



TRAVELING THROUGH TIME, WETLAND STYLE

Summary

Using clue cards containing maps, photographs, and bits of information, students divide into small groups to piece together timelines of the cultural history of the Watsonville Wetlands. As they travel back in time, they examine changes in wildlife, agriculture, growth, and immigrant populations. Then the students imagine and draw what they think West Struve Slough would look like at different time periods.

Objectives

Students will:

- know how to organize information into a timeline
- know that people from different cultures have moved through the Pajaro Valley
- name some specific changes the Pajaro Valley has gone through over the last 300 years

California Content Standards Addressed

Grade Five - *Visual and Performing Arts 5.3*: “Construct diagrams, maps, graphs, timelines, and illustrations to communicate ideas or tell a story about a historical event.”

Grade Five- *History and Social Sciences 5.8,5.:* “Describe the continued migration of Mexican settlers in the Mexican territories of the West and Southwest.

Grade Six through Eight- *History and Social Sciences, Chronological and Spatial Thinking 2.:* “Students construct time lines of key events, people, and periods of the historical era they are studying.”

Grade Six - *Reading comprehension 2.3*: “Connect and clarify main ideas, identifying their relationship to other sources and related topics.”

Grade Seven - *Visual and Performing Arts 5.2*: “Use various drawing skills and techniques to depict lifestyles and scenes from selected civilizations.

The Basics:

Grade Level:

5-8

Subject areas:

Social Science, Visual Art

Duration

90 minutes or more (All activities can be expanded.)

Number of Docents Needed

2

Outline

There are six pieces to this lesson:

- 1) Timeline Introduction (10 minutes)
- 2) History Timeline (35 minutes)
- 3) Timeline Discussion (10 minutes)
- 4) Walk down to Department of Fish and Game Reserve (10 minutes)
- 5) Historical Illustration: Imagining the Wetlands through Time (20 minutes)
- 6) Closing circle (5 minutes)

Materials

1. Timeline Introduction

A whiteboard and markers

2. History Timeline

2 or 3 sets of cultural history cards (teacher's kit) for each group, OR divide one set of cards into 2-3 smaller sets

1 large sheet of butcher block paper for each group of students

A couple sets of magic markers or colored pencils for each group of students

5. Historical Illustration

A clipboard for each student

3 or more half sheets of blank paper for each clipboard

A set of colored pencils for each student

1 stopwatch

1 set of historical cards, as a reference

Background Material

A Partial Timeline of the Pajaro Valley Area

18-15 thousand years BP (Before the Present time) – Melt water from the thaw of the last ice age raises the water level in Monterey Bay by hundreds of feet and both inundates the lower reaches of the Elkhorn Slough valley and fills it in with sediment, forming the present slough system.

10,000 to 7,500 years BP – Humans, possibly descendants of people who crossed a land bridge exposed in the Bering Strait during the last ice age, arrive and settle the land around Monterey Bay, which continues to rise as glaciers retreat. We call these settlers Native Americans, and in this area they are of the Ohlone tribe. They leave no written history, but evidence from their trash heaps, known to archeologists as midden mounds, reveal that they enjoyed a generally peaceful existence as hunters and gatherers in small communities, in a bountiful and predominately water-based world. Although they aren't agriculturists who plow fields and plant seeds, they do impact the landscape by regularly burning meadows and oak

forests to reduce brush and encourage growth of native grasses. Their reality changed dramatically when the Spanish military and missionaries arrived in 1769.

1769 (Oct. 8) – Gaspar de Portolá and his fellow explorers are the first Europeans to arrive in the Pajaro Valley. He names the river in honor of a large, straw-stuffed seabird the natives had hung from a pole in their burned and abandoned village.

1770 (June 3) - The Spanish Mission Era begins in Northern California with the founding of Mission San Carlos Borromeo de Carmelo in Carmel, which was founded by Junipero Serra,

1821 - Mexico wins independence from Spain and California becomes part of Mexico. Mexican Californians called themselves Californios.

