

Museum of the Gulf Coast

Description

Step into the past with the museum's realistic Sparks Family Pioneer Cabin dating from the late 1800s. Students will become pioneers as they don period clothing, take on pioneer family roles, and identify pioneer artifacts. Youth also engage in hands-on activities that convey pioneer life such as butter churning, corn shelling, washboard washing, pioneer games, and a craft.

Texas TEKS

Grade 3 Social Studies: 113.14(b)(1A),(2A,B,C),(4 C,D), (16), (19 A,B)

Grade 4 Social Studies: 113.15 (b)(2A), (3), (8 A,B),(9A,B,C), (12 A,B,C), (23 A,B)

Grade 5 Social Studies: 113.16 (4 C), (8 C), (9 A), (13 A,B,C), (23 B), (26 A, B)

Grade 6 Social Studies: 113.17 (b)(1), (7 A,B), (23 A, B)

Grade 7 Social Studies 113. 18: (b) (1A), (2), (7), (11A, B), (20 A), (23 A, B)

Grade 8 Social Studies 113.19 (b)(1A), (6), (10),(11),(23),(25 B), (30), (31 A,B)

Concepts/Goals

Students will develop an appreciation and understanding of the hardships that pioneers faced during their travels to new territories.

Students will learn about daily life on the frontier through hands on activities.

Students will consider the similarities and differences between their lives and the lives of the early settlers.

Vocabulary

Pioneer — A person who moves into an area that has previously not been settled.

Frontier — An area of land that was unpopulated by American settlers.

Trading post — A station where goods from afar are bought, sold or bartered for local goods, usually found in a frontier area.

Blacksmith — A person who works with metal, making and repairing objects like pots and pans, horseshoes, wagon wheels, nails and ammunition.

Outhouse — Before indoor plumbing was common in houses, a small building that housed the toilet. This structure was built over a deep hole in the ground and, when filled with waste, it could be moved to another hole.

Self-sufficient-needing no outside help in satisfying one's basic needs, especially with regard to the production of food.

Wagon train-caravan of wagons organized by settlers in the United States for emigration to the West during the late 18th and most of the 19th centuries.

Heirlooms-a valued possession passed down from one family member to another.

Perseverance-never giving up.

Homesteader-a person(s) that lay claim to a plot of land to build and settle on.

Loom-loom a machine on which cloth is made by weaving thread or yarn.

Pre-Visit Activity: Drop Spindle

For centuries, the hand spindle played a role in producing thread and yarn. It is still a tool used in parts of the world today. The form and function of the spindle is basically the same everywhere. It has a very simple design consisting of a shaft and a weight. The materials used to make the spindle in the past consisted of whatever was readily available at the time. The majority of the spindles available, today, have wooden shafts with a wooden disc as the whorl (weight). The type of yarn you want to produce, and the type of fiber being used determine choosing the type of spindle to use.

Materials:

1 wooden car wheel/student (2-3" in diameter)

1 dowel rod/student that fits into the center hole of the wheel, cut to 9-12"

1 1/4" cup hook/student

Yarn

The wheel will be the whorl part of the spindle. The wheel has already been drilled with a hole in the exact center which will keep the spindle from wobbling when it spins.

The dowel rod will be the shaft of your spindle.

After you have the dowel rod cut, push it into the center hole of your whorl (wheel) allowing about 1 to 1 1/2 inch to stick out the bottom. This is known as a low-whorl or bottom-whorl spindle.

Using a 5/64 drill bit, drill a small hole in the center of the shaft, in the end at the top.

Screw the cup hook into the top of the shaft. This acts as a "catch" for your yarn so that it doesn't slip off the end while you are spinning.

You are now ready to add your “leader” yarn, to start your fiber on the spindle. You can use some home spun or store bought yarn around 12 to 14 inches in length. Tie this tightly to the shaft right above the whorl.

Next take the leader yarn over the side of the whorl, looped over the bottom inch that is sticking out, (this helps stabilize the yarn and balances the spin of the whorl) then back up over the side of the whorl and loop it onto the hook. Leave a couple of inches of yarn to start your fiber on.

Drop Spindle Tutorial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7R0Lb1qA7kE>

Post Visit Activity: Ink and Quill

Years ago, in the pioneer world, there were no computers or plastic pens. People wrote with quills, or feathers dipped in ink! Today, most people don't even hand write their letters anymore, they communicate by email or instant messaging. Today we are going to write a letter as if we were pioneers.

Step 1

Choosing a feather: You'll need a large feather, one that has a hollow center so that you can draw the ink up into the middle.

Step 2

Cut the end off of the feather at a slant. You'll want to end up with a pointy tip (sort of like a calligraphy pen)

Step 3

Then cut a small vertical slit up into the tip of the pen (again, like a calligraphy pen). This will help the feather draw up and hold the ink for writing.

Step 4

Dip the end of your quill pen into the ink well.

Step 5

After you dip the feather in the ink, it should hold enough to draw with. You'll have to re-dip every

Making Ink

Ingredients:

1/2 cup ripe berries (blueberries, cherries, blackberries, strawberries or raspberries)

1/2 tsp salt, 1/2 tsp vinegar

Utensils:

Measuring cup and spoons, strainer, bowl, wooden spoon, small jar with tight fitting lid.

1. Fill strainer with berries and place it over a bowl.
2. With the rounded back of the wooden spoon, crush the berries.
3. Let all the berry juice strain into the bowl.
4. Throw the pulp away.
5. Slowly add salt and vinegar to the juice in the bowl and stir well.
6. If the juice is too thick, you can add a tablespoon of water.
7. Pour the “berry ink” into the small jar and keep the jar closed when not using it.
8. Make only a small amount of ink at a time.
9. Dip a quill pen into the jar and use it to write letters.

The ink may turn into what looks like jelly after a while, but do not eat it!