

Heritage: What would YOU take?

Summary

Could YOU leave your home and your beloved possessions to settle an unknown land? What would you choose to take with you?

Time Frame

1 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Large bag overflowing with many, varied, unusual items. Paper, pencils for each student.

Background for Teachers

When pioneers left their homes to come to Utah, they were required to bring with them all the supplies needed to sustain life and to set up a new home in the west. Their wagons were loaded with these essential items. This left very little room for the pioneers to bring any non-essential items. Pioneers were forced to make difficult choices as to what they could bring with them. Many heirlooms and treasured items were left behind.

This lesson will give students an opportunity to explore their own definition of 'valuable' and make a choice as to what is most treasured to them.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will differentiate (classify) the values of items according to survival, monetary, sentimental, etc.

Students will evaluate the value of their 'treasures' and make a decision as to what they choose to take with them if they could only take one item.

Students will defend choice of object by defining the reasons it is valuable to them.

Instructional Procedures

Review the Essential Questions

Teacher enters classroom by carrying or dragging in an overloaded bag to the front of the room.

Teacher lifts bag onto a table or desk. [Add a little drama here by rubbing your arms, stretching your back, sighing, etc. (it is more effective if you carry an overloaded bag into the room for a few days prior to this lesson.)] Recite this poem to the class, 'I've carried this bag around, filled to the brim, It's made me so tired I ache limb to limb.'

Take some of the objects out of the bag, look at them, name them and sigh over them. (Add more drama here.)

Continue reciting the verse:

'I need to reduce what I carry about,
Please help me choose what to keep
and what to throw out!

From my bag I'll take something out,

When I do will you kindly shout,

(Students will recite the following lines:

'Oh, (Mr., Mrs. Ms.) _____you don't need so much stuff,

Leave that_(name of object) behind you, You've got quit enough!"

Repeat the student lines a few times so the students will be able to say their part during lesson. (Or write them on the board.)

Instruct students that they can choose one item that you could take out of your bag. After they have chosen an object, the students recite the lines from the poem adding the name of the object. After each item has been chosen, give some reasons why you MUST keep that particular item. Repeat this 3 to 4 times.

Review the material in the background section of this lesson (above). Discuss with the students the difference between essential and non-essential items. Have students generate a list of the items they would like to take with them if they were going to move.

Discuss the different ways things are valuable to people. Have students classify the items on their lists monetary, sentimental or personal valuables. (A venn diagram is useful for this as some items are valuable for more than one reason.)

Students will now make a choice as to what item they would take with them if they were leaving their home and could only take ONE item. Emphasize that all items needed for survival are already included in the wagon. They will be choosing one of their 'prized possessions' to carry with them.

Set the criteria for their choice:

What makes you want to take this item more than any other item on your list?

Is it necessary for your happiness or contentment?

Is it useful?

What make it unique?

Did someone special give it you?

Did you work hard for it?

Does it hold a memory?

Does it have some special use?

Do you need it for something special?

Could you share it with others?

All choices are acceptable. Everyone needs and wants different things, for different reasons.

Assessment Plan

Assign students to write a paragraph about the item they chose. In their paragraph students will defend their choice of item by listing specific and valid reasons for their choice.

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