

Heritage: 'For Some Must Push and Some Must Pull'

Summary

The handcart was one of many modes of transportation used by the pioneers when traveling to the Great Salt Lake Valley. The students will listen to handcart stories, construct a paper model of a handcart and learn a handcart song.

Time Frame

2 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

- Computer, internet access (for stories and pictures)
- scissors, glue, crayons, handcart patterns (one for each child)
- stories of the handcart pioneers
- song: 'The Handcart Song' from the 'Sing With Me Book' of children's songs

Background for Teachers

The first European group of pioneers using handcarts arrived in the Salt Lake Valley on Nov. 9th 1856. (the Willie and the Martin Handcart companies). This group of people left late in the season and faced many hardships. The groups had to be rescued along the trail before entering the Valley. There are diary entries about the many men, women and children who died along the trail. The stories relate the hardships, elements and events that were overcome by the pioneers. Other hand-cart companies came in 1857, 1859 and 1860. Brigham Young was instrumental in bringing these European pioneers across the plains by handcart because they were too poor to outfit themselves with covered wagons and oxen. Many of these European pioneers had never been outside their own home villages and yet they were willing to sacrifice all to come to the Salt Lake Valley and be with people of their own faith. Religious freedom and gathering in the Salt Lake Valley was the most important goal of their lives. In spite of the many hardships, their tenacity and courage shone bright. These pioneers displayed determination, by standing for what they believed and giving their all for a cause greater than their own. See bibliography for links to more information.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The students will listen to one of the handcart stories, build a model handcart, and be able to sing 'The Handcart Song'.

Instructional Procedures

Refer to Essential Questions

Discuss the results of the introductory activity. Let the children share their feelings about the things they have to leave behind and why they chose to take the things they did. Administer the IO question pre-test.

Tell a story from the Internet site.

Provide the children with the materials to make their own model handcart. (scissors, glue, pattern) and have them each construct a model handcart. While they are working you could sing the Handcart Song and have them sing it with you.

The students will take turns creating an event that will become a part of a creative class story. The first students will provide the introduction and the others will continue building on the other student's event until the story is completed.

Some students could role play the story for another class.

Students can make a diorama using the paper handcart model

Sing the 'The Handcart Song' to the children and have them sing it with you several times (there are other pioneer songs that could be learned at this time also). They could also act out the words of the song.

Review how the pioneer families felt based on the stories that have been shared. How does the song tell a story about feelings?

Extensions

Learn other pioneer songs that were sung by the children along the trail. Here is a list of possible songs. 'Pioneer Children', 'Little Pioneer Children', 'Westward Ho!', 'Crossing the Prairie' and 'The Ox Cart'. All of these are found in the Sing With Me song book listed in the bibliography.

Assessment Plan

The finished product (handcart) model should be able to stand. The creative story should have a logical beginning, middle and end. Participation in the role playing and singing.

Bibliography

Jones, Helen Over the Mormon Trail (Children's Press, Chigago)

Sing With Me (Church Of Jesus Christ of Latter)

Church stories archive search engine

Authors

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