

Lesson Title: Applying Geography Themes to the Santa Fe Trail

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Tarkio R-1 School District

Grade 8

Class: American History

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### **Teaching Traditional American History Program**

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Lesson Overview: We use geography everyday in our lives just as the pioneers/traders used geography as they traveled west.

Students will apply the five themes of geography to the Santa Fe Trail. They will take on the role of an early traveler in the 1840's.

As they travel from Franklin, Missouri to Santa Fe , New Mexico, they will explain the (1) location, (2) place, (3) human-environment interaction, (4) movement, and (5) region.

Objectives: After completing this lesson, the students will be able to:

- demonstrate their understanding of the five themes of geography by applying these themes to the Santa Fe Trail.
- organize and analysis geographical information.
- discover how historical events are influenced by geography.

Essential Question(s): Where was the location of the Santa Fe Trail? (Location)

What are the physical (weather, land, plants, animals)/human (people, culture, ideas) of the Santa Fe Trail? (Place)

How did the early travelers adapt or change their environment? (Human-Environment Interaction)

How did the early travelers move across this Trail? What goods were moved and for what purpose?

(Movement)

What are three/four common characteristics that could be used to describe the Santa Fe Trail? (Region)

GLEES-Standard 5B, 5C, 5D, 5E, 5F Elements of Geographical Study and Analysis Grade 8

Materials: Map of the Santa Fe Trail, Access to the Internet, Atlases, Magazines for pictures.

Class Time: One week, Class periods-45 minutes each

Teacher Input: Teacher will explain, review and give examples of the five themes of geography. She/He will explain that each student will assume the role of a geographer traveling west with a group of travelers and pioneers via a wagon train. The student will apply the five themes to this trip by using research tools such as the internet, encyclopedia, atlas and other resources available in the school library. The teacher should secure a Santa Fe Trail map for the students to use as a resource. The teacher should provide magazines for the students to use to depict the different themes they might encounter on the trip.

Activities: Using the local area, apply the five themes to check for students' understanding. Recall for students some of the topics studied by geographers; land use, economic activity, transportation and human interaction.

Questions for Review:

- (1) Name the five themes of geography.
- (2) Study the history of the people who used this trail.
- (3) How did these early people interact with the land?
- (4) What was the purpose of these early travelers?
- (5) How was this place affected by the movement of people, goods and ideas?

- (6) How is the place similar to and different from other regions? i.e. languages

Closure: Students will present their findings in class. Class discussion will follow each presentation. Students should be asked to speculate how the West was changed due to this trail? Is our world changing today due to “new trails” (i.e. global communication)? What are the similarities in how we use the world’s resources? What are the differences?

Assessment:

### Scoring Guide

Points Earned	Possible points
Five themes of Geography-descriptions	
(1) Location	15
(2) Place	15
(3) Human-Environment Interaction	15
(4) Movement	15
(5) Region	15
Five pictures depicting each theme	
(1) Location	5
(2) Place	5
(3) Human-Environment Interaction	5
(4) Movement	5
(5) Region	<u>5</u>
Total points	100

Extension: Students could make a travel brochure. This brochure could provide information about the Santa Fe Trail; such as, the

distance, time, provisions needed, clothing, weather and native people. They could decorate the brochure with drawings or pictures.

References: World Geography Today by Robert Sager, David M. Helgren, Holt, Rinehart and Winston; 2000.