



School Then and Now

Grade Two Social Studies



CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Grade 2 Social Studies: Unit 2: Heritage: Module 1

<http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/elemsoc/g2tcess.html>

LESSON PLAN ONE: CLASSROOM INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME

LESSON OVERVIEW

Through comparisons, students will explore how school life has changed from the early 1900s to present day for teachers and students.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- Fast Facts information (at the end of the resource package)
- “Education,” by Ken Horsman and “One Room Schools” by Rosella Mitchell in *The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2005)
- Digital projector and computer or prepared overheads and overhead projector
- Online and print references (from the Resources section)
- “Letter from a Student” (appendix one)
- Flip chart paper
- Markers for recording
- Supply list answer sheets (appendix two)



Sod school house built near Handford, SK, circa 1907. Western Development Museum 5-A-46

PROCEDURE

1. Prepare to teach by reviewing the Fast Facts information at the end of the resource package and the two articles from the *Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan* listed in Resources and Materials. Share some of this information with the students as a general introduction to what school life was like in the early 1900s.
2. Ask the following survey/discussion questions:
 - How many students go shopping with their parents when it is time to buy school supplies?
 - Do you sometimes ask your parents to buy something not on the list just because it looks like fun?
 - Who packs or prepares your lunch for school? Do you get to choose what things are going to be in your lunch?
 - What types of books do you like to read?
 - Do I (teacher) have special supplies to do my job around the school?



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3. On individual pieces of flip chart paper, write Present Day Student, Present Day Teacher and Present Day Lunches at the top.
4. Ask students to list supplies used in each category. As the students provide answers, discuss if the supply is applicable to only one category or if it could go under more than one.
5. Explain to the students that these supplies help to make jobs easier and that over time supplies have changed. Using the reference books and websites listed, provide the students with visuals that allow them to see what school life was like in the 1900s for students and teachers.
6. Halfway down the chart paper, repeat the titles from step two, changing them this time to read “Early 1900s” in front of each.
7. Ask students to list supplies used in each category for this time period. Again, as the students provide answers, discuss if the supply is applicable to only one category or if it could go under more than one.
8. Read to the class the “Letter from a Student” from appendix one.
9. Discuss the content of the letter and ask the students if there is anything that could be added to the supply lists that may have been missed earlier.
10. Define and discuss what a comparison is (looking at things that are similar and things that are different). Explain to the students that later on they will be comparing the lists they have created.

ADAPTATION AND EXTENSION

1. Visit the *Celebrating Saskatchewan’s Heritage* website. A teacher’s theme page on schools and school life provides a comprehensive list of background information, online activities, lesson plans, multimedia items, and website links related to the study of school life. <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/Saskatchewan100/theme-schools.html>.
2. Students could interview their parents, grandparents, or an older adult to find out what supplies they used when they went to school.

LESSON PLAN TWO: AT THE MUSEUM

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will explore the contents of a discovery box and tour exhibits in the Museum.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- Materials and information sent to you in your Museum tour confirmation package.



PROCEDURE

1. Prepare to teach and to tour the Museum by reviewing the resources listed. Divide your class into groups before the visit. Discuss the required number of groups with the Museum Programmer when you book your visit. Select other staff members or parents to lead the groups. Advise the group leaders about what he or she will have to do.
2. Students will visit a Western Development Museum in Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Saskatoon or Yorkton. The entire class will assemble for a welcome and orientation.
3. The class will be divided into two, three or more groups depending on the class size. Students will interact with artifacts, replicas and photographs located in a discovery box. A leader's script included in the discovery box will spearhead discussion.
4. The class will tour pertinent exhibits in the Museum using a tour handout to guide their exploration. This handout may be a question-and-answer sheet or scavenger hunt. A tour script for the group leader will be sent with confirmation of your Museum tour booking.



Typical school supplies used in Saskatchewan classrooms long ago in the *School Life Then and Now* discovery box.

