

1925 – 1949

BEEF GOES MODERN

LESSON PLAN

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Lesson Plan: Operation Haylift

By Becky Boswell, Lefler Middle School, LPS
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Lesson Grade Level:
8th Grade

Length:

Two-three class periods

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will understand the impact of the blizzards of 1948-49 and the rescue efforts of Operation Haylift.
2. Students will analyze and interpret information to create a radio broadcast, representative of historical events.

Nebraska State SOCIAL STUDIES Standards:

By the end of eighth grade, students will:

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.

Resources & Materials:

- Computer with Internet access
- LCD projector
- Nebraska Studies: Beef Goes Modern
http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0807_0100.html
- Nebraska Studies: Beef Goes Modern, *Operation Haylift* video, accessed from this page
http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0807_0600.html
- *Operation Haylift Radio Broadcast* Handouts, located in the Resources section at the end of this document (there are two and they can be run back to back)
- *Operation Haylift Notes*, located in the Resources section at the end of this document
- Microphone image that can be laminated, located in the Resources section at the end of this document
- Blow up microphones for props, if you have them
- Anything students might use for sound effects
- *Radio Broadcast* Rubric, located in the Resources section at the end of this document
- *Nebraska History Special Issue: "I'm Never Going to be Snowbound Again" The Winter of 1948-1949.* Fall/Winter 2002 Vol. 83, No. 3 & 4
<http://www.nebraskahistory.org/publish/publicat/history/back02.htm>

Introduction:

In the winter of 1948-49, a blizzard hit Nebraska with devastating results. The storms started in November and continued through February. The snow stopped trains, buried houses, and threatened nearly a million head of cattle. Operation Haylift was a massive effort to save livestock for Nebraska's farmers and ranchers.

Vocabulary:

blizzard
cargo plane

livestock
rural

spotter
Weasel (a light, self-propelled tracked vehicle for traveling over snow, ice, sand, or in water)

The Process:**Warm Up:**

1. Ask students what was the worst snowstorm they can remember. Students will have a variety of answers.
2. In their notebooks or on a piece of paper, ask students to write down what challenges students and their families face during modern snowstorms, and then have them share their answers. Answers may include:
 - losing electricity for several days,
 - being stuck at home because they couldn't get out,
 - having to shovel out their driveway, etc.
3. If you teach in an urban setting, ask students how the challenges would have been different if their families had lived on a farm. Answers may include:
 - You would have to feed the animals.
 - You would be more isolated from neighbors.
 - You would be farther away from grocery stores, etc.

Activity:

1. Explain to students that in the winter of 1948-49, a blizzard hit Nebraska with devastating results. The storms started in November and continued through February. The snow stopped trains, buried houses, and threatened nearly a million head of cattle. Operation Haylift was a massive effort to save livestock for Nebraska's farmers and ranchers. This activity will focus on the attempts to save the cattle that belonged to numerous farmers and ranchers.
2. Hand out the *Operation Haylift Notes Worksheet*, located in the Resources section at the end of this document. Students will use it for taking notes.
3. In order to gather information, students will examine the Operation Haylift page in the Beef Goes Modern section of the 1925-1949 timeline of Nebraska Studies.
http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0807_0600.html
Students will also watch the two videos on that page, *Blizzard: A Really Bad Snowstorm* and then, *Sibbit's Cat Story* to see how one rancher got through it.
Note: Teachers can show this on an LCD projector or students can view the information on individual computers.
4. Review *Operation Haylift Notes*, located in the Resources section at the end of this document, with students, and make sure that all students have correct information recorded. Students can share their answers and ask questions about the haylift and the blizzard.

5. Explain that the final product for this assignment will be to conduct a radio broadcast that is historically accurate and representative of the time period. Hand out the *Operation Haylift Radio Broadcast* Handout to students (there are two pages and they can be copied back to back). Go over the assignment with students so they understand what is required in the assignment.
6. Put students into groups of 3-4. Give them time to brainstorm, write a script, and rehearse their radio broadcast.
7. Students will present their radio broadcasts and the teacher will grade them using the rubric located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

Evaluation:

1. Teachers can grade the *Operation Haylift Notes* to check for comprehension.
2. A rubric is provided in the Resources section at the end of this document to grade the radio broadcast.

