

Goods, Services, People, and Ideas Transported Through Colorado: A Mission Impossible?

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OVERVIEW

Students will be selecting (at random) goods and services, as well as methods of transportation in order to complete a mission across Colorado. Impossible or possible?

STANDARDS

- Geography Standard 1.3: Students know how to analyze the dynamic spatial organization of people, places, and environments.
- History Standard 2.1: Students know how to formulate questions and hypotheses regarding what happened in the past and to obtain and analyze historical data to answer questions and test hypotheses.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Be able to use maps of Colorado to derive information about places and environments.
- Use information from the Doing History CD-ROM disk or Website to solve problems in transporting good and services across Colorado.
- Use thinking skills through reading, writing, viewing, to justify their reasoning.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What goods or services do you think would be important to transport across Colorado?
- What problems could arise from transporting this product?
- Which would be the fastest, safest, or easiest way to transport this product?
- Are there places in Colorado that would be more difficult to transport products to than others?
- What might be some difficulties that could arise from a different choice of transportation?
- Which transportation inventions made the most impact on your product?

MATERIALS TO BE USED

- Doing History CD-ROM disk or Website, including both the Cities and Farming and Ranching topics
- Maps of Colorado
- Information on agricultural products of Colorado, etc.
- Note cards (three different colors of note cards would be helpful)
- Three cups or jars to hold note cards

PROCEDURE

Depending on the information already studied in class, the teacher may arrange this activity to suit the needs of students and to review information already studied.

1. Students will view the information on Cities Topic: Transportation, and on Farming and Ranching Topic: Food.
2. Using note cards, teacher and students will list information learned in class about Colorado in the 19th Century on the following topics: cities in Colorado, products (or services) in Colorado, modes of transportation (different colors for each topic/jar).
3. Place the note cards with the names of Colorado cities in one jar, in another jar place note cards with products of Colorado, and in another jar place the note cards with the different modes of transportation.
4. In small groups of 2 or 3 students, each group will choose 2 cards with the names of cities, 2 cards with products of Colorado, and 2 modes of transportation. Copy down the information chosen and return the cards to the appropriate jars.
5. Students will then be given the MISSION to use what they already know about the topics chosen (or what they need to learn more about these topics) to carry out the following orders:
“Your MISSION, if you choose to accept it, is to help in the transportation of the important products (or services) between the two cities listed on your cards. You must determine the best mode of transportation between the two chosen transportation methods. It is important for you to analyze the geographical maps for your route. You must prove to the AGENCY (teacher and classmates) your reasons for your decisions. You may display your choices/information on charts, graphs, maps, or in written paragraph form. Remember that this MISSION is taking place in Colorado of a century ago, not in the present.”
6. Give students an appropriate amount of time to come up with information to make their MISSION POSSIBLE.

7. Share each group's findings. Were their missions possible or impossible? Difficult or easy? What problems could arise?

ASSESSMENT

Assessment will vary, depending on the time spent on this activity, etc. Were students able to use information from previously learned activities to fulfill their missions? Were good problem-solving techniques used? Could students help to make up their own rubrics? Did students meet the objectives determined in the standards used? The assessment could be heavily based on the discussions that come from each group that shares.