

What We Need and What We Want: Then and Now Unit Guide

2-3 week unit lesson ideas encompassing New York State's American History as well as Global curriculum topics and key strands such as pioneers, women, needs and wants, goods and services, scarcity and limited resources, technology, transportation, comparison of past to today, and point of view.

Step I. Activity for teaching students about needs and wants and, scarcity and limited resources

Adapted in part from: Grade One Wants and Needs Lesson Activity: <http://tcaassets.org/public/lesson-plans/grade-one-wants-and-needs.pdf> (can use the activity following link or one below)

Ask students: *What would you **want** in order to get through one day at school?*

Help them by making a visual timeline of a day, beginning with:

When they get up and get ready - clothes and food at home in order to get going (what would they want to wear to school or eat for breakfast if it could be anything)

Way to get to school and back home - bus, car, sidewalk, bike (how would they get to school if they could choose any type of transport they wanted)

Place to learn in - building with light, heat, place to eat lunch, place to have lessons, place to go potty! (what would their school be like if they could design it the way they wanted)

Supplies - such as paper, pencil/pen, books, crayons, etc.; a teacher to help them learn, and so on (what would they want to use to help them learn at school if they could use anything they wanted)

Now, ask them to answer the question: *Of the items we just listed, what do you **need** in order to get through one day at school?* Go through the responses, guiding students in differentiating between what they want and what they need in order to get through a day at school.

Ask students: *How do we get these things we need for being at school?* Mostly from our families and communities - many of the needs are met through **buying goods and services** - we are *limited* by the amount of money we have - but we are also *influenced* by the kind of advertising that we come in contact with. For older students: As those who need or want to obtain certain goods and services, we are referred to as **consumers**; those who provide what is wanted or needed are called **producers**. (Maybe ask for examples from today)

Continue by saying we are going to learn about what life was like a very long time ago. The people who first came to our area were referred to as “**pioneers**,” which means “the first to settle an area.” Like us, *they had certain needs and wants*. But their needs and wants were different from ours since they lived in a *different time* and under *different circumstances*. For example, we live in a settled community, but they often moved to a place where no one else was living nearby. We need to think about how they tried to survive and settle into their pioneer life, and we will learn about how things have changed over time.

Step II. Initiate student back ground knowledge on pioneer life in preparation for reading primary source materials:

Ox Cart Man (grade 2)
Sarah Plain and Tall (grade 3)
Treasure in the Trunk (grades 4-5)

Teacher prep: Visit: **Frontier Life (PBS):** <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/frontierhouse/frontierlife/index.html> (click on “Frontier House/Frontier Life” and browse **the Homestead History: Historical Essays** – one on “Getting Started” (#2) has list of what pioneers often took with them when moving west. Also, look a “Making a Home on the Frontier” (#4) and “Food” (#6) essays for more background info).

Begin with statement: “When you think of the words **pioneer life**, what comes to mind in terms of:”*

Work (also use terms: occupation, trade, profession)
Possible answers: weaving, plowing, farming, spinning, blacksmith, etc.)

Play (also use terms: hobby, leisure, pastime)
Possible answers: sledding, singing, swimming, marbles, etc.)

Food (also use: provisions, staples)
Possible answers: mush, vegetables, bread, cider, etc.)

Clothing (also use terms: apparel, garments)
Possible answers: boots, suspenders, hats, breeches, bonnets, etc.)

Shelter (also use terms: housing, homestead)
Possible answers: cabin, homestead, farm, inn, tavern, etc.)

Transportation (also use terms: conveyance)
Possible answers: stagecoach, oxcart, canal boat, carriage, sled, etc.)

**for younger students, could prompt with an image of pioneer people from one of listed websites (found in Step V.) or from images or select short passages in above suggested texts that will be read in class. Or, perhaps create a word list from the text and ask them to place words in each of the appropriate categories below.*

Introduce new vocabulary and stress how types of needs and wants will change over time and between different groups of people.

