

Objectives

- Students will learn about Utah's Ghost towns
- Students will discuss what resources are necessary for a town's safety and survival
- Students will create a rural town in Utah and investigate ways to keep it safe and successful for its inhabitants.

Introduction

Ask students to name some of their favorite belongings or some of the things they would like to own. They might mention technology, trading cards, video games, sports shoes, or other material items. Discuss the reasons why these items are desirable.

Ask students to imagine that there has been an incredible new discovery: the most popular possession for kids their age has been found to occur naturally underground in some parts of Utah. It's a ridiculous idea, perhaps, but ask them to go along with it for fun and for the sake of the lesson.

Take students through the following chronological scenario, asking them to answer the questions in a class discussion. Fill in the blanks with the name of the popular item:

What would happen if _____ were found in large quantities on public land (land owned by the government instead of by individuals) in the mountains of western Utah, available to anyone who could find and remove them from the mountains? What would people do? What would you do? What happens when all of the _____ runs out?

Explain that the above scenario is more or less what happened to many towns during as valuable resources (gold, silver and copper) were discovered in the ground.

Learning Activity

Begin discussion by showing students the images *Ontario Mill*, *Park City* and *Mexican Hat* from the Springville Museum of Art's permanent collection.

What is going on these picture? Where do you think this scene takes place? What would life be like living in a town like this? What do you think brought people to settle in these locations?

Begin discussion with students about Ghost towns.

- What is a ghost town?
- Have you ever been to one?
- What was it like there?
- Why do you think it's called a ghost town?



Detail: Anthon Danquart Weggeland, *Ontario Mill*, Park City 1877

Materials

- Images from the Springville Museum of Art (See Images from the Museum)
- Poster sized paper (at least 11"x 18")
- Pencils
- Makers, colored pencils or oil pastels.

Images from the Museum

- Anthon Danquart Weggeland, *Ontario Mill*, Park City
- Howard Lasalle Kearns, *Mexican Hat*

Utah Core Standards

Social Studies, Standard 1 Objective 2c

Compare the development of industry and business in Utah as it relates to its physical geography (e.g. mining, oil, agriculture, tourism).

Social Studies, Standard 1 Objective 2d

Make inferences about the relationships between the physical geography of Utah and the state's communication and transportation systems (e.g. trails, roads, telegraph, rail lines).

Social Studies, Standard 2 Objective 3

Investigate the development of the economy in Utah.

Visual Arts, Standard 4 Objective 3

Explain how scientific information can be communicated by visual art.

Learning Activity Cont.

Explain that ghost towns are towns that have been deserted. There are few or no remaining inhabitants. Ask students what would cause towns to be abandoned? Explain how formerly busy and well populated towns can become ghost towns for a variety of reasons.

With the students, discuss different reasons why a town might become a ghost town. For example, towns that spring up due to a particular economic activity, such as the discovery of a natural resource, can become ghost towns when that resource runs out. Ask students what resources are necessary for a town to thrive?

Ghost towns can also be created by changes in access. For example, historic Route 66 encountered many changes during its lifetime. Occasionally, new interstate highways would be built that would lead to the closure of old roads. If a town depended upon that road's traffic for its livelihood, its closure could mean the death of the town.

Student Investigation

Utah has several ghost towns scattered around the state. Have students research a ghost town. They should find out which county it's located in and why it is now a ghost town. The website, <http://www.ghosttowns.com> provides valuable information about many of Utah's ghost towns. Students should share their findings with the class.

As a class, create a list of resources that would be important for making a town a safe and happy town to live in. Resources may include:

- Water
- Plumbing
- Safe roads for travel
- Food/Grocery shopping options
- Recreation
- Electricity
- Public Safety
- Source of Income
- Shelter/ Homes

Who is responsible for providing each of these resources? Discuss the role of Government and local businesses within a community. What happens when these resources aren't provided?

Art Making Activity

While working in groups, have students create a town that has recently discovered something exciting (this was discussed at the beginning of the lesson). This town has been established in an imaginary non-developed part of Utah. Have them mark their town's location on a map of Utah.

Each group will create a poster proposing what they will do to keep their new town alive in a difficult environment. They should come up with a town name, a list of services and business that will be provided. They should also include recreation and tourist attraction sites. Students should include illustrations of their resources and include a drawing of their town.

Individual groups will present their posters to the class.

Extensions

Students may also choose to create a poster about real ghost towns in Utah. They may create a list of resources that they would provide in order to bring their ghost town back to live.

Assessment

Finished posters should be graded for content and creativity. Did they consider the town's resources and climate? Did they come up with new ways to provide necessary resources to the town? You may ask students to write up what they thought was successful about their towns and what may prove difficult for their towns.



Howard Lasalle Kearns, *Mexican Hat*, 1964

You've discovered a new resource!

Town's Name:

Resource Discovered:

Climate:

Best time to visit:

Mark where your town is located with a star on the map





Howard Lasalle Kearns, *Mexican Hat*, 1964



Anthon Danquart Weggeland, *Ontario Mill, Park City* 1877