



Heading West in the 1830s: Tea Party

Subject: History, Social Studies

Time: 60 minutes

Grades: 4

Standards:

- MA SS4.T3.1: Describe how the construction of canals, roads, and railways in the 19th century helped the United States expand westward.
- MA SS4.T4.3: Compare different reasons why men and women who lived in the Eastern part of the United States wanted to move West in the 19th century, and describe pioneer life on the frontier.
- MA SS4.T4.4: Explain that many different groups of people immigrated to the United States from other places voluntarily and some were brought to the United States against their will (as in the case of people of Africa).
- MA SS4.RI.1: Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- MA SS.4.RI.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize a text.
- MA SS4.SL.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grade 4 specific topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.
- MA SS4.SL.2: Paraphrase portions of a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.
- MA SS4.SL.4: Report on a topic, text, procedure, or solution to a mathematical problem, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace and use appropriate vocabulary.

Background

This lesson will combine primary source materials with character cards made from quotations and other forms of character work. Students will engage in an historical tea party to meet and engage with real people who traveled West during the early 1800s. Through meetings with their classmates (who will portray other 19th-century figures), students will learn a range of motivations for choosing to migrate West.

Lesson Objectives

- Through examination of primary sources and the lives of people from the early 19th century, students will uncover the reasons why some migrated from the eastern states to the West.
- Students will role-play real people from the past and collect information from their classmates through discussion.

List of Materials and Resources

- Computer
- Writing utensil
- Paper
- Tea party character sheets
- Notebook or worksheet
- 3D tour: <https://www.osv.org/education/3d/>

Key Terms and Vocabulary

- Correspondence
- migration

Procedure

Before the Lesson:

- Print out character descriptions. You will need multiple copies of each character as the class will be divided into groups of 3-6 students.
- Print out character descriptions
- Divide class into small groups of 3-6 students

Opening to Lesson:

- Explain that today, you will be exploring the reasons behind why people chose to move out West from the East coast.
- The Freeman Farmhouse is one of the buildings on the 3D tour. Members of the Freeman family moved West in the 1820s.
- Samuel Freeman grew up in this house, but decided to move to Ohio in 1825. His son wrote:
 - *My father had for many years been embarrassed with debts, and long been anxious to dispose of his place in Sturbridge and to settle anew in some newer place where his boys could have greater scope in agricultural pursuits. He was activated to this course also with a view to greater usefulness.*
- Many New Englanders moved west during the early 1800s because a lot of the farm land in the northeast was owned by someone else, too rocky, or worn out from years of farming. Moving West provided a new start for these pioneers, along with plentiful and inexpensive farmland.
- We are going to start by exploring this house.
- Open the Freeman Farmhouse on the OSV 3D tour.
- Read through the description of the house together on the tour landing page.
- Give the students 10 minutes to explore the farmhouse on their own or in small groups.

- Ask: what did you notice about the house?
- Is there anything you want to know more about?
- Think about: what do you think life was like for people who moved West, away from their families?
- How do you think you would feel if you set out on an adventure like this? Keep these questions in mind during the remainder of the lesson today.

Body of Lesson:

- Students today will be having a tea party of characters. Everyone will get cards with character descriptions of actual people who migrated from New England to the West.
- Break the class into groups of 3-6 students.
- Once you get a character card, you will become that character. Give the students 5 minutes to read through their character sheet and consider the following questions:
 - Why is my character moving West?
 - How are they getting there?
 - Are they a man? Woman?
 - What is their occupation?
 - Are they moving alone? With family?
- They will be introducing their character to the other members of their small group and taking notes in their notebooks during the tea party.
- Within your small groups, introduce yourself to your groupmates as your character. Discuss your reasons for traveling West and what you plan to do once you get there.
- While your groupmates share their characters, jot down some notes about them in your journal. Who are their characters? Why are they moving West?
- Make sure that everyone in the group gets to share about their character.

