

Curating a Santa Fe Trail Collection

Overview

Students access previous knowledge about the Santa Fe Trail, select seven items from the Kansas Historical Society collections located online in Kansas Memory (link provided), and analyze how these items provide evidence of and understanding about the presence of traders and the military on the Santa Fe Trail.

Standards

KHGSS Standard (2020)

Standard 3 Societies are shaped by the identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and groups.

Benchmark 3.2 The student will analyze context and draw conclusions of how societies are shaped by the identities, beliefs, and practices of individuals and groups.

ELA Reading Informational Text Standard (2017)

RI.7.1 Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

ELA Writing Standard (2017)

W.7.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions for further research and investigation.

Objectives

Content

1. The student will identify the Santa Fe Trail as a route used by traders, entrepreneurs, and the military.

Skills

1. The student will analyze primary sources about the Santa Fe Trail.
2. The student will use conclusions formed about the Santa Fe Trail in an interpretive project.

Essential Questions

1. Who was present on the Santa Fe Trail?
2. What information can be learned about the Santa Fe Trail from primary sources?

Assessments

1. Analyze an assortment of primary sources and choose seven of them to interpret the use of the Santa Fe Trail by both traders and the military.
2. Create an interpretive project exploring the presence of both traders and the military on the Santa Fe Trail.

Previous Knowledge: Students will know the Santa Fe Trail as a route between Kansas City and Santa Fe that crossed the length of Kansas. If necessary, a short Santa Fe Trail article is available at Kansapedia:

<https://www.kshs.org/kansapedia/santa-fe-trail/12195>

The objects used in this lesson are located in Kansas Memory, an online repository of Kansas Historical Society collections. The following link connects to a Santa Fe Trail bookbag in Kansas Memory. Opening links for specific items in the bookbag allows access to higher resolution photos and additional information. Access the bookbag at:

<https://www.kansasmemory.org/user/KSHSK12EducationResource/bookbag/99255743>

1. Access prior knowledge. Ask students to share information about the Santa Fe Trail. Create a summary of what is shared in a central location. The list should contain basic information such as that the Santa Fe Trail is a trail of commerce that lay between Kansas City and Santa Fe. The military used it to protect caravans and to move troops to the New Mexico region and beyond. It was used by traders and the military.
2. Introduce Kansas Memory as a place to view primary sources online. Items there are from the collections of the Kansas Historical Society, an organization whose mission is to preserve and share Kansas history. Primary sources such as artifacts, documents, and photos can be found in Kansas Memory. A bookbag has been created in Kansas Memory that includes some of the Santa Fe Trail related sources it contains. Items in the bookbag reflect two groups that used the Santa Fe Trail – traders and the military.
3. Assign students to review the Santa Fe Trail bookbag in Kansas Memory and to choose seven items that together represent the presence of both traders and the military. For example: buttons, the inkwell, *Arrival of the Caravan at Santa Fe*, and the Navajo blanket reflect the use of the trail by traders; and the Army belt buckle, 1853 half dime, and the map of the Santa Fe Trail reflect the presence of the military at forts located along the Santa Fe Trail. Additional information about items can be found by using the links for each item in the bookbag.

The Kansas Memory bookbag containing Santa Fe Trail items is located at:

<https://www.kansasmemory.org/user/KSHSK12EducationResource/bookbag/99255743>

4. Each student should use their collection to create a piece of interpretive material such as a blog post, podcast, PowerPoint, etc. The interpretive piece should
 - include information about each item, and
 - use the items to explore the presence of both traders and the military on the Santa Fe Trail.

For example: Together the buttons, inkwell, Navajo blanket, and illustration of wagons being unloaded or loaded in Santa Fe provide evidence of traders and commerce moving both east and west along the Santa Fe Trail. The Army belt buckle, the half dime, and the numerous forts identified on the Santa Fe Trail map provide evidence of the military presence on the Santa Fe Trail. Together these items provide evidence of the multiple roles played by the Santa Fe Trail in the westward expansion of the United States.