

SOCIAL STUDIES THEMATIC UNIT: Work; What is it Good For?

INTRODUCTION

Goals and Aims

Students of all ages often accept a situation without question or with only a surface examination. By investigating a cultural value of the U.S., I hope to encourage students to become more curious about other aspects of how life works on this planet. If successful, the students will become better critical thinkers, and better prepared to participate as active citizens in a rapidly changing world. The goal for the education system is to prepare students to be life-long learners. The goal of the investigation of something that would probably not occur to students is to encourage them to be skeptics of information or withhold judgment until conducting their own evaluation.

Rationale

Work is a core value in the culture of the United States. Individuals will spend the majority of their lives in the “working population”. Because, the workplace is changing, and the nature of work continues to change, students must have more than a surface knowledge of their place as part of the global working population.

The purpose of this unit is to explore the how work has changed over time, the historical roots of the American work ethic, and how it impacts students personally. The unit is designed to help students begin to understand that any investigation requires looking at an issue from multiple perspectives and from a variety of sources. Because of the complex nature of “work”, the unit also provides students with numerous opportunities for developing critical thinking skills through the evaluation of multiple sources for reliability, biases, etc. These skills will assist the students in their further study of history and in their journey as life-long learners.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The overarching goal of this unit is to understand that change is an integral part of history; however, knowledge of the past makes the present more understandable and better prepares one for the future.

National Standards for History

Standard 2: The student comprehends a variety of historical sources

- A. Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility
- B. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage
- C. Identify the central question(s)
- F. Appreciate historical perspectives
- I. Draw upon visual, literary, and musical sources

Standard 3: The student engages in historical analysis and interpretation

- A. Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas
- B. Consider multiple perspectives
- C. Analyze cause-and-effect relationships
- D. Draw comparisons across eras and regions in order to define enduring issues
- J. Hypothesize the influence of the past

Standard 5: The student engages in historical issues-analysis and decision-making

- A. Identify issues and problems of the past
- D. Evaluate alternative courses of action
- E. Evaluate the implementation of a decision

Alaska State Content Standards

History

- A. A student should understand that history is a record of human experiences that links the past to the present and the future.
 - 6. Know that cultural elements, including language, literature, the arts, customs, and belief systems, reflect the ideas and attitudes of a specific time and know how the cultural elements influence human interactions.
 - 7. Know that history is dynamic and composed of key turning points
- B. A student should understand historical themes through factual knowledge of time, places, ideas, institutions, cultures, peoples, and events.

Alaska State Performance Standards

Reading

(E.B.3) summarize information or ideas from a text and make connections between summarized information or sets of ideas and related topics or information

(E.D.2) identify and assess the validity, accuracy, and adequacy of evidence that supports an author's main ideas

Writing

(e.a.5) revise writing to improve style, word choice, sentence variety, and subtle of meaning in relation to the purpose and audience;

INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Enduring Understandings

The Nature of work in the United States has changed over time

The culture & economic systems have a direct impact on work & how work has changed over time

The “work ethic” is one of the core values of American culture

Essential Questions

Why is some work more highly valued than others?

Is all work worth doing well in accordance with U.S. values?

Expected Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit students will be able to:

1. Analyze the impact of early settlers on the concept of “work ethic”
2. Compare and contrast the Federalist & Antifederalist view of work
3. Evaluate the impact of the change from Mercantilism to Industrialization to a Postindustrial economy on work
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the what caused the creation of Labor Unions, characteristics of Labor Unions, Goals, Conflicts, and culture’s perceptions of labor unions
5. Analyze the impact of the Great Depression on workers’ psyche
6. Explain how the U.S. culture has denied certain groups of people the benefits from work.
7. Analyze, compare & contrast primary documents
8. Reflect on how the past impacts the present, and how learning impacts self awareness

Studies Content, Concepts, and Skills

Concepts

Culture

Technology

Institutions

Change/Continuity

Economics

Values

Content

AFL

CIO

Mercantilism

Industrialization

Postindustrial economy

Economics

Resources:

primary

Values

Federalist

Antifederalist

Depression

Strike

collective bargaining

secondary

ethics

glass ceiling

discrimination

sexism

cult of domesticity

Protestant work ethic

tertiary

Social Studies Skills & Dispositions

Intellectual skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group data in categories according to appropriate criteria. Note cause and effect relationships Detect bias in data presented in various forms; graphics, tabular visual, print Form opinion based on critical examination of relevant information Present visually (chart, graph, diagram, model, etc.) information extracted from print Determine whether or not the information is pertinent to the topic
Interpersonal skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express personal convictions Contribute to the development of a supportive climate in groups Work individually or with others to decide on an appropriate course of action
Reading skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detect cause and effect relationships Read for a variety of purposes: critically, analytically, to predict outcomes, to answer a question, to form an opinion, to skim for facts Use context clues to gain meaning
Study skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the community as a resource Take notes
Reference & Information-search skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detect bias in visual material
Dispositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of individual biases, prejudices and attempt to be open-minded Listen to and be respectful of others Examine issues from more than one perspective

Assessment Framework

Formative Assessments

Initial Discussions on Unit Questions
 Homework (Study questions for documents)
 Key People Quiz
 Ongoing vocabulary quizzes
 Quiz on Labor Conflicts
 Seminars on primary documents & audio sources
 Venn Diagram on Fed/Antifederalist view of work
 Flow Chart on changing economy
 Illustrated Outline on Unions

Summative/Culminating Assessment

Mural depicts four content areas of work answering the question, how has the nature of work in the U.S. changed over time? The four content areas are Economy's Impact, Culture's Impact on Work and Work Ethic, Reasons for rise of Unions & impacts of Unions, and Impact of Work on the Individual. A no more than one page typed artist's explanation is required on the back of the poster.

Mural Rubric					
Point Value Criteria Evaluated	Advanced 4	Proficient 3	Basic 2	Novice 1	S C O R E
Content Accuracy	Clearly reflects the most important content of the unit	Reflects content of the unit; some mistakes	Somewhat reflects the content of the unit; many mistakes	Completely inaccurate; misleads the audience	
Craftsmanship	Masterpiece; outstanding design, planning & neatness	Adequate design, planning & neatness	Design appears somewhat haphazard; not consistently neat	Show a lack of planning; sloppy	
Creativity	Was extremely clever and presented with originality; a unique approach	Had many unique features and clever aspects	Has some unique features, but not consistent throughout the mural	Predictable and bland; looks like it was copied	
Answers the Unit question	Demonstrates sophisticated understanding of essential questions	Demonstrates competent understanding of essential questions	Superficial understanding of essential questions	Lacks understanding of essential questions	
Comments					

WHERE

W – Rubrics for each performance task will be handed out during the introduction of the Unit along with the Unit Instructions and calendar. Essential questions will be posted in the room on the first day of the unit.

H – Prewrite and short discussions on the unit questions

E – Performance tasks will allow students to explore/discover and gain an in-depth understanding of the topics referred to by the essential questions

R- Students will self-assess the flowchart on the changes in the economy of the United States and the Illustrated Outline on Labor Unions

Students will write a reflection paper on how what they have learned about work has impacted, changed, or reinforced their views and attitudes toward schoolwork, homework, chores and jobs.

E – Performance tasks will demonstrate understanding of critical elements of enduring understandings. Culminating project will provide evidence concerning the depth of understanding of the essential questions. Students will also self-assess the culminating project.