

Arkansas History Lesson Plan

“Can You Hear Me Now?”

***Appropriate Grade Levels**
Grades 2-6

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***District/School/Grade Levels Taught**
Newport High School, 9-12

***Enduring Understandings:**
How do I get information?
How did people in early Arkansas get their information?
How does information affect our lives?

***Essential Questions:**
How have the ways people communicate changed over time?
What has enabled those changes?
How have those changes affected our lives?

***Student Learning Expectations:**

Arkansas Social Studies Curriculum Framework:

Strand: History

Standard 6: History

Students shall analyze significant ideas, events, and people in world, national, state, and local history and how they affect change over time.

H.6.2.12

Compare past and present means of transportation and communication in Arkansas

H.6.6.5

Research early 20th century inventions and their impact on Americans (e.g., telephone, electricity, automobile)

H.6.6.6

Explain the impact of the American industrial revolution:

- communications
- mass production

Strand: Geography

Standard 3: Interaction of People and the Environment

Students shall develop an understanding of the interactions between people and their environment.

G.3.6.3

Compare methods of communication through present day technology.

***Lesson Plan:**

***Overview:**

To build on prior knowledge, students will attempt to put items from different time periods in correct chronological order. Some students may or may not have seen all the various older telephones, televisions, etc. After the teacher goes over the correct order, she will ask students for possible answers to questions such as, “How have these items changed? Do the changes help us? What brought about the changes in design and function?”

Next, the teacher will ask students to explain the purpose of all those devices and list student responses on the board or overhead. Possibilities include:

**To hear from family
For entertainment
To watch the news
To stay in touch with friends
To know what is happening in the world
To listen to music**

Students will be placed in groups to investigate various primary source documents—telegram, newspaper, handwritten letter, Morse code chart, text message. (See attachment) They will answer questions relating to each document. (See attachment)

Students will complete a Venn diagram comparing and contrasting older phones, televisions, radios with modern models. (See attachment)

Students will create a chart placing items in chronological order and explaining the purposes of each form of communication.

Students will be asked if any other forms of communication should be added to the chart. Possibilities include books, magazines, billboards, other advertisements, and photographs.

The teacher may want to lead a discussion about the positive and negative aspects about each form of communication.

Finally, students will be asked to match famous Arkansans from different time periods with the type of communication most likely to be used by that individual during that time. (See attachment)

***Lesson Objectives:**

Students will recognize the change in communications technology over time.

Students will offer explanations for the changes.

Students will investigate the purposes of communication and the various methods of communication.

Students will identify which types of communication correspond with which time period.

Students will explore the impact of communication on everyday lives, past and present.

***Teaching Strategies:**

Students will work independently and in groups to examine different forms of communication in Arkansas.

Students will create a chart to identify forms of communication by time period as well as which famous Arkansans might have used the various types of communication.

Students will create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast forms of communication over time.

***Background information:**

Students are probably familiar with modern communication forms such as cell phones, flat screen televisions, etc. They may not be aware of telegrams and Morse code, or in some cases, even newspapers or radio.

Using photos and copies of telegrams, hand-written letters, vintage telephones and televisions, students will formulate explanations for the changes in technology as well as the impact of rapid communication on our daily lives.

***List of materials:**

Handouts

Board or Overhead projector

Pencils and paper

Powerpoint and LCD Projector

***Vocabulary:**

Communication-a verbal or written message; transfer of information

Telegraph- an apparatus, system, or process for transmitting messages or signals to a distant place, esp. by means of an electric device consisting essentially of a sending instrument and a distant receiving instrument connected by a conducting wire or other communications channel

Telegram-message sent by telegram

Morse code- codes consisting of variously spaced dots and dashes or long and short sounds used for transmitting messages by audible or visual signals

Mass media- newspapers, radio, or television or other means of communication that is designed to reach the majority or masses of the population.

***Activities:**

As an opening or springboard activity, students attempt to place the photos of telephones in chronological order. The teacher reveals the correct order after students have had time to complete the task.

After examining the definition of communication, the teacher then asks students to list other types of communication and records their answers on the board or overhead.

After a brief explanation of the ways telegrams work or other unfamiliar forms of communication, students attempt to place all the forms of communication in chronological order. They will experience some confusion while recognizing that people today still write letters by hand and talk on the phone even though telegrams are no longer used. Students should focus on the development of technology over time. An acceptable chronology begins with handwritten letters, telegrams, telephones, radio, television, cell phones, etc.

Next, students complete a Venn diagram to compare and contrast older and newer forms of communication. To simplify, students may compare “old phones and cell phones” or “old TVs” and “flat screen TVs”

Possible Answers

Compare:

Sends information

Involves seeing or hearing

Contrast:

Big and bulky

Wires vs. wireless

**Higher quality picture
Color vs. Black and White
Dials vs. Push button
Telegram required paper/email paperless**

Next, in small groups, students examine a primary source document such as a letter, telegram, newspaper, song lyrics, and text message. Students answer the following questions:

**What type of communication is represented by the document?
In what time period could this communication be used?
Who creates this type of communication?
Who receives this type of communication?
Why was this type of communication used?
How can this type of communication affect our life?**

Each group will share answers aloud with the class.