LESSON PLAN THREE: WHEN A MUSEUM VISIT ISN'T POSSIBLE

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will take part in a school day reminiscent of early 1900s Saskatchewan.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- Old-fashioned school supplies as gathered by the teacher if desired like a hand bell, small slates/ chalkboards, straight pen, syrup pail and Union Jack flag.



PROCEDURE

1. Prior to the lesson, send home a letter to parents encouraging them to dress their children in pioneer style clothing to lend an air of authenticity to the activities. Suggest simple things like rolled up pants and suspenders for boys and a long skirt and blouse for girls.
2. If desired, gather some items that would have been used by teachers in early Saskatchewan like a hand bell, Union Jack flag, straight pen like those used for calligraphy and small chalkboards/slates. Old school readers and other books may be available for loan from senior citizens in the community. Discuss the items and their use with the class. Historical photos for illustrating aspects of early school life can be accessed at <http://www.sasksettlement.com> or <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/Sask100gallery/schools.htm>.
3. Discuss how children would have travelled to school in days long ago. In the days of the rural schoolhouse, the method of transportation to school was not the school bus of today. Each family was responsible to see that their children got to school. The distance, of course, varied for each family and so did the mode of transport. Some students walked, but the most common mode was the horse and buggy. The buggy, pulled by a horse or two, was usually a box set on four wood and metal wheels with one seat for the driver. In the winter the vehicle was a sleigh or a caboose. A caboose was a wooden shack on runners so it could slide on snow, and often the caboose would have a wood burning stove inside to keep everyone warm.
4. Discuss school chores like hauling wood for the schoolhouse stove and water for drinking and washing, cleaning chalkboard erasers and tending animals in the barn.
5. Conduct classroom activities that pioneer children would have participated in like a spelling bee, memorizing a simple poem, reading Aesop's fables, and learning songs such as *School Days*, *Dear Old Golden Rule Days*, *The Maple Leaf Forever*, or *God Save the King*.
6. Spend some time outdoors (weather permitting) or in the gymnasium playing some old-fashioned schoolyard games. A list of old-fashioned games can be found in appendix one of the preceding theme entitled, *Having Fun*.
7. At the conclusion of the activities, wrap-up by discussing similarities and differences between a school day today compared to a child of 100 years ago.

ADAPTATION AND EXTENSION

1. Make homemade slates by using heavy cardboard or wood painted with chalkboard paint.
2. Package a snack for the class to enjoy as it would have been in days long ago. Package the snack in a metal tin or fold it up in a piece of fabric or brown paper.
3. Partner with a senior home or have the students talk to a local senior and ask the people about their school days. Ask about their favourite books, what their lunches were like, etc.



Miss McClardy and pupils inside the Freshwater School near Watrous, SK, circa 1913. Saskatchewan Archives Board S-B8209



LESSON PLAN FOUR: CLASSROOM WRAP-UP

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will learn about proper letter format, and using the “Letter from a Student” as a guide, they will write their own letter to students of the future and place it in a time capsule.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

- “Letter from a Student” (appendix one)
- Prepared overhead or bristleboard poster – Parts of a Letter (appendix three)
- Prepared overhead or bristleboard poster – Example of a Letter (appendix four)
- Writing paper
- Pencils
- Envelopes
- Time capsule jar

PROCEDURE

1. Review the class’s experience at the Museum or with the Alternative Lesson. What have they learned about what school was like for Saskatchewan children long ago? How was school different? How was it the same?
2. Introduce the next activity where the students will write a letter about what their school life is like, including what kinds of school supplies they use. Review the “Letter from a Student” with the class from appendix one. Their letter will be written in the same fashion as Mary’s where each person will tell the students of the future what it is like to go to school today. Explain that the activity will be very important for students in the future, as Mary’s letter was to their learning about the past.
3. Display the time capsule jar and discuss its purpose and meaning. Emphasize the importance of the information and explain that the letter the students are writing will be read many, many years from now.
4. Display the model of the parts of a letter (appendix three). Explain each part involved and leave the model visible for reference.
5. Show an example of a letter (appendix four), relating it to the parts explained in the model.
6. Have the students complete their letter, collecting them afterwards for the time capsule. Adding photographs of the class, classroom and school would certainly add to enjoyment of students opening the time capsule years down the road.



