

Building a State of Community

Summary

People have lived in communities since the beginning of time. Utah communities followed organized and successful patterns of cooperation and hard work. Change is inevitable, and the ways in which communities handle change will influence their present and future success.

Time Frame

3 class periods of 45 minutes each

Materials

ULCT DVD (The entire DVD may be shown or you may wish to show sections depending on students' abilities and understanding.)

Summary of ULCT DVD: ["Building a State of Community"](#)

Handout: ["Notes on Building a State of Community"](#)

Materials for student communities (boxes, cardboard, construction paper, pipe cleaners, paint, markers, sand, etc.)

Background for Teachers

Enduring Understanding

Students will understand the importance of communities and how they must adapt to change over time.

Essential Questions

What factors are needed for successful communities?

How does change affect communities?

In what ways can citizens promote the success of their community?

Objectives

Students will study the growth of Utah communities and identify the ways in which they have achieved success. Students will design an ideal community and decide how the community might provide economic, social, and financial resources to adapt to change and grow.

Students will predict ways in which Utah cities may change in the future.

Instructional Procedures

Setting the Stage: Wants and Needs

Explain that students will watch and take notes on a DVD which explains factors involved in the growth of Utah communities. Distribute the [note taking handout](#).

Students will watch the DVD and take notes on their handout.

Discuss background history of Utah communities, the services that communities offer, and factors that might encourage community success.

Activity: Community History

Ask students to share experiences where they have had to make big changes in their lives.

Encourage stories that demonstrate the positive effects of change as well as stories where change was not a positive experience.

Ask students what characteristics might help people deal with change. (Examples might include: open-mindedness, asking for help from experts, brainstorming solutions to problems, seeing how others have handled similar situations, calling in experts, etc.)

Explain that not all Utah communities were a success. As environment, economics, and opportunities for education and jobs changed, people left their communities and some became

ghost towns.

Students will discuss factors that influence community growth such as environment, economy, and technology and show what they have learned by creating an imaginary community.

Obtain background information on your own city or town. (You may find this information from a city home page, the local Chamber of Commerce, or at

www.utah.gov/government/citycounty.html

Explore how your own community has changed.

Enrich this discussion of community change and adaptation with guest speakers.

Activity: Create Your Own Community

NOTE TO TEACHERS: *You may wish to have students draw their community or allow them to add three-dimensional features using "fold-up trees," boxes, foil, etc. If students have created a community in a previous lesson, then go to Part 2.*

Part 1:

Explain that each Utah community is unique. Many factors influence the ways in which a community is built, how it grows, and how it adapts to changes.

Ask students to list factors that might influence the planning and success of a community.

(Examples may include: environment, geography, climate, available jobs, tourist attractions, available roads and freeways, cost of living, shopping areas, etc.)

Divide students into planning groups. Ask students to use their Utah maps to select a spot where they would like to create an imaginary community. Each group will be given a poster board.

Students will design a small community. The design will include road signs (marking mileage to other towns). Students will sketch or create environmental features such as lakes, streams, or mountains. Students will include a city center with a government office, a school, places of worship, streets, shops, etc. Students must decide what jobs are available for the people who live in their community. Students will determine where to locate houses, businesses, farms, etc.

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Students will give their community a name and determine what makes the community famous.

Part 2:

Assign a problem or change to each community after students have completed their display and have determined the history of their community. Changes or problems may consist of: huge population growth, crop failure, drop in population, need for new roads, interstate road bypassing their tourist community, flooding, problems between neighbors, increase in crime, etc.

Encourage students to find creative solutions to help the community thrive and grow even better after each group receives one or several problems or changes. (Examples might include: setting up special committees, hiring an advertising company to promote tourism, subdividing farm land for new homes, changing crops, or beginning new jobs, etc.)

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Invite students' groups to present their projects and discuss the results.

Bibliography

This lesson plan is part of the Utah League of Cities and Towns [This Must be Utah! A Teacher's Guide to Utah Cities and Towns](#)

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