

IMAGINE LIVING IN Ancient Times

Overview

Based on information and details provided in a historical account, this activity asks students to consider how past peoples satisfied basic needs.

Objectives/Skills

Students will

- describe how a community satisfies its needs for food, shelter, and clothing
- learn factors that affect the collective well-being of people
- use comprehension skills to gain meaning
- gain experience in communicating data
- practice the skills of interpretation, imaginative recreation, group work

Subjects

Language arts, social studies, fine arts

Age Level

Grades 3 through 8

Materials

- an account of prehistoric life, a Spanish expedition, or an early homesteader that relates details about environment
- the summary chapter of an archaeological report

Background

As archaeologists study the results of their investigations, they ask the question: How did the inhabitants

satisfy their needs? In the process of this activity, students should conclude, among other things, that some of the skills required by previous populations included tool making, weaving (basketry), and tracking animals.

Procedure

1. Ask students to pretend that they have been teleported to another time period in a specific area; for example, the Archaic period of 6000 B.C. in the Trans-Pecos region. The time period will depend on the account that has been selected for discussion.

2. Present information about the

environment and resources of that era. Ask them to recount what they know of the skills of early people of that area. Brainstorm as a group and make a list for easy reference.

3. Ask students to relate in skits (drama) or on a mural (art) how they would adapt, given the information and conclusions that they have assembled. What skills do they have that would have been useful in an earlier time (universal characteristics)?

4. As an extension to this activity, you might reverse the situation and ask students to brainstorm about how an Archaic-era hunter would adapt in the twentieth-century world.

Teaching with Historic Places

As a possible extension to the lesson plans presented in this edition of the Education Station, teachers should know about a set of classroom-ready activities dealing with historic sites in the U.S.

"Teaching with Historic Places" was developed cooperatively by the National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. As a focus of study, the lesson plans use properties listed in the National Register—for example, the Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site in North Dakota. They link the dramatic story of a place to larger themes in history, social studies, geography, and other subjects. As educational resources, the lesson plans encourage basic and critical thinking skills; include activities guiding students to their own community's history; and they can be adapted for use by different grade levels.

"Teaching with Historic Places" lesson plans are available for \$5.95 per unit plus shipping and handling. Orders of five or more lesson plans are discounted by 20%. To receive a free brochure listing sites included in the program and an order form, write to the Preservation Press, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036; or call (800) 766-6847.