Visiting day at residential school. Saskatchewan Archives Board R-A21263



ADAPTATION AND EXTENSION

1. For practice, write a sample letter from the teacher's perspective together as a class (you writing to a teacher in the future).
2. Have students write and illustrate a story about what they believe the school buildings and playgrounds of the future will be like.
3. Have students address an envelope.
4. Have students practice writing with a straight pen or a calligraphy pen.

RESOURCES

- Visit the *Celebrating Saskatchewan's Heritage* website. A teacher's theme page on schools and school life provides a comprehensive list of background information, online activities, lesson plans, multi-media items and website links. <http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/DE/Saskatchewan100/theme-schools.html>
- The Saskatchewan Archives Board centennial website is an on-line exhibit and virtual educational resource centre that will take you on a journey to early Saskatchewan, and includes photographs and documents related to education. <http://www.saskarchives1905.ca>
- The *Saskatchewan One Room School Project* provides an online history of one room school districts, including an alphabetized listing, reminiscences, and a photo gallery. <http://www.rootsweb.com/~cansk/school/schooldistricts.html>
- The *Saskatchewan Settlement Experience* website created by the Saskatchewan Archives Board and the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society contains a number of images and documents relating to schools, teachers and students. <http://www.sasksettlement.com>
- *School Days Gone By* is an online exhibit created by the Morse Museum and Cultural Centre (Morse, SK) for the Virtual Museum of Canada's Community Memories program. http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/pm.php?id=exhibit_home&fl=0&lg=English&ex=0000087
- Information, history, sound clips, and sheet music downloads on a variety of patriotic Canadian anthems sung in schools can be found at: <http://canada4life.ca/anthems.php> http://www.craigmarlatt.com/canada/symbols_facts&lists.html
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FAST FACTS

- With the heavy influx of settlers in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the responsibility of formal education was moved from the family to the community.
- In a township, two sections out of 36 [a section is an area 1 mile by 1 mile or 1.6km by 1.6km] were declared crown land and were reserved for schools. They were established where there were 10 or more children to attend. They usually served about a 5 mile radius, or less, because of the difficulty of travelling, especially in the winter.
- Factors including weather conditions, illness, and the need for extra hands to help with farm work and harvesting, contributed to children missing school.
- The subjects taken in elementary school were reading and literature, composition, arithmetic, history, geography, nature study and agriculture, writing, drawing, music, hygiene, physical culture, morals and civics, spelling and grammar.
- The high school subjects were English, history, mathematics, physics, chemistry, botany, languages, manual training, household science and physical training.
- The subjects offered depended upon the resources of the teacher and the requirements of the pupils.
- In order to receive a Grade VIII diploma, the student was required to pass exams set by the provincial Department of Education. Elementary school was completed by obtaining a diploma, which entitled the person to enter high school. All high school subjects were completed only when examinations set by the Department were passed.



