Lesson 5a: Introduction to Researching Kansas Settlers  
(grade 7)

Note:
For an overview of this lesson, the compelling question, and objectives see the introduction to the lessons in Section 5. Lesson 5a serves as the first lesson in Section 5. Because it sets up the research being done in lessons 5b-5g, and the interpretation of that research in lesson 5h, it should be completed before beginning any of the other lessons in Section 5. For the sake of this research project, ‘early settler’ is being defined as people settling in Kansas between 1854 and 1900.

Prior knowledge:
As needed, review that settlement was not allowed in today’s Kansas before Kansas became a territory in 1854. Prior to that, it had been known as the ‘Great American Desert’ and later as Indian Territory. Explorers, people traveling on the Santa Fe or Oregon-California Trail, gold prospectors, and a few other groups passed through Kansas but did not settle in it during these years. Prior to 1854 the area we know as Kansas today was home to many American Indian societies.

Items used from the trunk:
CD Kansas Settlers
- Worksheet #4: Research Notes (included as a paper copy in this manual, as a pdf on the CD in this trunk, or online at kshs.org)

Advance preparation:
1. Determine what project students will do at the completion of their research.
2. Worksheet #4: Research Notes. Each student will need one copy. This copy will be used throughout their research project with information added after each step of their research.
3. Draw a timeline on the board where it can remain during the research project. It will be used in some of the research lessons in this unit (5b, 5c, 5f, 5g, and 5h). The timeline should include a place for each decade from 1800 to the present (ex: 1800, 1810, and 1820). Do not label the years. (Four inches between each decade from 1800 to 2020 is approximately 2.5 yards.)
4. Identify a place to create an abbreviated KWLH chart where information can be kept and updated throughout the research project. Space should be provided for the topic of the research, four columns will contain a list of what the class knows, what they want to know, what they learned, and where they found the information they learned. See example below:
What did early Kansas settlers experience?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we know</th>
<th>What we want to know</th>
<th>What we learned</th>
<th>How we learned it</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People lived in sod houses</td>
<td>Why did people come to Kansas?</td>
<td>In addition to farming and ranching, settlers ran stores and newspapers, built roads, and more.</td>
<td>Maps, Photographs, Artifacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Settlers moved to Kansas from the eastern United States</td>
<td>Did settlers make everything they needed?</td>
<td>Buildings were made from local natural materials and purchased materials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early settlers were farmers and ranchers</td>
<td>What did they do for fun?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Where did they work?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lesson:**

1. Introduce lesson
   a. Introduce the topic of early settlers in Kansas. Write the words “How do the lives of early Kansas settlers compare to the lives of Kansans today?” on the board. Explain that this is the question the class will answer and that they will use the information they learn to complete a project at the end of their research.
   b. Initiate a class discussion about how this question can be answered, what the class knows, what they need to know to answer it, and where they can go to find the answers. Direct the discussion so that it includes:
      - The class is familiar with their lives in Kansas today but unfamiliar with many aspects of the lives of early Kansas settlers. They will need to research early Kansas settlers.
      - “Early,” for the sake of this project, is defined as 1854 to 1900. This period includes Kansas Territory from 1854-1861.
      - A variety of sources are available with information. As needed, review the difference between primary and secondary sources and the benefits of using primary sources.
      - Research needs to be organized.

2. Create a timeline
   a. Review the purpose of a timeline as a visual representation of time.
   b. Explain the timeline drawn on the board and have students label it in ten year increments from 1800 to today.
   c. Create some context for time. Add the birthday of one student. Do the same with one or two other dates for things the class will be familiar with such as the year
they began kindergarten; the year the school was built; or the birth year of a pop culture figure such as an actor/actress or musician students are familiar with.

d. Label the years Kansas became a territory (1854) and a state (1861) on the timeline. (Kansas Territory was when people were allowed to settle in Kansas. Once enough people had settled here, Kansas could become a state.)
e. Highlight the years 1854-1900 as the years the research will focus on.

3. Create KWLH chart
   a. As needed, review the KWLH chart as a way to begin organizing a research project with the research question as the title and columns to record general information.
   b. Explain that almost everyone living in Kansas today is a descendent of someone who moved to Kansas from someplace else. (Even most of the American Indians living in Kansas are from tribes moved to Kansas from elsewhere by the U.S. government before 1854.)
   c. Begin the research process by recording what is known about early Kansas settlers. Have students share what they know. Summarize this information in the ‘K’ column on the KWLH chart. Note that this list may contain both accurate and inaccurate information.
   d. In the ‘W’ column record what students want to know. Review that asking questions is an important part of doing research. The project begins with a large over reaching question, but more specific questions will help to direct the research. List things students want to know, and summarize them in the ‘W’ column in a question format. Examples may include:
      • Where did early settlers live?
      • Where did they get their supplies?
      • How did their supplies reach them?
      • Did they make or buy what they needed such as clothing, tools, etc.?
      • Did they grow or buy the food they ate?
      • Did they enjoy living in Kansas?
      • Did young children move to Kansas?
      • Were there schools?

4. Research notes
   a. Have the class review what they want to know to make sure that answering these questions will help to answer the question, “How do the lives of early Kansas settlers compare to the lives of Kansans today?”
   b. Hand out Worksheet #4: Research Notes. Each student should identify two questions from the chart that he/she wants to find answers to and add them to the question already listed on the worksheet.
c. Explain that the class will use a variety of primary sources to look for answers to the questions on their worksheet.