The teacher then asks students to think about the different experiences someone at home waiting for a letter from a soldier at war might feel. Next, students will be asked if text messages or email might make waiting any easier.



Students are asked to identify other ways faster communication impacts life everyday.

(Possible answers include “Bad news travels fast.” “I miss getting cards in the mail for my birthday.” “Mom always knows where I am.” “People have more wrecks because they talk and drive.”

Younger students may need more prompting with this question.

As a culminating activity, groups are given copies of photos of famous Arkansans. They are asked to place those photos on the chart next to the form of communication most likely to be used by that person. This can be completed as a seat work activity or project the Powerpoint chart and let students match the Arkansans by taping them to the screen. (See attachment)

(If the class has not studied any Arkansans, some additional explanation may be needed. Information cards about each person could be printed and distributed if needed—See attachments)

	<p>1775-present (US Postal Service created in 1775)</p>	
	<p>1700s-present</p>	
	<p>1840s-2006</p>	
	<p>1890s-present</p>	
	<p>1920s-present</p>	
	<p>1940s-present (available in 1930s but not in widespread use until 1950s)</p>	
	<p>1990s-present (available in 1970s but not in widespread use until 1990s)</p>	
	<p>1990s-present</p>	

There will be several correct answers possible, but the following is a general guide. It is important for students to see more than one correct answer.

Written Letter: All

Newspaper: All except possibly Gerstacker

Telegram: Mifflin Gibbs, Ida Brooks, Charles Brough

Land Line Phones: Bill Clinton, Wesley Clark, Geese Ausbie, Daisy Bates*

Radio: Hattie Carraway, Charles Brough, Bill Clinton, Wesley Clark, Geese Ausbie, Daisy Bates

Television: Geese Ausbie, Bill Clinton, Wesley Clark, Daisy Bates

Computer/Email: Bill Clinton, Wesley Clark

Cell Phone/Text Message: Bill Clinton, Wesley Clark

*Daisy Bates was unable to reach Elizabeth Eckford by phone on the day, September 4, 1957, that the Little Rock Nine were to attend Central High. Elizabeth walked to school alone and faced the angry mob. This incident is the subject of a famous photo from the Central High Crisis. (See Powerpoint attachment.)

Please note: This is a random sample of Arkansans taken from the Arkansas Encyclopedia of History and Culture. The lesson could be modified to focus on certain groups of Arkansans to tie in with other lessons or subjects if the teacher so desired.

Generally, students should see that telegrams have disappeared and that for a time, newspapers, then radio, were the only forms of mass communication until the advent of television, computers, and cell phones.

Cross Curricular Activities:

Arkansas Science Curriculum Framework

Strand 3: Physical Science

Standard 6: Motion and Forces

Students shall demonstrate and apply knowledge of motion and *forces* using appropriate safety procedures, equipment, and technology

PS.6.6.1

Compare and contrast *simple machines* and *compound machines* (If the extension activities to research further are assigned, then the following may apply)

PS.6.6.2

Identify and analyze the simple machines that make up a compound machine

Strand 3: Physical Science

Standard 7: Energy and Transfer of Energy

Students shall demonstrate and apply knowledge of energy and transfer of energy using appropriate safety procedures, equipment, and technology

PS.7.6.1

Classify examples of *energy* forms:

- chemical
- *electromagnetic*
- mechanical
- thermal
- *nuclear*

Arkansas Library Media Framework:

Strand: Application

Standard 6: Communicate

Students shall exchange information and ideas effectively and responsibly

Arkansas English Language Arts Curriculum Framework:

5th Grade

A.6.5.1

Understand that the exchange of creative expression can be represented in a variety of formats (e.g., print, audio, digital, artifact, *realia*)

Strand: Connection

Standard 7: Read

Students shall pursue opportunities for individual growth and lifelong learning through reading.

C.7.5.3

Read from a variety of *practical texts* (e.g., newspapers, magazines, brochures, pamphlets)

Strand: Connection

Standard 8: Associate

Students shall make connections to the academic environment and the world.

C.8.5.1

Activate prior knowledge to make connections to text, self, and the world

C.8.5.2

Comprehend the impact of knowledge gained on self, community, and world.

Arkansas English Language Arts Curriculum Framework:

Grade 2:

Strand: Oral and Visual Communication

Standard 3: Media Literacy

Students shall demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media as a mode of communication

OV.3.2.3

Compare and contrast a variety of media *presentations*

Strand Reading:

Standard 9: Comprehension

Students shall apply a variety of strategies to read and comprehend printed material.

