

Providing for Community Transportation

Summary

Students will study historic photos of early Utah cities and will discuss ways in which public transportation has changed. Students will act as municipal transportation experts and extrapolate future transportation issues and solutions.

Time Frame

3 class periods of 45 minutes each

Materials

NOTE TO TEACHERS: You may wish to find historic photos of your own community. Contact local government offices, the State Historical Society, or other historic groups for interesting photographs.

Clipboards and pencils

Worksheet: ["Transportation: Utah's Past, Utah's Present, Utah's Future"](#) (pdf)

Prepare transparencies and several copies of the photographs of [Bountiful \(1920\)](#), [Ephraim \(1912\)](#), [Sandy \(1910\)](#), and [West Jordan \(1902\)](#).

Prepare several copies of each of the following to be used in small groups:

- [Planning for Alternative Transportation](#)
- [Planning for Bicyclists](#)
- [Planning for Mass Transit](#)
- [Planning for Pedestrians](#)

Background for Teachers

Enduring Understanding

Methods of transportation change over time. Communities adapt to changing technology, population growth, and community needs through successful transportation planning.

Essential Questions

In what ways has transportation changed over time?

How does planning for public and private transportation benefit the community?

Objectives

Students will act as municipal transportation experts by presenting summaries from Utah Cities and Towns documents.

Students will predict means of future transportation from their studies of the past and present.

Instructional Procedures

Setting the Stage

Pass out the ["Utah's Past, Utah's Present, Utah's Future"](#) worksheet (pdf), clipboard, paper, and pencil.

Ask students to explain how they get to school.

Brainstorm the many, varied ways students might use to travel to school.

Explain that the class will observe the flow of transportation in this area of the community.

Explain the worksheet. Students will describe the roads surrounding the school grounds. Ask them to notice and record the number of traffic lanes, the speed limit around the school, the existence of sidewalks or bike lanes, and traffic volume. (Are the streets busy or quiet?) Students will also record the number and types of vehicles that they observe.

Proceed outdoors and walk slowly around the school grounds allowing students to observe and describe roads and traffic.

Lead the class to a street corner and ask them to watch and record the number and kind of vehicles that pass during a five minute period.

Students will record their observations in the "Utah's Present" section of the worksheet.

Back in the classroom, discuss students' findings and add other means of present day transportation to the list.

Explain that each community must plan for municipal transportation in some way.

Activity: Early Forms of Transportation

Distribute packets of early Utah photographs to small groups or tape each photo to the wall in different areas of the room.

Divide students into five groups.

Ask students' groups to study the photographs and list all the methods of transportation available to the people living in the early Utah towns shown in the photographs. Students will record their ideas in the "Utah's Past" section of the worksheet.

Remind students to look for clues that suggest how people traveled in these communities. (Notice horses, buggies, early automobiles, and the trolley lines in Salt Lake City, Sandy, and Bountiful.)

Brainstorm other means of transportation that might have been available to the people living during these earlier times.

Discuss lists. (Remind students to include walking, bike riding, trains, cars, vans, trucks, skateboarding, roller skating, mass transit, etc.)

Activity: Modern Transportation

Ask students: "Do you think that the roads from the historic photos still exist today, and if so, how have they changed?" (The pictures showed main streets so most of them do exist, but rail lines have been removed, and the roads have been paved.)

Ask students: "In what ways might cities or towns help people and vehicles travel effectively and safely?" (Safe roads, lights, signs, cross-walks, bus stops, bike lanes, sidewalks, etc.)

Explain that addressing transportation issues is an important function of most Utah municipalities.

Activity: Future Transportation

Discuss transportation changes over time. Encourage students to make predictions about Utah transportation in the future. Students will consider street design and future vehicle design and record their ideas in the "Utah's Future" section of the worksheet. Encourage students to sketch their designs and present drawings to the class.

Activity: Becoming a Transportation Expert

Explain that the Utah League of Cities and Towns publishes guidelines to help cities organize in the most efficient manner. Students will be assigned to study a specific transportation issue, understand the important facts about the issue, and then make a presentation to the class describing what they have learned.

Divide the class into study groups. Prepare handouts on the following documents. Explain that each group will become an expert on a planning issue.

Pass each group a different topic sheet with poster board and markers:

- [Planning for Alternative Transportation](#)
- [Planning for Bicyclists](#)
- [Planning for Mass Transportation](#)
- [Planning for Pedestrians](#)

Encourage student groups to read and discuss their issue. Groups will present what they have learned to the class as if they were explaining the information to a citizen group. Each presentation should explain how planning for public and private transportation benefits the community in some way. Students may create charts, posters, a role play, a formal lesson, etc. to present their findings so others will understand. Encourage creativity.

Ask all students to participate in some way during the presentation and to call for questions after

their discussion.

Instruct that as each group gives their presentation, the rest of the class must take notes. Students must record at least five facts from each presentation.

Extensions

- Examples of Transportation Planning

The teacher and students may wish to research and discuss recent transportation planning and improvements. Examples include: light rail, Legacy Highway, freeway extensions and repair, digital warning signs along freeways, etc.

- Community Involvement

Encourage students to consider ways that their community streets, roads, sidewalks, and public transportation might be improved using the information learned in class. Ask students to use what they have learned to compose a letter to the city officials addressing transportation issues and to offer their suggestions.

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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