Next, visit: **19th Century Monographs on the History of Western New York** (<http://www.nyheritage.org/collections/19th-century-monographs-history-wny> courtesy of Niagara University) that includes early pioneer descriptions for Erie (Buffalo) and Niagara Counties in New York.

Materials like this can be found for other parts of the state at sites such as Internet Archives (for example, Pioneer Life of Orleans County; <http://www.archive.org/stream/cu31924025959531#page/n5/mode/2up>) and at local historical societies and historians offices.

Use search terms such as “women”, “cooking”, “washing”, “ox carts”, “log cabins”, “Plows”, “clearing”, “mills”, and so on for finding excerpts in the text that present local examples describing pioneer life and that could be used in class activities that follow. In some cases, use of search boxes will not work, but most of the tables of contents for these publications are very detailed and will lead you to good examples.

Common Core Connection: Have students work independently or in pairs to read various excerpts (length to suit reading and grade levels of the class) and ask them to:

Identify new vocabulary and guess what it means (*Craft & Structure*)

Identify explicit meaning in text, and use details to support this (*Key Ideas and Details*)

Activity: *Create a word wall or a pioneer alphabet book using words encountered, and add new words as unit progresses. Make it creative!* Maybe a small trunk in which new words are placed, or are taped to wall over the trunk; maybe a chain of covered wagons made from construction paper and placed around the wall, one with each students' name on it and words they have uncovered.

Step III. Re-read one of the texts suggested above (or other similar text) and help the students identify which of the following terms might be represented in the story and how:

needs, wants, scarcity, abundance, consumers, producers, movement of people, movement of goods, technology, transportation

Perhaps present this as: “We are going to begin reading from the book, “...” and during our reading, I want you to think about “needs” and “wants” in terms of:

- *What is necessary for people to survive and thrive?*
- *What is not absolutely necessary for their survival, but would be nice to have or be able to do?*
- *What are limited resources that might be preventing these people from satisfying their needs and wants?*
- *What might solve that problem for them? (increased or advanced transportation and production)*
- *What might cause confusion among some people in deciding what are “needs” and what are “wants”? (possibly bring up concept of advertising here)*

Common Core Connection - Ask students to describe or to chart - from the evidence in the text: *How did life then compare to life today in terms of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter)?*

Students can identify and know text features in order to locate information from the text (***Craft and Structure***)

Students can describe the connection between two individuals or two events, ideas, or concepts in a text (***Key Ideas and Details***)

Activity: Have students write a friendly letter from the point of view of one character in the book, describing his/her pioneer experience to a friend or relative back home in a settled community.

Or, have students create a “Hand-Head-Heart” chart based on a character from their reading (what their character did, what their character thought and what their character felt about the pioneer experience)

For older students, extend this lesson: Use information from the readings to come up with a possible positive and negative effect for each cause: (show them how to visualize “cause and effect” statements by imagining each sentence beginning with “Because...”) Some examples:

- 1) *Farmers did not have a lot of money to spend (or, Because farmers did not have a lot of money to spend...they sometimes traded items or services for what they needed/....they sometimes were not able to get what they needed.)*
- 2) *The harvest will begin in three weeks...*
- 3) *Many companies began selling farm tools...*
- 4) *The frost came earlier this year than last...*
- 5) *Some families are very large in number...*

Another possible extension: *Mathematics:* would be to look at the PBS site or the Sutter's Fort site to have students calculate the distance, cost and quantity of supplies they might bring with them as they leave from the New England area or from another country to settle in the western New York territory – taking into account the mode of transportation they are using (give out various assigned roles) and number of family traveling with them.

Assessment activity: Have students create a storyboard: each student folds paper into 8 sections – first section is title, next 6 sections depict what is learned about pioneer life, last section is what is learned about courage to be a pioneer.