Lesson Wrap-Up

- Discuss your experiences as a class.
- Make a list together on the white board/smart board:
 - What were the reasons that people migrated to the West?
 - What were their occupations?
 - Were they men? Women? Race?
 - Were they moving alone? With family?
 - What were the challenges in moving West?
 - Did any other interesting topics come up during your tea party? Slavery? Indian removal?

Modifications for Remote Learners

- *For asynchronous learners:*
 - Take time to explore the 3D tour of the Freeman Farmhouse on your own. Members of this family migrated West in the 1820s.

- Samuel Freeman grew up in this house, but decided to move to Ohio in 1825. His son wrote:
 - *My father had for many years been embarrassed with debts, and long been anxious to dispose of his place in Sturbridge and to settle anew in some newer place where his boys could have greater scope in agricultural pursuits. He was activated to this course also with a view to greater usefulness.*
- Many New Englanders moved west during the early 1800s because a lot of the farm land in the northeast was owned by someone else, too rocky, or worn out from years of farming. Moving West provided a new start for these pioneers, along with plentiful and inexpensive farmland.
 - Think about: what do you think life was like for people who moved West, away from their families?
 - How do you think you would feel if you set out on an adventure like this? Keep these questions in mind during the remainder of the lesson today.
 - Read through the character sheets. These characters were real people who moved West in the early 1800s.
 - For each person, fill out the worksheet. It includes following questions:
 - Why is this person character moving West?
 - How are they getting there?
 - Are they a man? Woman?
 - What is their occupation?
 - Are they moving alone? With family?
- *For synchronous learners:*
 - Take time to explore the 3D tour of the Freeman Farmhouse on your own. Members of this family migrated West in the 1820s.
 - Samuel Freeman grew up in this house, but decided to move to Ohio in 1825. His son wrote:
 - *My father had for many years been embarrassed with debts, and long been anxious to dispose of his place in Sturbridge and to settle anew in some newer place where his boys could have greater scope in agricultural pursuits. He was activated to this course also with a view to greater usefulness.*
- Many New Englanders moved west during the early 1800s because a lot of the farm land in the northeast was owned by someone else, too rocky, or worn out from years of farming. Moving West provided a new start for these pioneers, along with plentiful and inexpensive farmland.
 - Students today will be having a virtual tea party of their characters. Everyone will get cards with character descriptions of actual people who migrated from New England to the West.
 - Using breakout rooms, break the class into groups of 3 to 6 students.
 - Once you get a character card, you will become that character. Give the students 5 minutes to consider the following questions:
 - Why is my character moving West?
 - How are they getting there?
 - Are they a man? Woman?
 - What is their occupation?
 - Are they moving alone? With family?

- They will be introducing their character to the other members of their small group and taking notes in the worksheet during the tea party.
- Within your small groups, introduce yourself to your groupmates as your character. Discuss your reasons for traveling West and what you plan to do once you get there.
- Record the responses of your groupmates in your journal. Who are their characters? Why are they moving West?
- Make sure that everyone in the group gets to share about their character.
- Discuss as a class.

Extension Activities and Connected Lessons

- **Create a Timeline of American Expansion:** The early 1800s was a time of great expansion in the United States. While the original 13 colonies became states in the late 1700s, Midwestern states gained statehood throughout the 19th century. Construct a timeline with the dates that all of the New England and Midwestern territories became states during this time.
- **Write a Journal Entry or a Letter about Life in the West:** Imagine that you have moved from your New England home to the new frontier of Ohio. Why did you move? What did you find there? Write about your experiences in the form of a journal entry or a letter to your family back home in the East.
- **Exploring the Impact of Westward Expansion on Native Americans:** Westward expansion of white New Englanders had a massive effect on the lives of Indigenous people. During the Village's time period, thousands of Native Americans in the southwest were forcibly removed from their homes through the Indian Removal Act. Research the ways in which Indigenous lifestyles changed as settlers pushed west.
- Connected Lesson: **Heading West in the 1830s: Maps and Provisions**