1821 - 1847 The era of the Californios. They raised huge herds of cattle on *ranchos*. They imported the cattle and planted many non-native grasses to feed them.

1837 – The Bolsa del Pajaro, with the Pajaro River as its southern boundary and stretching to Monterey Bay, is granted to Sebastian Rodriguez by Governor Juan B. Alvarado. Rodriguez first claimed the land in 1823 and had lived on it since 1831. In 1851 the US put a value on the 5,496-acre property of \$34,430.

1844 – The first of steady stream of Irish immigrants arrives in the Pajaro Valley, congregating around the property of attorney Eugene Casserly, who was born in Ireland. The Irish are the largest foreign-born group in the region into the 1880s, just ahead of the Chinese.

1846 (June 14) – Californios proclaim independence from Mexico as the Republic of California. They raise their own flag with a grizzly bear as an emblem and elect William B. Ide as president of the new nation. On July 9, 26 days later, the Bear Flag is replaced by the flag of the United States.

1848 (Feb. 2) – The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo is signed, ending the US-Mexico War and ceding all of Alta California, Utah, Nevada, and parts of Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico and Wyoming to the United States.

1850 – The first of a steady stream of Portuguese immigrants from the Azore Islands arrive in Pajaro Valley, first working in the whaling industry and then turning to farming, specifically cereal grains. They eventually dominate the dairy industry in Santa Cruz County.

1852 – The demand and subsequent high price of potatoes, destined for the miners fueling the California gold rush, spurs a rush of people into the Pajaro Valley, mostly from the gold mines, to grow potatoes.

1858 – The first commercial apple orchard, consisting of 13 acres, is planted by Issac Williams and Dr. R.F. Peckham.

1852 - 20,000 Chinese laborers are the first wave of Chinese immigrants to enter California. Most of them helped to build railroads

1860 – Immigrants from Denmark arrive in the Pajaro Valley and begin cultivating wheat, as they had done in their homeland. By 1880 there were enough Danes to build their own church in Watsonville on Ford Street. Struve Slough is named for one of the Danish families.

1863 – The first school built in Watsonville, called Pajaro School and later the Primary School, is completed on East Fourth Street.

1865 – Strawberries are planted in the Pajaro Valley, eventually giving rise to the area's strawberry industry.

1866 – The first crews of Chinese laborers destined specifically for the agricultural fields arrive in Pajaro Valley. The Chinese remain the primary farm workers in the area until the 1890s.

1868 – Martinelli's Soda & Cider Works is established.

1868 – Watsonville is incorporated.

1874 – Coatian immigrants begin their move toward dominating the apple industry in Pajaro Valley when Marco Rabasa becomes a wholesale apple broker. The Coatians are generally from the Konavle Valley, inland from the Dalmatian coast on the Adriatic Sea

1882 - Chinese are legally restricted from entering the United States.

1888 – The Spreckels sugar beet processing mill is completed on a 25-acre site in Watsonville. The first year 1,000 tons of beet sugar were produced. By 1892 an average of 350 tons of beets are processed daily, generating 45 tons of sugar. By 1895 Watsonville farmers devote 11,000 acres to beets, producing 19,945 tons of sugar. The planting and harvesting of the beet fields are dependent upon Chinese and Japanese laborers.

1896 - Bullfrogs are introduced to California to help satisfy the demand for frog legs. Their populations increases greatly over the years, eventually threatening populations of native frogs like our tree frog.

1890 - Japanese laborers begin moving to California to work in the fields.

1900 - Grizzly bears, important to the Ohlone people and the Californios in very different ways, disappear from the Pajaro Valley area for good. Presumably the last grizzly bear in Pajaro Valley was killed.