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- In the early years of the 20th century, there was a shortage of teachers because of the many schools opening up to accommodate the heavy influx of settlers. Because of this, teachers' qualifications were varied. If the teacher had a certificate, which was not always the case, it could have been one of three types ranging from third class which was temporary and required two months of training, to first class which was the highest and required a first class course at Normal School.
- In the early years, only unmarried female teachers were allowed to teach school.
- The schoolhouses of early Saskatchewan were one-room, oblong frame buildings that were sometimes whitewashed. Their average size was 5.5 metres x 7.3 metres (18 feet x 24 feet).
- The heating source was a single wood stove. The only way to adjust the heat was to move closer to, or farther away from the stove.
- School equipment consisted of a blackboard, a teacher's desk and chair, desks or benches, a box of chalk and brushes, slates or notebooks for the children and a few odd textbooks. The schoolroom was generally poorly lit and smelled of kerosene, chalk dust, damp wood and chlorine bleach.
- A health check was administered every morning upon arriving at school. Often stars were given if faces, hands and fingernails were clean, hair was combed and teeth were brushed.
- In the days of the rural schoolhouse, the method of transportation to school was not the school bus of today. Each family was responsible to see that their children got to school. The distance, of course, varied for each family and so did the mode of transport. Some students walked, but the most common mode was the horse and buggy. The buggy, pulled by a horse or two, was usually a box set on four wood and metal wheels with one seat for the driver. In the winter the vehicle was a cutter or a caboose. A caboose was a wooden shack on runners so it could slide on snow, and often the caboose would have a wood burning stove inside to keep everyone warm.
- In 1944, when the Larger School Units Act was passed, the Saskatchewan government began the process of consolidating rural school districts into sixty larger units of administration. Once the larger units were established, great distances and sparse population left unit boards with little choice but to rely heavily on bus transportation to convey rural students to centralized schools.
- The creation of larger school units gradually led to the closure of one-room schoolhouses throughout Saskatchewan.



APPENDIX ONE

Letter from a Student

November 6, 1905

Dear Friend,

My name is Mary. I am in grade four at Hillcrest School. I have an older brother William in grade eight, a younger brother John in grade one, and a baby sister Emma. Our teacher has asked us to write a letter about what our school life is like so that students in the future can learn about the kinds of things we did.

My family just moved here from North Dakota. My father was excited to move to Canada and the new province of Saskatchewan where we could own our own farmland. It is nice to live in our new log house that our neighbours helped us build – it is much warmer than the sod shack we had before.

Our farm is three miles from the school. In the fall we walk to school, which is sometimes really tiring after a busy morning of chores. William stayed home many school days this fall to help Father with the harvest, but now that it is winter and the crops are off the fields, he can use our horse Blacky to pull us all in the sleigh to school. During recess he goes to check on Blacky and the other horses in the stables at the schoolyard – they need food and fresh water like us too.

Our teacher's name is Miss Barnes. She is really nice and very pretty! Hillcrest School is her first teaching job, which must be hard because she has to teach everyone from grade one to grade eight in the same room at the same time. There are 45 students in our school, so she has to be really organized to keep everybody busy all the time. I always do my work neatly and quietly and often when I'm done, Miss Barnes will ask me to help some of the younger students with their reading or arithmetic. I like to use my chalk to write math questions on their slates for them to practice adding and subtracting. Sometimes I just practice writing my letters and numbers in my scribbler using a nib pen dipped in ink. I don't like it though when the boys sitting behind me dip my hair into their inkwell – what a mess. If Miss Barnes catches anybody doing this she gets very cross with them and makes them stay after school to sweep and mop the whole floor. Sometimes she'll make them chop extra wood for the stove or clean the ashes. They learn their lesson pretty quickly!

One of my chores before school is to pack lunch for me and John and William. Each one of us has a different lunch pail so it is easy to tell them apart. Mine is from Roger's syrup, William's is from Nabob coffee, and John's is from Burns' Lard. I helped Mother make preserves and jam from a lot of fruit and berries this summer so that we'd have enough to last until next spring. I use the jam to make sandwiches and will sometimes put in a piece of homemade cheese if there's any left over after we sell it to the storekeeper in town. I always hope for a good crop of berries each year because if we run out of preserves during



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the winter, you know what that means – lard sandwiches for us. Yuck! Sometimes in the fall I'll also put a mason jar of freshly pressed crabapple juice in our lunch pails, but usually we'll just drink water from the bucket at the back of the room with a dipper like everyone else.

Well, it's time for me to finish my letter because it is going to be recess time soon. It seems to come to an end so quick when Miss Barnes rings her school bell! That's okay today because after recess we are supposed to start practicing for our Christmas concert. I can't wait!