Step III. Market Day activity (optional) – tell students they are going to create their own pioneer market day and that they will be given different roles to play – as well as different resources in order to meet their needs and wants.

Teacher prep: For this, the teacher will need to introduce the types of people who produced what was needed (pioneer occupations) and create potential families and individuals as consumers. Each student would be assigned a skill or trade and each would also be assigned to a “family” (or just be an individual) and create situations that would allow the students to interact in a buying/selling/trading situation, based on their roles.

Teacher Resource: The Classroom Mini-Economy booklet:

<http://www.unm.edu/~jbrink/365/Documents/ClassroomEconomyBooklet.pdf>

Step IV. Changes in Technology and Transportation: As we look at what we learned about the past and what we know today, how have changes in things like technology and transportation changed the way things are done? Are any things the same?

Discuss observations such as technology and transportation have made more people and products able to travel further and faster than in the past. Like today, safety was an issue, but the rules for safety have changed with the new technologies and methods of transport. The new ways of doing things also changed the types of occupations in society. There are different energy needs today than in the past; Technology and transport have also made it possible to increase the capacity of people and goods being moved.

Activity: *Divide class into 5 groups and have them create a five-generation newspaper, each representing a point of view and experience of their generation (1812, 1862, 1912, 1962, 2012) in relation to how, as consumers, they obtain goods and services or, how, as producers, they transport goods and services to consumers.*

Resources: Students can be asked to search on their own if they have already been instructed on using online resources for research or, they can be given sample newspapers from various sources including the New York Heritage website (<http://www.nyheritage.org/newspapers/>; dates vary), Library of Congress (<http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/>, covering 1836-1922), and Fultonhistory.com (<http://fultonhistory.com/Fulton.html>; dates vary)

Step V. The Role of Advertising impacts ideas about needs and wants – as the American economy began to grow, and as technology and transportation began to connect more people with more kinds of products and services, early product labels identifying product brands and names began to grow too. Buying unpackaged goods was being replaced by sanitary, sealed, individual packaging of items.

The use of **rhetoric** in advertising became more widely used as a device to get people to buy certain services and products. The use of rhetoric goes back to the times of the ancient Greeks. Aristotle wrote about rhetoric as a means of persuasion. He identified three basic types of persuasive language:

Ethos or Ethics – to make an appeal based on the integrity or reputation of the speaker

Logos or Logic – to make an appeal based on the facts or reasoning related to the topic

Pathos or Emotion – to make an appeal using figurative language that evokes sympathy or emotional interest in the topic

Teacher background resources:

American Advertising: A Brief History (from History Matters)

<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/mse/ads/amadv.html>

Emergence of Advertising in America: 1850-1920. (from Duke University)

The Rise of Advertisement and American Consumer (U of MD)

<http://teachingamericanhistorymd.net/000001/000000/000129/html/t129.html>

Brand Name Product Labels and 19th Century Advertising in American Treasures Exhibit at LOC

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/tri184.html>

The Branding of America (lesson ideas from LOC)

http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities/presentations/branding/did_you_know.html

Show the students a variety of ads from the past (can show several time periods or just one), and ask them to identify what advertising techniques (ethos, logos, pathos) are being used in each one.

Sites with subjects of pioneers and advertising:

Library of Congress: "Advertising" Themed Resources at American Memory
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Advertising>
and at Prints & Photos Reading Room
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/list/picamer/paAdverts.html>

New York Heritage (search "advertising")
<http://www.newyorkheritage.org/>

New York Public Library Digital Gallery (same as above)
<http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/index.cfm>

For older students: Have them complete an *ad analysis worksheet* and discuss the concept of point of view in advertising (modified from two samples provided to suit grade level and/or reading levels):
<http://www.glencoe.com/sec/science/webquest/content/pdfs/unit1worksheet.pdf> or,
http://www.tennessee.gov/tsla/educationoutreach/worksheet_ad.pdf

Activity: *Balloon captions (what they think the people or characters in the ad might be saying or thinking) or have students create their own ads representing a different point of view ad from one they have analyzed.*

Examples of historical records from New York Heritage for Unit lessons/activities:





L.

