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A Lesson on Settlement by Neyvis Mendoza

Grade Level: Grade 4

Subject Area: English Language Arts

Lesson Length: 2 hours

Lesson Keywords: Reading, Writing, History

Lesson Description: The goal of this lesson is to give students an understanding that most people in the United States have ancestors that have come from all over the world, and many of them faced similar struggles. By reading the passage closely, and focusing the reading through a series of questions and discussions, the students will be able to make the connection between events in history and their current lives.

Common Core Standards Covered with This Lesson

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including those that allude to significant characters found in mythology (e.g., Herculean).

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RL.4.9: Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics (e.g., opposition of good and evil) and patterns of events (e.g., the quest) in stories, myths, and traditional literature from different cultures.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.1: Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

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CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.4.7: Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

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Lesson Content: Book/Story/Reading Passage

Instructions: Please read the following reading passage as many times as needed (aloud and silent) before starting to go through other lesson pages. Understanding the content of this passage is very important since the lesson activities will be all about this content. Feel free to print the passage if needed.

Settlement

by

Content: Settlers came to this area to build farms. They found the land difficult to plant in. It was difficult to dig in because of the thick root system. Trees were not a problem because the area was mostly open grassland. When settlers came, they traded goods with the Potawatomi tribe to get food and animal skins. After a while, the Potawatomi were forced to move when homesteaders started taking over the land.

Here is what one woman wrote about her trip to live in Illinois.

I have walked for such a long time. I just hope that everything will be good when I get there. On Friday evening, after we got to Paris, Illinois, we kept going into the prairie. We drove for 14 miles. The sun was setting, but it was still hot. It was good for most of the way. Though, we slipped a couple of times. The doctor got stuck and the oxen had to draw his wagon out twice. The prairies are so beautiful. There are so many different kinds of flowers that grow on them, and I love the prairie hens. One of the men in our group shot a hen for us to eat yesterday. Eliza looks sick still but she says she feels like helping me prepare dinner. Oh, dear, I think it will be a hard time still. On Saturday, the 15th, we traveled in both prairie and forest. We got lost. We took the wrong road and were lost in the prairie grass for a long time. Sometimes the grass comes up as high as the horses' backs. When night came, we cut some of the grass. Then, we pitched our tents. We tried to make ourselves as comfortable as possible, even though there were many mosquitoes.

Here is what one woman's life was like after settling.

The woman told me that she makes all of the thread and then sews all of the clothes for her family from the cotton and wool that they make. She also knits all the socks. Her husband makes the shoes. He was not a shoemaker originally, but he learned. She makes the soap and the candles that they use. She also makes sugar from the sugar-trees on their farm. All that she wants to buy is coffee and tea. They make money when she sells her butter and her chickens in the market. They don't use any wheat, or sell any of their corn. It seemed like they had a lot of corn. But, she said it was not more than they needed to make some bread and cakes. They also use it to feed their animals in the winter.

Here are some of the problems these settlers faced each season.

Fall There was a constant threat of fire. When the prairie grass became very dry, a spark could start a fire that would burn the prairie and sometimes their cabins.

Winter The freezing cold and deep snow were problems. People got lost in the drifts or out on the prairie when the trails were covered.

Spring The rains and the melted snow were problems. The prairie became swampy when the snow melted and the rains started and people would get stuck on the muddy tracks.

Summer The heat was a problem. Some days were very hot and there was no shady forest to sit and cool down in; there were also so many insects that sometimes horses died from so many stings.

Task 1: Vocabulary

Instructions: Please complete the following vocabulary activity by choosing the correct meaning of each word selected from the passage and use of each word correctly in a sentence.

Q: 1 WordPhrase: Pitched **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: "Then, we pitched our tents." What does the word "pitched" mean in this sentence?

- A: Throw
- B: Give
- C: Discard
- D: Keep

Question: Choose one sentence below that uses "pitched" correctly?

- A: Sammy pitched a perfect game.
 - B: All the leftover were pitched after the party.
 - C: Tonia pitched a great ad campaign.
 - D: Tony pitched the ball to Michael.
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Q: 2 WordPhrase: Drifts **WordPhraseTier:** 2

Question: When people got lost in their drifts, what was the meaning of "drifts"?

- A: Carried
- B: Meaning
- C: Gather
- D: Movement

Question: Which sentence uses the word "drifts" with the same meaning in the story?

- A: The boat drifts away as the people on shore waved good-bye.
 - B: The dog drifts from house to house in search of a new family.
 - C: When pigs can fly, I will go cliff diving, catch my drift?
 - D: We need drift wood for the winter months.
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Q: 3 WordPhrase: Prairies **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: When the writer states "The prairies are so beautiful," what are the "prairies?"

- A: Grassland
- B: Mountains
- C: Forrest
- D: Desert

Question: Which sentence below uses "prairies" correctly?

- A: The prairies were full of tress, creating a beautiful canopy.
 - B: The prairies had tall grass and beautiful flowers as far as the eyes could see.
 - C: It was so hot in the prairies that the ground began to have cracks in them.
 - D: While at the peak a prairie, Jenna looked to the other mountains.
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Q: 4 WordPhrase: Settlers **WordPhraseTier:** 3

Question: In the passage, "settlers" refer to?

- A: Homesteader
- B: Nonimmigrant
- C: Judge
- D: Time Keeper

Question: The meaning of "settlers" in the story is similar to which sentence below?

- A: Tony is the settler between his two sisters.
 - B: The settlers were born, raised and then died in their lands.
 - C: California got its phrase "California Dream" from the settlers during the Goldrush.
 - D: The teacher was the settler for her students during the debate.
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Task 2: Forum Discussion

Instructions: This discussion forum will have questions for students to respond. Read the posted questions, and respond to each. Students are responsible for posting one initial and two peer responses for each topic.

1 - Solutions to the problems the settlers experienced

Find a solution that we use in present time to overcome one of the problems the settlers faced?

2 - Your settlement to the US

Describe your family background and explain how your ancestors settled in the United States?

3 - A difficult task

Have you ever faced a task that has been difficult? Explain what it was, and why it was hard.?How did you overcome it?

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Task 3: Writing Activity

Instructions: For your writing assignment research any large migrations in the U.S.? Write 3 paragraphs on the following and post your response below:

Paragraph 1: Who were the immigrants, where were they from and where did they go. Why did they leave their homes?

Paragraph 2: What were some of the struggles they faced?

Paragraph 3: How was this group similar or different to the story on the Settlement?

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