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## WORK AND CULTURE OF THE SOUTHERN COLORADO COAL FIELDS

### LESSON PLANS

La Veta is a small district with about 330 students Pre-School--12. Since I'm the Library Media Specialist for K-12, these lesson plans/units will be focused toward methods recommended by American Library Association in INFORMATION POWER: BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEARNING. The literature is continuing to guide us toward a collaborative approach for facilitating use of the library and technology in the Library Media Center. The form that is being used for the lesson plans is the recommended format from ALA. To begin the year, I would also like to do a presentation with teachers before school starts that presents the benefits of collaboration between the teachers and the Library Media Specialist. This collaborative effort with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher could be used as an example. This would be a good opportunity to talk about the use of primary sources.

So toward that goal, I met with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher on June 29<sup>th</sup> to discuss a unit on Colorado History. Colorado History will be taught in her social studies time period and focus on the standards for 4<sup>th</sup> grade social studies. The unit will be taught for a 9 weeks period. Social Studies is taught for 30 minutes each day, and our school has a 4-day week. My contribution will be to gather resources from our library, purchase some books and materials to add to the library collection, contribute information for guest speakers and field trips, and **contribute enthusiasm and suggestions for using much of the materials that I gained from the Teacher Institute**. As Media Specialist, one of my main responsibilities is to act as a resource person and to be familiar with all curriculum areas so that the library resources complement the curriculum. I will add my standards for Information Literacy and the teacher will add the Social Studies Standards. Last year this unit led up to visiting Bent's Fort that culminated the unit for Colorado History.

There is a new teacher for 7<sup>th</sup> grade Colorado History this year so can not meet with him/her. It would really be great if the middle school (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>) would have an interdisciplinary unit because there are only 3 teachers and one class for each subject. A retired teacher said the "hook" she would use is to put them in a dark room first and ask how they liked it and have different languages spoken that they would not understand. They could focus on the history, science, (the middle school teacher also teaches high school chemistry) math, (last year Colorado History teacher taught math), plus writing about the personalities of Ludlow. This could be concentrated into an enrichment week that we sometimes have during the week before the second semester starts. I've included a syllabus and scheduling notes for a summer session that was taught by 5 teachers during the summer of 1997 on Huerfano County. The materials filled a 2-inch notebook. This would be a great interdisciplinary unit for the middle school.

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There is also a vacancy for high school history. Hopefully, there will be a teacher soon. It would be good for them to approach the mining and Ludlow from the study of unions.

I also think it would be a good writing exercise for the English class to consider what a massacre is and why the term is used. What are the guidelines that make it a massacre, rather than an incident, uprising, etc? The Columbine school shooting was called a massacre and other school shootings have not been. Some strikes, where people were killed, were not called massacres. What makes a massacre? It's an interesting question to me. I would assume that the teacher would look at the Ludlow Massacre and some others before the writing assignment. I found a reference to a Columbine massacre that was in 1927:

**21 November 1927**

Picketing miners were massacred in Columbine, Colorado

It was on a web page, <http://hempwine.com/alleycat/labor.html>, with the title, "An Eclectic List of events in U.S. Labor History." The page is by Allen Lutins who received his M.A. from Binghamton University in the Department of Anthropology in 1992. Seemed a coincidence. This could make an interesting writing exercise. It would be a good research question for History or English students.

I also talked with the Principal and suggested that we might choose Colorado as the theme for the year since everything we teach could definitely be tied to our state. She thought that sounded good. The decision would be made at the Teachers' Meeting before school starts for students. I told her that I was going to have a timeline for Colorado in both the elementary and high school libraries.

It seems that I have done a lot of explaining. I hope this fulfills the requirements.

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June 17, 1999

Hi Ashley,

I'm sending the top sheet that I sent to Dean about the unit to be taught in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. I'll try to include other ideas that I might have.

Sometimes I think we get history only by bits and pieces and it never gets tied together. I really liked the overall picture that we had. I don't think it has to be in great detail to lead up to the period of time being discussed in more detail. That's the reason that I liked the idea of keeping a timeline in the classroom (in my case in the libraries) to let students see the progression of events.

A unit on genealogy would be an opener to discuss the mines and could be done in conjunction with a unit like in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade or any history unit. It would bring it down to the local level for students. This would include other cultures and traditions.