Lancaster, Erie Co., N.Y.
Feb. 23. 1864.

Gentlemen,

Seeing your request in the paper for communications from the old settlers of this vicinity, I desire to contribute a very brief one to say, that

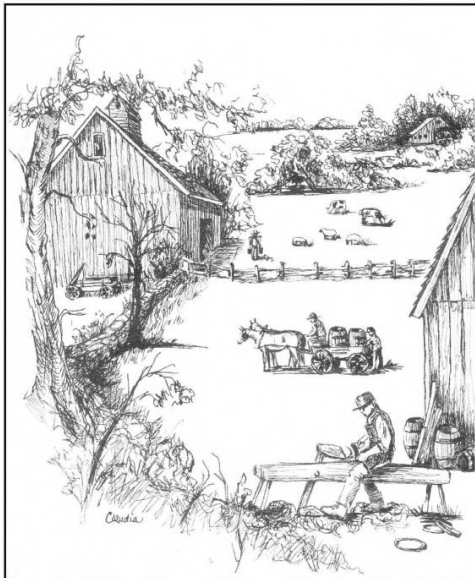
I moved into the town, which now goes by the name of Lancaster, in the year 1808. At that time, as I well remember, there were but twelve dwelling houses, on the road through this region, between Buffalo & the eastern boundary of the county. I could tire your patience in reciting incidents of the war that soon after broke out between this country & Great Britain. This, however, I will not do, presuming that the object of my communication will be gained if I simply mention a few points that stand out vividly in my memory.

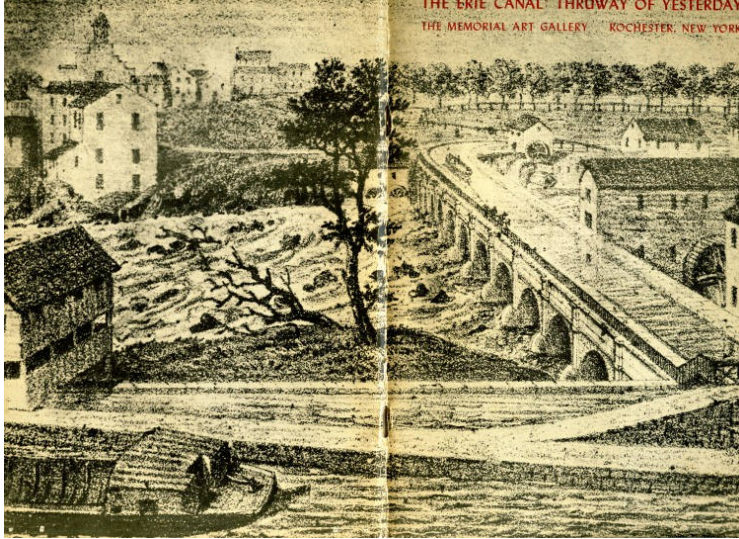
I was at Lewiston when the ar-
rived there



Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester. Archives.

WEST MONROE, N. Y.
1839 to 1989





[Sand Pumpings, 1982-03 \(Spring\)](#)



42. [History of Niagara County, N.Y., with illustrations descriptive of its scenery, private residences, public buildings, fine blocks and important manufactories and portraits of old pioneers and prominent residents](#)



43. [History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County ; With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers In Two Volumes. Volume 2, History of Buffalo](#)



44. [History of the City of Buffalo and Erie County ; With Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of its Prominent Men and Pioneers In Two Volumes. Volume 1, History of Erie County](#)

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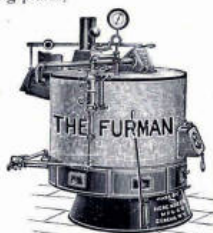
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