

ecoMentors Lesson Plan Template: Helping kids explore the planet! www.ecomentors.ca

Title: Pioneer Life

Grade Level(s): 3

Time/Date:

School:

Teacher:

Directions to school, class:

Contact Info:

Ontario Curriculum Connection: Social Studies: Heritage and Citizenship – Pioneer Life

Vocabulary: Words & Concepts your class may be learning, ask students if they can spell them for you!

Pioneer – a plant, animal or human that inhabits a new area first

Natural Resource – Something that comes from nature that can help us live

Materials and Equipment: List these before and while you plan and revise so you're prepared.

Paper, pencils, crayons, ...

Globe or world map if available.

What is your class accomplishing?: Learning & Activity Goals, Objectives

- **Describe changes that have occurred in their communities since the time of the early settlers**
- **Compare and contrast the lives (e.g., daily routines) of pioneer and present-day children**
- **Compare and contrast life in a pioneer settlement with that in their own community**
- **Compare the effects of modern life and pioneer life on the environment**

PROCEDURE

The Spark: Introductions, Demonstrations, Show and Tell, Topic Intro (Break the ice!) ~5-10min

“Your teacher tells me you’ve been learning about pioneer life.”

Ask the students to introduce themselves: *“Tell me your name and what you would like or dislike about being a pioneer.”* *“What can you tell me about pioneers?”*

What is the ‘Environment’? Can someone spell it? What is it?

Everything around us that helps us live.

Brainstorming, Getting ideas, Connecting ideas (assess their knowledge!) ~10-20min

What is a pioneer?” Can you spell it? A pioneer is someone who goes somewhere for the first time, does something for the first time or discovers something new. Explorers and inventors are also pioneers! Can you name a famous explorer or inventor? What did that person discover? Also the first people who went to the moon were pioneers!

*We have been talking about pioneers as being humans. But are only humans pioneers? What do you think? In nature we also use the word pioneer for plants and animals who go somewhere for the first time! The first plants that grow in an area are called pioneers. Can someone give an example of a situation where pioneer plants would grow? **Dunes, other empty areas.** These pioneer plants make the soil better, so after the pioneer plants other plants can live there as well.*

Of course you have been learning about special pioneers; the people who came to Canada several hundred years ago. Were these pioneers really the first people to start living in Canada?

Activity, Game, Exercise, Debate, Puzzles, Problem Solving, Role Play ~10-30mins

How is pioneer life different from our lives today?

Write down the following titles and write down answers in the right columns or ask students to come up and write answers. **Water, Food, Homes, Family, Jobs, Transportation, Pollution.** You may need more headings as the students come up with new ideas.

Divide each column in half; one half for pioneer life and 1 column for now (use different colors of chalk if possible). So under each heading you will get 2 columns of items. Let the students name things that have to do with those headings, and how it is now and how it was during the pioneer time. i.e. water now comes from the tap, water in the pioneers time had to be fetched at a river or creek. Do the same for the other headings.

What is a Natural Resource? How do we use natural resources? How did pioneers use natural resources? What is the difference?

What are the most striking differences that you see on the black board? Note that in the pioneer’s time there was no electricity, no cars, no industry, no pollution. People had to work for their own food and water.

How was the environment different in the pioneer days? No cities, buildings or even roads! Just wilderness!

Describe several 'modern' situations in which we use energy. Ask the students to come up with a similar scenario in pioneer times (i.e. watching television – playing outside)

I am going to tell you some things you do everyday that use energy. How would you do them if you were living like a pioneer? What did pioneers use for energy?

1. *cooking dinner* (fire instead of gas)
2. *reading a book when it is dark outside* (candles)
3. *going to a movie* (tell stories)
4. *writing an e-mail to your friend* (pony express/pigeon)
5. *keeping your food cold* (water or deep hole in the ground)

Think of more scenario's ecoMentor!

If available, grab a globe or go to the world map. "*Where did pioneers come from?*" Ask a student to point out Europe on the map. "*How did they travel to North America?*" "*Where did they come first in Canada?*" "*When the pioneers first landed, what did they eat? What did they do to survive?*"

Activity, Game, Exercise, Debate, Puzzles, Problem Solving, Role Play ~10-30mins

How is your life different from that of pioneer children?

You have been transported back in time to colonial America. You are one of eight children in your family. Your task is to compare your life in this time to your life in the Twentieth Century.

Write these questions on the black board so the students can focus on them. Let the class read out the questions aloud. Then, divide the class in groups, and every group should write down the answers to these questions for a pioneer child and a child nowadays.

1. **What do you wear everyday?**
2. **What might you have for dinner tonight?**
3. **How do you spend your free time?**
4. **Where do you go to school?**
5. **What job will you have when you grow up?**
6. **Do you receive an allowance?**
7. **Do you pollute the environment? How?**

Discuss the answers of the groups in the class. Compare the answers for pioneer children and modern children.

Activity, Game, Exercise, Debate, Puzzles, Problem Solving, Role Play(Pt. II or Cont...) ~10-30mins

Diary

Let the students write a piece of a diary of a pioneer's child. Maximum 1 page. *You are a pioneer's child. You are traveling to the west with your parents. You are keeping a diary about your adventures. Write a piece of your diary, pretending to be that pioneers child. What hardships do you face? What are the fun things of being pioneers?*

Let them illustrate their stories with fun pictures!

Activity, Game, Exercise, Debate, Puzzles, Problem Solving, Role Play(Pt. II or Cont...) ~10-30mins

Pioneer Charades

Play Charades with the class, let the students act out pioneer-activities, like fishing, plowing, riding a horse, cutting down a tree, hunting, feeding the animals, driving a wagon, sowing clothes, chopping wood, fetching water, building a house, putting a horse shoe on a horse, think of some more...

Contingency, Plan B, extra game or activity (Back up plan) ~5-10mins

What do you think will the world will be like in the future. One hundreds years from now? How will people take care of the Environment? Have students make pictures along with a few sentences

Presentation of Findings ~5-15mins

Ask students to share their pictures from the previous activity.

Review, Conclusion and steps towards continued action ~5-10mins

Was a colonial child's life much different from your own? Was the family an important part of colonial life? What are some things that pioneers did that used no electricity or energy? Can we do some of these things so that we can live more like pioneers? If people, 100 years from now, will look back at us; what are some new things we do to help the environment? How can we be pioneers in protecting the environment?

References

<http://www.eagle.ca/~matink/themes/Pioneers/lessons.html>

Great work ecoMentor! After use of Lesson Plan revise, gather ideas and repeat!