Utah children.

Hold a debate on the rights and responsibilities of modern children vs. children from Utah's past. Interview grandparents to compare their childhood lives with that of the students. Perhaps a local citizen who can remember the local community would be a good class alternative. Create a display showing childhood lives then and now. Create a pioneer day from the child's point of view. Include games, tasks, school, chores, food and the like.

Authors

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