

1875 – 1899

SOLOMON BUTCHER PHOTOGRAPHS, THE SOD HOUSE FRONTIER

ACTIVITY

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Activity: Solomon Butcher Photographs

Activity Grade Level:
8th Grade

Activity: Photograph Analysis

Teacher Preparation:

For this activity, teachers will need a class set of Butcher photographs showing farm families in Nebraska. To find a minimum of 30 different photographs, so each student has a different photo, follow these instructions:

1. Go to the *Solomon Butcher Photographs, the Sod House Frontier* page in the 1875-1899 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0600/stories/0602_0100.html

2. Use the Search box in the upper left hand corner. Type in Butcher, and then click on Primary Source, just below the Search box. This will bring up a number of Butcher photos. They'll appear as thumbnail sketches so you may choose the photos you want. You are looking for photos that show a variety of scenes depicting life on the Plains. Look for pictures showing families, ranches, family farms, life in town, cowboys, etc.
3. Print the pictures you want to use. It's helpful to mount them on construction paper, and then laminate them so you have a permanent set of Butcher photographs.

The Activity:

1. Give each student a photograph and ask him/her to examine the photograph for 1-2 minutes without talking. Ask them to look at all areas of the photograph and examine every detail.

Note: More advanced students may want to use the National Archives *Photograph Analysis Worksheet* located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

2. Have students write down everything they see in the photograph: people, animals, objects, buildings, plants, machinery, etc.
3. Ask students to describe the scene in the picture in 1-2 complete sentences.
4. Next, have students get together with 2-3 students close to them. In small groups, students will:
 - present their photograph and explain what they see
 - compare photographs and see what they have in common
5. Finally, move the discussion to the entire class. Discussion questions:
 - What did they see in common in their photographs?
 - What did they see that was unusual in some of the photographs?
 - Why do they think these photographs were taken? (This is a great way to start discussion about Solomon Butcher.)

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards

By the end of eighth grade, students will:

Standard 8.1.7. Explain post Civil War changes in the United States, and the role of the United States in world affairs through World War I.

Standard 8.4.2. Demonstrate skills for historical analysis.

Standard 8.4.6. Improve their skills in historical research and geographical analysis.

Nebraska State READING & WRITING Standards

By the end of eighth grade, students will:

Standard 8.1.1. Identify the main idea and supporting details in what they have read.

Standard 8.1.2. Identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.

Standard 8.1.5. Identify and apply knowledge of the text structure and organizational elements to analyze nonfiction or informational text.

Standard 8.1.6. Identify similarities and differences across a variety of eighth grade reading selections.

Standard 8.1.7. Demonstrate the ability to analyze literary works, nonfiction, films, or media.

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Nebraska Department of Education Academic Standards

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ndestandards/AcademicStandards.htm>

Nebraska Department of Education Social Studies and History Standards

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/SS/DOCUMENTS/TheHistory-SocialStudiesStandardsPDF.pdf>

National Archives

<http://www.archives.gov/index.html>

Library of Congress Learning Page Lesson Plans

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/index.html>

Six Trait Writing: Ideas, Organization, Voice, Sentence Fluency, Word Choice, and Conventions.

<http://www.edina.k12.mn.us/concord/teacherlinks/sixtraits/sixtraits.html>

RESOURCES

RESOURCES

National Archives Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE

OBJECTS

ACTIVITIES

| | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ |

Step 2. Inference

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

Step 3. Questions

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

B. Where could you find answers to them?