Yours truly,
Mary

APPENDIX TWO

Supply List Answer Sheets

EARLY 1900s SUPPLIES

Student

Pencil	Eraser	Paints	Paste	Nib pen
Inkwell	Pencil box	Desk	Ruler	Slate
Lunch pail	Scribbler	Chalk	Book strap	

Teachers

Pencil	Eraser	Pencil sharpener	Blackboard	Clock
Chalk brush	Hand bell	First aid kit	Nib pen	Inkwell
Desk	Chalk	Textbooks	Pointer stick	Register
Piano	Ruler	Slide rule	Yard stick	Paper
Dictionary	Flag	Abacus	Carbon paper	Scissors
Paste	Maps	Art supplies	Globe	Typewriter
Strap				

Lunches

Syrup tin	Mason jar	Bread	Sandwich	Cheese
Fruit	Vegetables	Cloth napkin	Lard	Cake/cookies
Water pail/dipper				



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PRESENT DAY SUPPLIES

Student

Pencil	Eraser	Scissors	Desk	Pencil sharpener
Textbook	Lunch kit	Running shoes	Pen	Dictionary
Binder	Highlighter	Calculator	Tissue	Paper
Workbook	Backpack	Ruler	Markers	Pencil crayons
Pencil box	White glue	Gym clothes	Computer	Notebook
Crayons	Paints	Glue stick	Scrapbook	Computer disk
CDs	Lead refills			

Teacher

Pencil	Pencil sharpener	White glue	Hole punch
Maps	Whiteboard	Elastic bands	Paper cutter
Flip charts	Textbooks	Globe	Fun tack
Register	Pen	Highlighter	Glue stick
White out	Paper	Chalkboard	Paper clips
Stapler	Clock	Chalk brush	Teacher's manuals
Laser pointer	First aid kit	Ruler	Calculator
Desk	Overhead projector	Scotch tape	Masking tape
Art supplies	Chalk	Thumbtacks	Dictionary
Board erasers	Daybook	Flag	Eraser
Scissors	Metre stick	Computer disks	CDs
Computer	TV	VCR/DVD	Cassette/CD player
Staple remover	Posters	Camera	Photocopier
Fax machine			

Lunches

Paper bags	Lunch kit	Water bottle	Storage containers
Zipper bags	Thermos	Juice box	Chips
Sandwiches	Crackers	Cheese	Pudding
Granola bar	Lunchables	Veggie sticks	Cookies
Fruit cup	Yogurt cup	Cereal bar	Fruit
Spoon/fork	Fruit roll-ups	Paper napkin	



APPENDIX THREE

Parts of a Letter

Adapted from www.abcteach.com/Writing/FLinfo.htm

Writing Friendly Letters

Friendly letters have five parts:

1. **The Heading:** The heading can include your address and the date. In casual, friendly letters your address is not necessary.
2. **The Salutation (also known as the Greeting):** This usually begins with Dear _____, where the blank is for the name of the person you are writing. After the person's name, you put a comma (,).
3. **The Body:** The body of the letter is the information you are writing in your letter.
4. **The Closing:** In the closing the first word is capitalized and you put a comma after the last word. Some examples of closings are: Sincerely, Your friend, Love, and Yours truly.
5. **Your Signature:** This is your name. It goes under the closing.

Heading

Salutation (Greeting),

Body

Closing,

Your Signature

APPENDIX FOUR

Example of a Letter

Heading { November 6, 2005

Salutation { Dear James,

Body { How are you? Do you have a lot of snow in Winnipeg? Last night we had a huge blizzard and now the snow hills at school are even bigger than before. Our class started making a snow sculpture of a dinosaur today and it is going to be as long as the whole playground!

Mom and Dad told me the good news today that you are coming to our house during the holidays. Even cousins Adam and Jennifer will be there! I think it will be really fun when our whole family gets together for Christmas.

Remember to bring your skates and hockey stick so we can go play shinny on the slough. We have a fire pit set up there now so that everyone can enjoy a wiener roast after the game.

I am excited that you are coming to visit and look forward to seeing you soon.

Closing { Yours truly,

Your Signature { Andrew