

Create Your Own Pioneer

Summary

Families, children, teenagers, single adults and single parents are part of the pioneer story. In this activity each student will create one pioneer and write his or her story.

Time Frame

3 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Individual

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning

Materials

1. A file folder. (May be shared by two or three students.);
2. Colored paper, glue, cloth, yarn, other items to make a miniature pioneer figure.;
3. Theme paper to write autobiography of the character selected.;
4. Other materials may be included as students brainstorm and extend the basic directions.

Background for Teachers

This activity will require imagination on the part of the students. The teacher will provide initial directions and then step back and watch them progress through the creative process. Each person will develop a strong sense of identification with the pioneer he or she creates.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will become involved with the pioneer experiences as each creates an individual and writes a brief history of that person.

Instructional Procedures

The teacher may create a representative pioneer model and hold it up for the class to see. Brainstorm by having students tell what kind of experiences this pioneer might have had in 1847.

If available, show a short video to illustrate the life of the pioneer. Check your school district library for appropriate titles.

Pass out file folders to the students. No more than three students should be assigned to one folder. (Note: The three students will share the folder and the setting of the story, but each will create his or her own pioneer model and story.) Tell the students that they are to design the setting for their story on the outer portion of the file folder. This might be a wagon, a handcart, a tent, a pioneer home, a fort, or a portion of a pioneer trail. The setting is important because the story they write about their pioneer will take place in this setting.

After the setting is complete, each student will create a small model (paper/cardboard doll, etc.) of a pioneer. The model should be small enough to fit inside of the folder. The pioneer model might be made entirely of paper but some students will want to use cloth or other items to make their model more realistic. Hats, shawls, shoes, and other items often are added for a more realistic figure.

After the setting and the pioneer characters have been made, it is time for each student to write a short story about his or her character. Details should include:

1. age
2. male or female
3. name
4. details of life before the pioneer experience.
5. circumstances bringing individual or family into pioneer situation
6. outcome of the pioneer experiences for the character in the story.

At the conclusion of the activity each group should begin by having one member describe the setting (folder). After the setting is in place, have each group member share the finished model and tell the story of that pioneer's experience.

The finished products may be displayed within the school or library and step 5 may be repeated (performed) for other classes or schools.

Assessment Plan

Keep in mind that students will be putting their personal talents on display. Do not compare the finished products based upon how creative each is. Consider the effort and the realistic thinking that has gone into this project. You might want to develop a grading scale before the project begins. (See Rubric)

Three areas should be considered for basic evaluation. Others might be added as appropriate.

1. The setting
2. The pioneer model
3. The written account of the pioneer

Authors

[DAVID SQUIRES](#)