

FARM CROPS

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OVERVIEW

Students will use historical photographs to understand the different kinds of crops (grain, root, vegetables, fruits) grown in 19th-century Colorado.

STANDARDS

- Geography Standard 2.2: Students know how and why people define regions.
- Economics Standard 1: Students understand that because of the condition of scarcity, decisions must be made about the use of resources.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between various crops and where they were grown.
- Identify a geographic region from visual cues in a photograph
- Describe varying water needs of each crop.
- Identify the sequence of steps involved in harvesting crops.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What crop was being grown in this photograph?
- Is it an orchard or a field crop?
- In what region of Colorado was this photograph taken?
- How is the crop harvested?

PROCEDURE

1. CD-ROM/Internet use: Students will use photographs from the "Farm Work and Tools" theme or subtopic at the computer. For the wheat harvesting step below, the teacher should print out the photographs and make several hard-copy packets for the students to use.
2. Brainstorm a list of crops that were/are grown in Colorado.
 - Create categories for types of crops, such as "grain," "root vegetables," and "fruit."
 - Assign each crop a region in Colorado in which it is most likely to be grown, such as "eastern plains," "river valleys," and "western slope."

3. Send students in pairs or small groups to the computer to see which of these crops they can find in the historical photographs.
 - Ask students to identify the crops they find.
 - Ask them to assign a region to this photograph based on visual cues (flat background may indicate eastern plains mesas indicate the western slope, irrigation ditches indicate river valley locations).

4. Print out and copy the Harvesting Wheat photographs to make packets for small group work, and create a separate list of the titles of these photos.
 - Ask students to match the photo to the title.
 - Ask students to put the photos in the correct sequence involved in harvesting wheat.

5. End the activity with a discussion that compares and contrasts the work involved in growing wheat, root vegetables, and fruit.