

LESSON # 4: GUARDIANS OF THE WEST

(Grade 8/Social Studies)

Written by Mishelle Hall

Overview of the Lesson: In this lesson, students will research, evaluate and analyze the role of the buffalo in the Westward Movement. This activity is intended to be used with other Social Studies lessons and activities to provide students with a comprehensive study of American Westward Expansion.

Objective: The learner will

- Research, evaluate and analyze the role of the buffalo in the Westward Movement.

TEKS/TAKS:

(8.6) History. The student understands westward expansion and its effects on the political, economic, and social development of the nation.

(B) explain the political, economic, and social roots of Manifest Destiny.

(8.12) Geography. The student understands the physical characteristics of the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries and how humans adapted to and modified the environment.

(A) analyze how physical characteristics of the environment influenced population distribution, settlement patterns, and economic activities in the United States during the 18th and 19th centuries;

(B) describe the consequences of human modification of the physical Environment of the United States.

(8.30) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired from a variety of sources including electronic technology.

(8.31) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms.

(8.32) Social studies skills. The student uses problem-solving and decision-making skills, working independently and with others, in a variety of settings.

Time Required: One to two class periods

Materials Needed:

Transparency of the Sid Richardson Museum painting *Guardian of the Herd* (1899) by Charles M. Russell

Transparency of the NARA photograph: "Buffalo grazing near buffalo yards, Wichita National Forest, Okla., March 11, 1908. 95-G- 76223"

<http://www.archives.gov/research/american-west/images/107.jpg>

Copies of the article "Buffalo Nation"

Copy of the NARA source Headquarters Department of Platte (1871) Memo
Cause and Effect Chart

Procedure

- Create a transparency of the Sid Richardson Museum painting *The Guardian of the Herd* by Charles M. Russell.



The Guardian of the Herd, 1899, Charles M. Russell,
Pencil, Watercolor, and Gouache on Paper
Sid Richardson Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

- Using the painting as a visual discovery, let students discuss the painting. Discussion might address the following questions:
 - What is happening in the painting?
 - What do you notice in the background?
 - What is the location of the painting?
 - What is the time period? How do you know?

Create a transparency of NARA photograph “Buffalo grazing near buffalo yards”, Wichita National Forest, Okla., March 11, 1908.



“Buffalo grazing near buffalo yards”, Wichita National Forest, Okla., March 11, 1908. 95-G-76223; Records of the Forest Service, 1870 – 2000, Record Group 95; Still Picture Records LICON, Special Media Archives Services Division (NWCS-S), National Archives at College Park, MD. Online version on November 2, 2006, available at <http://www.archives.gov/research/american-west/images/107.jpg>
ARC Identifier: 523028.

- Discuss the photograph:

What is happening?
Where was the photo taken?
When was the photo taken?

- Have your students compare and contrast the painting and the photograph:

How are they alike? How are they different?

What inferences can we make about the population of buffalos from the mid-to-late 1800s to the early 1900s?

- Provide each student with a copy of the reading “Buffalo Nation” and the “Headquarters Department of the Platte” memo (1871).

Online version of “Buffalo Nation” article, American Buffalo: Spirit of a Nation at PBS Online, on November 2, 2006, available at:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/buffalo/nation.html>

of Telegram.

Headquarters Department of the Platte,

OMAHA, NEB.,

January 19th 1871.

General E. D. Townsend,
Adjutant General U.S. Army,
Washington, D.C.

I hear of no arrangement by Indian
Department to feed indians at Fort Laramie.
In what extent am I to feed them?

(Signed) C. C. Ingles,
Brigadier General,
Commanding.



Letter to Adjutant General E. D. Townsend, Headquarters Department of the Platte, Omaha, Nebraska, January 19, 1871; Letters Received by the Office of the Adjutant General (Main Series), 1871-1880. National Archives Microfilm Publication M666, Roll 2. File 113 AGO 1871; Record Group 94. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

- Have your students take turns reading the article and the memo aloud.

As a class, discuss the key points of the article such as:

What happened to the buffalo?

How did Native Americans' usage of buffalo differ from the American settlers' usage of the buffalo?

How do the problems described in the article relate to the U.S. Government's memo?

What were the overall effects of the Government actions?

Activity

After examining the painting, the photograph and the written documents, have students complete a Cause and Effect chart about the treatment of buffalos during American Expansion.

An example of a Cause and Effect chart available at www.educationoasis.com, online November 2, 2006, at:

http://www.educationoasis.com/curriculum/GO_pdf/causeeffect_tchart.pdf

Using their chart, students will take on the role of a westward settler and create a postcard to family or friends back East, describing his/her view point about the U.S. Government's treatment of the buffalo and ultimately, Native Americans.