R.9.2.8

Make and explain inferences from text, such as cause and effect relationships

Grade 5:

Strand: Oral and Visual Communication

Standard 3: Media Literacy

Students shall demonstrate knowledge and understanding of media as a mode of communication

OV.3.5.1

View a variety of media (e.g., posters, film clips, periodicals, charts, cartoons, etc.) to enhance and show understanding of a specific topic

Standard: Writing

Students shall demonstrate competency in writing for a variety of purposes, topics, and audiences employing a wide range of forms.

W.5.5.1

Write to describe, to inform, to entertain, to explain, and to persuade

W.5.5.2

Select the form of writing that addresses the intended audience

***Assessment:**

The teacher will be able to determine the students' understanding by how well they do on the matching activity. As an additional assessment, students will write a pretend email or text message to someone from historic Arkansas. (See rubric attached.)

***Estimated time allotted for lesson: 45-60 minutes**

***Adaptations for special needs learners:**

Readers can be assigned the text message or shorter passages to interpret. Mixed ability grouping will help in the document interpretation portion of the lesson. Individual modifications can be made on the writing portion based on individual student needs. Modifications can be made to the rubric concerning spelling and grammar for ESL students or students with written expression disabilities.

***Resources/Bibliography:**

<http://www.encyclopediaofarkansas.net/>

<http://libinfo.uark.edu/SpecialCollections/manuscripts/civilwar.asp>

Letter from Nolan Richardson to Bill Clinton on Flickr - Photo Sharing!

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/11281116@N02/1880421957/>

<http://www.governor.arkansas.gov/contacts.html>

***Extension Activity:** Students may be assigned certain topics for further study. Some students may want to do a project or report on the telegraph, inventors of radio, television, etc. Students may even want to build a basic telegraph system. Students may also enjoy creating a class newsletter or television news broadcast highlighting the news of their classroom or the school.

Students may enjoy predicting what type of technological advancements will develop next and even design and draw prototypes for future communication devices.

***Attachments:**

See Powerpoint Attachments for chronology and matching activities as well as the primary source documents for interpretation. Also included are the information cards on famous Arkansans and a Venn diagram template.

Transcriptions of the documents displaying cursive script are provided below in case the script is too difficult for students to interpret. Errors and misspellings have been not been corrected or edited.

Powerpoint Slide 19: Onward to Victory
Pittsburgh Landing
Tennessee
Apr 23 1862
Dear Brother & Sister
I received yours dated February 23rd
About one hour since
And have directed myself to conquer it

I am thankful

Powerpoint Slide 22: Letter from Pvt. John V. Fine to Mrs. Audie Fine, Star Route, Rogers, Arkansas

Dec 24 1944

Sunday morning

Hello dear little sugar bunch

thought I would write a little more this morning while I was killing a little time. The sun is trying to shine a little bit this morning. I am just seattng around and cleaning up our room. I think of you all the time. Say Audie I think I will send some money home ever payday. I my get more France money than I no what to do with. I may just take out element and send abought \$20 a month home. I will wait until I get paid a time or to so I can tell how much I can spair. I don't think I will need mutch. I never go anyplace. I should draw \$30. 70 a month now. I think \$10.00 a month will be enough for me. I want us to try to save all we can. You take care of it and spend it waisly. I don't mean for you all to do without things. By what you all need. I want to keep the children well dressed and you to. I just wanted us to have a back account when I get back home for we will need it. Well so long for now babby dear Your loving husband. Tell all the children daddy said hello. (XOXOXO-- Hugs and kisses)

***Rubric for Assessment:**

Students will be asked to complete the email template as if they were sending an email to the Governor about a topic of interest to them personally. An alternate assessment allows students to write an email to an historic Arkansan describing the differences in modern and historic life. For example, student may send a pretend email to Dr. Ida Brooks talking about the possible changes in medicine between the early 1900s and now.

3	Student writing exhibits correct spelling and grammar. The email uses appropriate forms of address such as “Dear Dr. Brooks” or “Dear Governor Beebe.” The content of the message clearly displays an understanding of past forms of communication and change over time OR explains the student’s opinion on a topic of interest to them such as money for education, immigration, plans for new roads or other ideas the students would like to suggest to the Governor. The message is thorough and shows outstanding imagination and attention to detail.
2	Student writing exhibits correct spelling and grammar with 5 or fewer mistakes. More detail is needed. Student attempts to use correct forms of address but minor errors may be present. Message exhibits a vague or general understanding of past forms of communication and/or change in those forms over time. The message may be brief. Student opinion is offered with only minor explanation.
1	Student writing exhibits more than 5 errors in spelling and grammar. Very little detail is presented. It is difficult to determine if student understands the idea of change over time in forms of communication. OR, student message to the Governor is silly or inappropriate.