1903 - Korean laborers begin moving to California

1910 - Mexican immigrants begin pouring into the area to escape the turmoil and violence of the revolution. While they begin working in San Benito County, by the 1920s they are a

prominent part, along with Filipinos, of the agricultural fields in Pajaro Valley. By the 1940s Mexicans dominate as farm workers.

1915 – Lettuce is planted commercially for the first time in Pajaro Valley by Mose Hutchings despite the cynicism of fellow farmers. Success sparks a rush to grow lettuce, resulting in lettuce being a major crop within a decade.

1924 – Japanese are legally restricted from entering the US, opening the door for Filipinos to replace them as farm workers in the Pajaro Valley. The Philippines are a US territory, which allows Filipinos to travel freely to the US.

1930 - Filipino immigrants make up the majority of farm workers in the Pajaro Valley

1934 Filipinos are legally restricted from entering the United States.

1942 – Japanese residents in Pajaro Valley are sent to internment camps for the duration of World War II, leaving farms nearly empty of workers.

1942 - The Bracero program brought Mexican citizens to California to work as farm laborers.

1964 – The Bracero Program ends, but instead of returning to Mexico, migrant workers move their families into Pajaro Valley to live. They mostly are from the Mexican states of Michioacan and Jalisco.

1970 – The United Farm Workers calls for a strike in the Pajaro Valley and Salinas lettuce fields, resulting in a series of bloody conflicts with the police and sheriff's departments. UFW, led by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta, had staged successful grape boycotts in the late 1960s and early 1970s in a fight for higher wages and improved working conditions.

1987 (May) – Tony Campos is elected to the Watsonville City Council, the first Latino to be seated.

1989 (November) – Oscar Rios, an immigrant from El Salvador, wins a city council seat in Watsonville's first district election.

1992 – The Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the nation's largest marine preserve at 5,322 square miles, is created by President George Bush after a 15-year effort by environmentalists and other activists.

1995 – Heavy rain causes a breach in the levee on the south side of the Pajaro River, inundating Pajaro and Watsonville.

2004 (August) – Pajaro Valley High School opens with 9th graders only in a temporary site, which is under construction and destined to become Cesar Chavez Middle School.

2005 (August) - Pajaro Valley High School inaugurates its new, still uncompleted campus, hosting only 9th and 10th graders. Junior and senior classes are added over the next two years. The school is designed to accommodate 2,200 students.

Procedure

1) Timeline Introduction (10 minutes)

- Gather students in the classroom and introduce the concept of a timeline. Ask if any of the students know what a timeline is. Has anyone made one before? Are they useful? Why? What for? If there is confusion, explain to the students that a timeline is a calendar of events that makes it easy to see the order in which events occurred.
- Invite students to help make a sample timeline and draw a horizontal line on the board. Ask a student to tell you the year he or she was born and mark that in the middle of the timeline.
- Now ask several students to name an event. (Prompt: Did anyone move to Watsonville? When was that? What happened recently that you enjoyed? Can you name anything that happened before you were born?)
- As students to name events; ask where that event should go on the timeline. Stop after 4-5 events and ask if anyone has questions.
- Does anyone know some historic events that happened in Watsonville? How do you think the wetlands in Watsonville have changed over time?

2) History Timeline (35 minutes)

- Tell students that they will divide into groups to make a timeline of things that have happened in the Pajaro Valley over the years.
- You may use 1 set of history cards for each group or you may divide one set of cards into 2 or 3 smaller sets- one set focusing on immigration, one on agriculture, one on maps and natural resources. For the shortest version of this lesson, use only 8 cards per group. For the longest version, use all the cards.
- Divide students into three groups. Give each group a sheet of butcher block paper large enough to cover a classroom desk, magic markers, and a set of cultural history cards. (Depending on the students, you may want to have a copy of the Pajaro Valley Timeline so they have an additional source of information.)

