

Heritage: How did the pioneers impact Utah's environment?

Summary

How did the face of Utah change with the coming of the pioneers? Farming, mining, roads, rails, and cities all changed the landscape of Utah in many ways.

Time Frame

2 class periods of 45 minutes each

Group Size

Individual

Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Drawing paper, writing paper, art supplies.

Background for Teachers

When Utah's first pioneer settlers came to Utah, by necessity, many environmental changes took place. Land had to be cleared of trees, grass and rocks for farming. Irrigation canals had to be dug. Rivers and streams were dammed and flooded. Timber was cut to build homes. Game was hunted for meat. Roads were built. Mines were dug. The changes to the landscape were endless and necessary to the survival of the people who had nothing but what the environment provided for their survival.

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will examine the environment of a landmark or place in Utah that was altered by the original settlers. Students will determine how it was changed and why.

Instructional Procedures

Take students on a walking fieldtrip around the school neighborhood. Discuss what changes to the landscape were made to provide the roads and sidewalks, home sites, farms, businesses, etc. Discuss what these areas might have looked like before the neighborhood was built up. Have the student choose a historical site in Utah (city like Salt Lake, tourist area like Promontory Point, mining area like silver mines of Park City.) Have the student brainstorm what the locations of the site looked like before the pioneers came, how the site was changed, and why it was changed. Divide a piece of art paper into two equal sections. Label the left side 'before' and the right side 'after'. Draw pictures illustrating what the site looked like before it was altered by the pioneers and how it looked after they had altered the site. Write two paragraphs: one explaining how the site's landscape had been altered, and the other telling the reasons why the pioneers changed it. Mount the picture on a piece of poster board. Place the writing below the picture. Display the pictures in the classroom or the hallway.

Extensions

Students could add another picture and written explanation telling how and why they might have changed the landscape differently.

Assessment Plan

Have the students submit a plan of action describing how they might go about preparing a fictional site for a farm, road, mine, etc., while minimizing the damage and change to the landscape.

Authors

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