It seems to me that history classes are sometimes boring because they stick directly to the history book which sometimes only has a sentence about things that might be really interesting for a local area. I would like to see them augment their classes by reaching out for other resources—librarian and the library, local individuals, and including the local history. For example, WPA probably receives a few sentences. Our school was built around 1911 and with WPA labor as were the town lakes here. Teachers sometimes go so slowly in some areas that students become quickly bored. They're always saying, "We never got past the Civil War this year". I would like to see them learn how historical events have changed their world and not just study unrelated events that are not relevant to them.

I like the idea of the literature connection. I don't have particular examples right now but am more aware and will be looking to tie some to my timelines in the libraries this year.

I would like to see a list of resources that could be purchased at the present time that would expand my collection for Colorado History. One teacher from Trinidad said to use the "Grandmother's trunks" that can be borrowed from the Colorado Historical Society with only cost of postage.

We have a science teacher that gives an end of the year project for environmental science that concentrates on education, minerals, and industry. They have to research how the particular area has impacted the environment for a number of years. One student really had an in-depth paper on the education of our county, especially our local area.

World history could be made more interesting by relating what is happening in Colorado at the time things are happening in other parts of the world. Some teachers do this I know, but it has not happened in our school very much.

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Of course my main emphasis would be on more collaboration with the library and more cooperation/teaming with other teachers within the system. Our Science department has a very good natural history museum and also is working on an Interactive Nature Trail on property adjacent to the school that was granted GOCO funds. These are great resources for science but also for the study about Colorado in general. Just communicating with other professionals in our local districts show how many have an expertise in areas that we didn't know about. Our Superintendent was really interested and talked to me just one time for an hour and a half about his father and grandfather in the mines and about other personal experiences that were so interesting.

And last but not means least, I would like to see more consideration of teaching students and teachers more Information Literacy and copyright restrictions. One great site that I found about copyright for young students was: "What I learned about being a copy-cat: a true story". [http://www.peachstar.gatech.edu/ga\\_stories/stu/copycat.htm](http://www.peachstar.gatech.edu/ga_stories/stu/copycat.htm)

Well, this probably covers more than you ever wanted to know about what I think. Have a good summer for the time that is left.

## Collaborative Unit Planning Sheet

Teacher: Marie Ortivez-4<sup>th</sup> grade

Library Media Specialist: Evelyn Heikes

Content area: Social Studies

Unit of study: Colorado

Unit planning began: June 29, 1999

Unit ended: \_\_\_\_\_

### Goals and Objectives of the Unit:

#### Social Studies:

**SSE4-01. Students will demonstrate knowledge of map skills for 4<sup>th</sup> grade level.**

**SSE4-02. Students will demonstrate knowledge of geography by acquiring skills about studying regions, environment, multi-cultures, how people make a living with available natural resources—farming, ranching, mining, manufacturing, and providing services.**

**SSE4-03. Students will demonstrate a knowledge of regions utilizing the following concept objectives at 4<sup>th</sup> grade level:**

**3.1. Concept objective, discovering what a region is. The earth is divided into regions, which are differentiated by climate, vegetation, or landforms.**

**3.2. Concept objective, the U.S. in the world. The U.S. is the fourth largest country in the world in area and is a country of immigrants.**

#### Information Literacy:

- 1. (Inf. Lit #1) Students as knowledge seekers develop information-seeking strategies and locate information.**
- 2. (Inf. Lit #5) Students as responsible information users. Students cite references in proper format.**
- 3. (Inf. Lit. #2) Students will create quality products.**
- 4. Interest students and teachers in the rich history of Southern Colorado as shown by the Teacher Institute on “Work and Culture of the Southern Colorado Coal Fields.”**

#### Responsibilities:

**Teacher: Will decide format for divisions of study—individual, groups, etc.  
Will decide the time period for the class.  
Will determine order of topics.  
Will determine when students will be in classroom or library and time for field trips, guest speakers, and other activities.**

- LMS:**
- Will collect resources, either by ordering, school library, Interlibrary Loan, bibliographies, etc.**
  - Will have Colorado History featured in the libraries for the 9 weeks with a timeline, as well as displays and bulletin boards to coordinate with particular topics, such as exploration, immigration, and Ludlow.**
  - Will help facilitate with obtaining guest speakers and arranging some of the field trips.**
  - Will make a list of Internet references to make it easier to search on the Internet. This can be done with *Filimentality* or *Dreamweaver 2*.**
  - Will help with the technological aspects on computers, CD-ROMs Internet.**
  - Will help with the scheduling so that 4<sup>th</sup> graders can use the elementary and high school libraries as well as the local public Library.**