- Tell each group to use the information on the table to create a timeline of Pajaro Valley history. Ask students to first read the information on each card and then arrange the cards in correct chronological order. Then instruct them to draw a line on their paper and copy the information from each card on to the timeline. Finally, ask student to draw a picture to illustrate the information on their card. Docents and stewards should be available to answer questions (vocabulary or content) about the cards.
- When students are finished, have each group conduct a quick presentation on their timeline.

3) Timeline Discussion (10 minutes)

- Changes in agriculture over time -- what crops have grown in the Pajaro Valley in the past? What do you think we will grow here in the future?
- Name the animals mentioned on the WERC Timeline. Has the wildlife in this area remained the same over time? What are some changes you notice?
- Compare the 1940 map to the 1956 map. Can you find any common landmarks to both? What are some changes you see? What about the 1914 map?
- Changes in population over time -- How many different ethnicities can you count that were the “newcomers” to the Pajaro Valley at one time or another that have influenced life here?
- How has our area benefited from all the different ethnic groups that have lived here?
- Looking at the WERC Timeline how many years did it take from the time Watsonville was incorporated until it had a Latino mayor?
- What do you know/ what have you experienced here that you would add to the timeline?

4) Walk down to Department of Fish and Game Reserve (10 minutes)

- Gather students together to walk down. Pass clipboards with plain paper out to the students for them to carry down with them. Stewards and docents should carry down packs of colored pencils, a stopwatch, and a set of history cards.
- As you start to head out with the group, draw the students’ attention to the ESHA. Ask the students if they think the land looks like part of a wetland. Ask them what the fields look like to them (if they do not think it looks like part of the wetlands). Explain that up until several years ago the fields were strawberry fields but historically this land is a

seasonal wetland. Show them what restoration work is being done on the ESHA. (You may have to review or introduce the concept of restoration.)

- Continue down to the DFG Reserve. Once you are there, have the students circle up and sit down on one of the sites with hay bales.

5) Historical Illustration: Imagining the Wetlands through Time (20 minutes)

- Tell the students that the DFG Reserve is being restored to its natural beauty, just like the ESHA, but this land has gone through many changes over time. The students are going to imagine what the land looked like at different periods of time and draw what they imagine. Have the stewards pass out the colored pencils. Have the students sit as far away from each other to reduce possible distractions. Tell them that this is a quiet activity so we expect quiet while everyone is drawing.
- Tell the students that for their first sketch (explain that a sketch is a quick, representational drawing) they will write down today's date in a corner of their paper and draw what they see around them. Give them exactly 4 minutes. Start a stopwatch. When the time is up have them put down their pencils and hold their drawing up so everyone can see.
- For the 2nd sketch, have them imagine that it is 1948. Their assignment is to draw from the same perspective but to draw what they think that landscape would look like in that time period. If some students are not sure what was happening during that time frame, have other students describe facts from their timeline or show them some of the historical cards. Again, have students write the imagined date in the corner of a fresh sheet of paper. Give the 4 minutes to sketch. When the time is up, they share their drawings.
- You may do this with 1 or 2 or 3 more time periods depending on how much time you have left. Other recommended time periods for this assignment are 1870, 1830, and 1600.

6) Closing circle (5 minutes)

- Gather students in a circle. Pass a rock around the circle and ask each student to say one thing that has changed in the Pajaro Valley over the last 300 years. Walk back up to the WERC or have the students picked up at the DFG Reserve gate.

Extensions:

- ✓ Watch “First People of the Pajaro: The Pajaro Ohlone Indian Story” (available on DVD in the WERC library)

Bibliography/Resources

“America On The Move.” Smithsonian Institution website. retrieved March 17, 2007 from http://americanhistory.si.edu/ONTHEMOVE/exhibition/exhibition_3_1.html.

Evans, J. “Timeline: Watsonville, Pajaro Valley, and Monterey Bay Area.” research for PVHS social science class. Available in WERC library.

Interactive online timeline of the history of California. Retrieved March 15, 2007 from http://www.californiahistory.net/temporary_files/timelineframeset.htm.

Map collection, UCSC library