

FOUR RANCH WORK AND TOOLS ACTIVITIES

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OVERVIEW

The following activities will help students use photographs and primary sources to discover the kinds of work ranchers did and the kinds of tools they used. One of the activities focuses on the work done during a round up. The students also will write a first-person account of ranch work and life.

STANDARDS

- History Standard 2.2 Students know how to interpret and evaluate primary and secondary sources of information.
- Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Use photographs and printed primary sources to identify ranch work done by men and women.
- Identify and describe tools and implements or machines used on ranches.
- Write a first-person account of ranch work and life.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- What kind of work did ranch men and women do?
- What purpose did round-ups serve?
- How did ranchers know which cattle belong to them?

PROCEDURES:

1. CD-ROM/Internet Use: Students will use photographs at the computer to identify the kind of work done and tools used on ranches.

- The two most useful subtopics or themes are "Ranch Work and Tools" and "Women's Work."
- You may also wish to integrate text-based primary sources into this work—check out the Doing History Archives: Ranch Work page.
- Teachers may want to print out these photographs and make hard-copy packets for the students to use.

2. Ranch Work and Tools Activity

Have students work in pairs or small groups to examine the photographs and make the following lists:

- Tasks or jobs that ranch men and women did.
- Tools required for each kind of task. (Saddles and bridles are tools, as well as branding irons and lariats. Discuss what is meant by a "tool.")
- Implements or machines used on ranches (windmills, chuck wagons, mowing machines, etc.)

The groups will share their findings.

3. Ranch Artifact Activity:

- Invite a local rancher to bring ranch tools to class.
- Arrange tools in stations around the room.
- Ask students to handle the tools and decide what each tool is or was used for.
- The guest describes the actual use of the tools.
- Or create a classroom museum by acquiring a set of ranch tools (e.g., branding iron, spur, lariat, bridle).

4. Round Up Activity:

- Using the photographs in "The Round Up" sequence, have students working in pairs make predictions about the purpose of round ups.
- Have students read at least one printed primary sources about round ups.
- Then have them review their predictions and write brief, one-sentence descriptions about what they now think was happening in the photograph.
- Each pair should share their descriptions with another pair of students.

5. Diary/Letter-Writing Activity

- Each student will adopt the role of a ranch man or woman.
- Write a diary entry or a letter to a city dweller about the work he/she does and the tools used.
- Describe how life on a ranch is different from life in a city.