

### Overview

Students will learn about the impact of railroads on the settlement of Kansas. They will read town maps to identify economic, social, and political components that made the town attractive to new settlers and observe and infer the importance of the railroad to town development. This lesson is designed for one class period but can be adjusted for individual classroom needs.

### Standards

Current standards can be found on [kshe.org](http://kshe.org).

### Objectives

#### Content:

- The student will be able to give three examples of businesses or organizations that were important for town development.
- The student will be able to explain the impact on businesses by the railroad.

#### Skills:

- The student will be able to analyze historic town maps to identify important businesses and organizations critical to town development.
- The student will be able to make observations and inferences about railroads in regard to town development.

### Essential Questions

- Why did towns want to be on a rail line in the 1800s?
- How would the settlement of Kansas in the 1800s have been different without the construction of railroads?

## Activities

This activity uses the following *Read Kansas!* cards:

- **Bird's Eye View of Dodge City**
- **Bird's Eye View of El Dorado**
- **Bird's Eye View of Halstead**
- **Bird's Eye View of Junction City**
- **Bird's Eye View of Newton**

### Day 1

1. Introduce the topic of the construction of railroads in the mid-1800s. At that time railroads were the fastest form of transportation for freight and people. The first major lines across Kansas were the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe (now the Burlington Northern Santa Fe) and the Union Pacific. Ask your students if their town is on one of these lines? If not, did or does a different railroad service their town? Do they know the name?
2. Explain that students will be finding evidence of the importance of the railroads in town development by examining historic maps.
3. Share the **Bird's Eye View of Dodge City, Kans.** *Read Kansas!* card with the class. Explain what a "bird's eye" map is and why it was created. Point out the map features.
  - a. What is the name of the town and the date of the map?
  - b. Read the list of buildings. Discuss types of businesses (some may be unfamiliar to them), abbreviations, and spellings.
  - c. Have students locate the buildings on the map. This may require enlarging the image. The original maps are available on *Kansas Memory*, [kansasmemory.org](http://kansasmemory.org). This will allow you to zoom in or enlarge key areas.
  - d. Students will be looking at these components when they are in their own groups.
  - e. Complete **A Bird's Eye View of History** worksheet with the class so they know what information to record and where to record it.
4. Divide the class into four groups. Each group will be examining evidence about one town. Each student in the group will need that town's *Read Kansas!* card. Also, provide each student with a copy of **A Bird's Eye View of History** worksheet. Each student will be responsible for completing his or her copy of the worksheet. Students will need their own worksheet to complete the final activity.
  - a. As a group, students should complete questions 1-4.
  - b. Individually, students should select three businesses or organizations and complete questions 5 and 6.
5. Provide students with enough time to complete questions 1-6.
6. Bring the class together.
  - a. Select one student from each of the four groups to be the reporter. The reporter will identify the name of his or her town. Have another student from that group locate the town on the map and name the railroad line.

- b. Then have the reporter share the group's answers to question 4, the types of businesses and organizations in their town. Use the Dodge City **A Bird's Eye View of History** worksheet from the beginning of the lesson to record information.
  - c. As each group makes its report on the businesses and organizations in the town add a tally mark for repeats or add new names to the list.
  - d. Select students from each group to share their answers to questions 5 and 6.
  - e. When all four groups have presented, have students use the information compiled from question 7 to answer question "What can you infer about town development from this list?" This can be done as a class discussion or an individual assignment.
7. As a final assignment, each student will write a persuasive letter to a railroad company encouraging them to construct a railroad line to a Kansas town. The letter needs to be written from the perspective of a citizen in a 19th century Kansas town. It should be in letter format and include three reasons why the railroad would help the town grow. The reasons should be supported with historical facts and/or inferences.

## Assessment

- Evaluate the students' ability to work cooperatively to complete **A Bird's Eye View of History** worksheet.
- Evaluate the students' ability to write a persuasive letter to the railroad company to construct a railroad line to their town.

## For the Teacher

If you are using the textbook *The Kansas Journey*, this lesson can be used with pages 121-125 and 146-154.

### Definitions:

**Bird's eye view map:** A map that displays a panoramic view such as a bird in flight might see.

**Odd Fellows Hall:** A meeting place for members of the Odd Fellow fraternity which promotes personal and social development.

**House:** Another name for hotel, i.e. Dodge House, South Side House.

**Terminus:** An end point on a transportation line or the town in which it is located.

**Eldorado:** Misspelled on map. Correct spelling is El Dorado.

**Santafe:** Misspelled on Newton map. Correct spelling is Santa Fe.

The materials in this packet may be reproduced for classroom use only. Reproduction of these materials for any other use is prohibited without written permission of the Kansas Historical Society.

Resources for this lesson are from:

- Kansas Historical Society collections

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## A Bird's Eye View of History

1. Name of town: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Date of map: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Where is the railroad line located in relationship to the town? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Does your town have any of the following? If so, list them by the name on the map.

• Courthouse: \_\_\_\_\_

• Schools: \_\_\_\_\_

• Churches: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Railroad depot: \_\_\_\_\_

• Railroad tracks: \_\_\_\_\_

• Post office: \_\_\_\_\_

• Newspapers: \_\_\_\_\_

• Hotels: \_\_\_\_\_

• Other businesses: \_\_\_\_\_

• Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Pick three businesses or organizations and explain why they would make the town attractive to new settlers.

6. Using these same three businesses or organizations, explain the service the railroad provides to them or their customers.

7. List the businesses and organizations that all six towns have in common.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. What can you infer about town development from this list?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_