**Students:**

- Will complete workbook that accompanies textbook.**
- Will add to Colorado map that was used by 1998-99 4<sup>th</sup> graders and draw maps for coal mines in Huerfano County and Ludlow.**
- Will conduct research in the library, interview family members and other knowledgeable persons, and take notes on guest speakers, field trips, etc.**
- Will have a culminating paper/scrapbook/journal with proper references**
- Will have a presentation in the form of scrapbook, oral, computer, etc.**
- Will have some essay assignments, with one at least focusing on the Ludlow Massacre.**
- Will contribute to Timeline banner in the library.**

**Assessments:**

**The responsibilities mentioned above will be assessment items as well as giving tests after five lessons.**

**Text:**

**Schmidt, Cynthia. Colorado: Grassroots. Phoenix, Arizona: Cloud Publishing, 1996.**

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**Unit Topics:**

- 1. Colorado Today**
- 2. Explorers and Settlement**
  - A. Spanish**
  - B. French**
    - 1. Fur traders**
    - 2. Mountain men**
      - a. Kit Carson**
      - b. Jim Bridger**
      - c. Jim Beckwourth**
  - C. Mexico**
  - D. Native Americans**
    - 1. Anasazi**
    - 2. Utes**
    - 3. Arapaho**
    - 4. Cheyenne**
  - E. United States**
    - 1. Zebulon Pike**
    - 2. Stephen Long**
    - 3. John Fremont**
    - 4. John Gunnison**
- 3. Counties and geographical information**
  - A. Huerfano**
    - 1. Altitude**
    - 2. Landforms**
  - B. Las Animas**
- 4. Natural Resources**
  - A. Gold**
  - B. Silver**
  - C. Coal**
  - D. Grasslands**
    - 1. Cattle**
    - 2. Sheep**
- 5. Occupations**
  - A. Their families at the present time/their grandparents**
  - B. Mining**
  - C. Ranching and farming**
  - D. Manufacturing**
  - E. Shopkeepers**
  - F. Service Industries (tourism)**
  - G. Mines**
- 6. Colorado's People/Ethnic groups**
  - A. Native Americans**
  - B. Immigrants**
    - 1. Mexicans**

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2. Spanish
3. Europeans
  - a. Germany
  - b. England,
  - c. Russia
  - d. Italy
4. Oriental
5. African-American
- C. In mines
- D. Students' ancestors
7. Businesses
  - A. Railroad
  - B. Supplies
8. Education

The teacher plans to cover these topics but some of the detailed lessons will focus on the mining and Ludlow. There is a woman that “does” Mother Jones. We also have students whose grandparents can tell stories about their parents that worked in the mines. The Superintendent has already said that he will take them for an all day field trip to Ludlow and around to the other mine locations. His grandfather and father both worked in the mine at Valdez. He is a very good source to explain to the students about the different methods and other areas associated with mining. We also want to look at the mine sites around La Veta and Walsenburg. I think they can prepare some material on the computer(with help) that could illustrate the mines in Huerfano County. Also there is a high school web development class that might cooperate with them for a web page that would link to other pages for the mines. The 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher spends 9 weeks on Colorado so I'll push the study of Ludlow and the mining subjects. There is so much that can be done with it. **The real goal for me is to make students aware of their local history and the significance of it to them.**

Since this is a very long unit, we will work closely together to plan to stay far enough ahead to make the unit effective. Hopefully this will be a unit that she will want to repeat in future years.



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## RESOURCES

Albright, Zella Rae. One Man's Family: The Life of Hiram Vasquez. Zella Rae Albright, 1984.

Beshoar, M. All about Trinidad and Las Animas County, Colorado: Their History, Industries, Resources, Etc. Denver, Colorado: Times Steam Printing House and Blank Book Manufactory, 1882, reprinted by Trinidad Historical Society, 1990.

Bonacquista, Joe. **Ludlow Massacre-April 20, 1914 Student Information Sheet of Leading Personalities and events** [Lecture & tour guide]. June 24, 1999.

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Sampson, Joanna. Remember Ludlow: Ludlow Massacre April 20, 1914. Denver, Colorado: Colorado Historical Society, 1999.

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Other books in the La Veta school libraries.

Lesson Plans that focused on Huerfano County from 1997 summer school that was team-taught by five teachers from Walsenburg.

Roger Brunelli, Superintendent of La Veta Schools  
Nancy Christofferson  
Betty Story retired teacher  
Carolyn Newman (does Mother Jones)

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New Books:

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