Extensions:

- Have students brainstorm about how technology would impact a modern day rescue of cattle stranded in a blizzard.
- Have students look up agricultural statistics in Nebraska today to see the number of cattle raised and how a blizzard would impact the cattle industry.

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RESOURCES

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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

Operation Haylift

Radio Broadcast Information



Handout, Page 1

In the winter of 1948-49 a blizzard hit Nebraska with devastating results. The storms started in November and continued through February. The snow stopped trains, buried houses, and threatened nearly a million head of cattle. Operation Haylift was a massive effort to save livestock for Nebraska's farmers and ranchers.

You are going to work in a small group to create a radio broadcast that tells the story of Operation Haylift. You will "interview" people associated with rescue operation and tell their story through a re-creation of a radio broadcast.

Here are the requirements:

- All group members must have a speaking role.
- You must have a written script. In other words, you cannot make it up as you go.
- You must include at least five facts that you learned from the website and video.
- You must include at least two "real" quotes that are provided. You can include more.
- Your broadcast should be 2-3 minutes long.

You will be graded on the following:

Competency	Excellent 4 points	Good 3 points	Average 2 points	Poor 1 point
All group members had a speaking role				
Used a written script				
Included at least five facts from the website and video				
Included at least two "real" quotes				
Broadcast was 2-3 minutes long				
Quality of work				

RESOURCES

Operation Haylift

Radio Broadcast Information



Handout, Page 2

Working in a small group, you are going to tell the story of Operation Haylift. You will use your notes from the text and video from the *Operation Haylift* page of the *Beef Goes Modern* section of the 1925-1949 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0807_0600.html

Here are some additional ideas to help you get started.

Characters:

Choose from these characters. If you want to add an additional character, check with your teacher first.

- Nebraska rancher whose cattle were just fed
- Nebraska rancher on the ground waiting for help
- Farmer with 100 head of cattle who needs help
- Rancher with 700 head of cattle who needs help
- Person kicking the hay out of the plane
- Airplane operator
- Governor Val Peterson
- Amateur radio operator
- Spotter who knew the land and guided the pilot to the ranches

Quotes:

Choose two of these quotes. You will also make up quotes of your own to use in your radio broadcast.

- “There ain’t nothing that’ll put the chills up your back like a bad, bad snowstorm.”
- “My cow is hungry as hell. Please toss her a bale of hay when you go over.”
- “We saw so much trouble from the air, including seven cows lying dead near one ranch house.”
- “No doubt the operation did a great deal of good in its way. It was a temporary measure, and kept cattle alive until they could be fed in the natural way.”

Information you want to include in your radio broadcast:

RESOURCES

Operation Haylift Notes



Name _____

Period No. _____

Take notes as you examine the text and video from the *Operation Haylift* page of the *Beef Goes Modern* section of the 1925-1949 timeline of Nebraska Studies.

http://nebraskastudies.org/0800/stories/0807_0600.html

The notes will provide background information for your radio broadcast.

Photographs

What do you observe from photographs of the blizzard?

Describe the scenes and the difficulties people and animals encountered during the blizzard.

The Storm

Give facts about the storm. How much snow fell? How was life affected by the blizzards? How was transportation stopped?

The Need on the Ground

Describe how the storm affected Nebraska communities. What was damaged? Could people leave their homes? How did people need help?

Operation Haylift

Describe what happened during the haylift. Record how many cattle needed food, how much hay was dropped, what types of planes were used, etc.

RESOURCES

Microphone as Prop



RESOURCES

Operation Haylift Radio Broadcast



Rubric

Group Member Names _____

Competency	Excellent 4 points	Good 3 points	Average 2 points	Poor 1 point
All group members had a speaking role				
Used a written script				
Included at least five facts from the website and video				
Included at least two "real" quotes				
Broadcast was 2-3 minutes long				
Quality of work				

Total Points _____