

★ Let US Teach That For You!

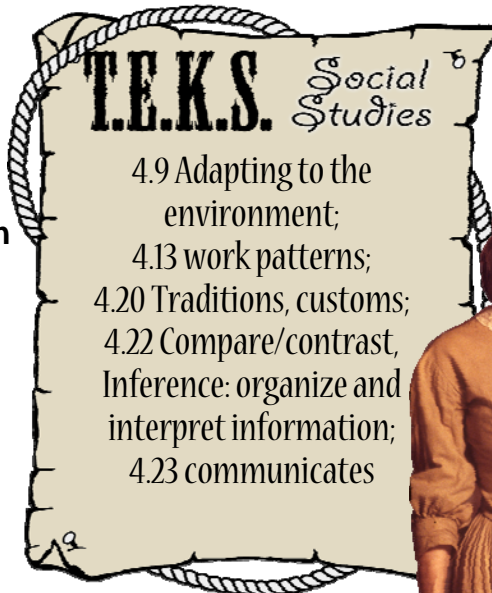
A Day in the Life of Frontier Boys and Girls

Overview: This lesson asks students to compare their lives with those of frontier boys and girls, making inferences and drawing conclusions about life on the frontier.

Objectives:

Students will:

1. **Discover similarities and differences between themselves and a frontier child.**
2. **Make comparisons and draw inferences.**
3. **Evaluate pros and cons of frontier life.**



Materials

Educational Displays provided by Frontier Texas!

Information Station (57), Towns and Social Life Rotator (56), Frontier Women Rotator (61), Frontier Experience Theater

Supplemental Materials Needed

Copies of journal page (Attachment 1), "A Day in the Life of a Frontier Boy or Girl," (Attachment 2), "Frontier Boy/Girl Comparison" (Attachment 3), "A Few Thoughts" (Attachment 4)

Teaching Strategy

Pre-Visit Introduction

1. As an introduction to your trip to Frontier Texas!, ask student to think about what their normal day is like. "When do you get up? What is your morning routine? What do you do after school?"
2. Students will complete the journal page (Attachment 1) describing what is happening at the times specified on their usual school day.

Museum Instruction

1. Enjoy learning about frontier life from the Frontier Experience Theater, Towns and Social Life Rotator (56), Imagination Station (57), and Frontier Women Rotator (61)
2. Remind students to look for similarities and differences between their own experiences and those of frontier children, especially as they play the game at Imagination Station.

Post-Visit Synthesis Activity

1. Distribute copies of "A Day in the Life of a Frontier Boy or Girl." (Attachment 2)
2. Ask students to compare the frontier boy's routine with the frontier girl's daily life, using attached comparison page (Attachment 3). Discuss ways their own lives are different from frontier children.
3. Students will express their own thoughts about frontier children, using the attached graphic, "A Few Thoughts" (Attachment 4)
4. Students will complete a paragraph telling what they would like and dislike about living on the frontier.

Student Assessment

Assess students understanding from their comparison of their own lives with that of a frontier child.

G/T Extension Activity

Students will create a game for a frontier child, using only the resources and materials that would be available on the frontier.



My Weekday Journal

7:00 am

9:00 am

12:00 pm

2:00 pm

4:00 pm

6:00 pm

9:00 pm

A Day in the Life of a Frontier Boy or Girl

In the 1800s, the pioneer family worked together to ensure each member's survival. For this reason, a child's help was essential towards the well-being of the entire family. During primitive settlement activities, boys and girls worked side by side. As the home place became established, it became acceptable for a young girl to work inside the house while her brother helped outside. Even though these frontier children worked hard, they always found time to play.

A Day as a Pioneer Boy

5:00 AM

Rise and shine! The sun has not fully risen, but it is time for you to start your chores. You pull on your clothes and walk outside to fetch water. If your family has a well, consider yourself lucky. You have to pump the well at least 100 times to ensure your family has enough water for the day. If there is not a well, you must travel a few miles to the creek. Next you have to carry extremely heavy buckets back home. Be careful you don't spill, or your mother will send you back outside for more water.

6:30 AM

After you wait for your mom to boil the water, you scarf down breakfast. Mom has cooked up a typical breakfast meal, consisting of corn mush, bacon and biscuits and gravy. Don't forget to drink your milk.

7:30 AM

It is important that you attend to your family's garden. If the crops fail, you will not have supper on the table tonight! You begin by weeding the fields. You have to do this by hand, because like most other pioneer families, your family doesn't have the money or the machines to make this job either. When you were younger, your hand would blister after weeding. Now you have built up calluses that protect your hands. This job can take several hours. Lucky for you, it is not harvest season, during which you would spend another few hours harvesting the crops by hand. Maybe you will have a few extra hours to play.

11:00 AM

You pause to take a quick lunch break, and you run to find your dad. He is just finishing branding some cattle. Your sister brings you some dried bread, cold beans, and leftover bacon to eat.

12:00 PM

Now it is time to go hunting. You need to have some meat on the table tonight. Unfortunately, your father has a number of other chores to do, so you have to hunt all by yourself. So what will you hunt today? Rabbit. These little critters abound the Plains region, and when cooked with your mother's special recipe, they provide a delicious source of protein.

2:00 PM

You are getting a little tired. You have been working for nine hours, but your work is not finished yet. It is time for you to collect fuel to keep the fire burning tonight. However, you are too young to get an ax and chop wood. Instead, you gather hay and animal bones. But most importantly, you fill buckets with cattle dung. Dung keeps your fire burning strong throughout the night. Once again, you have to carry an extremely heavy load back to the house. This keeps you busy for a few hours.

5:00 PM

Home at last and time for supper! Mom has cooked up a delicious meal – rabbit stew! The stew is flavorful, due to the carrots and wild onions your sister collected earlier today. No meal is complete without homemade bread.

6:00 PM

Your work is finished, but now it is time for school! Some children in other parts of the frontier may have a schoolhouse where they go to learn, but not you. Your mom has a collection of different books that she uses to teach you to read. Tonight, you begin reading *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. This play is one of your mother's favorites, and she carried it with her during the long journey west.

8:00 PM

Playtime! You join other children outside and decide to play *All the Tigers are Gone*, which is most fun when the sun is set. The group decides that your sister is it. She runs to hide, while you and the rest of the group wait at home base. After a minute, you split up and go walking into the dark night yelling "All the tigers are gone!" Hopefully, you will be able to spot your sister before she pounces, giving you a chance to run to the safe home base. Before you know it, your sister jumps out the dark and catches you. You're it! Have fun playing for a little longer.

9:00 PM

Bed time! What a day. Because your house is composed of only one room, your entire family goes to bed at the same time. After washing your face and ears in a basin filled with cold water, you snuggle up in bed. Your mother extinguishes the light in the kerosene lamp, and you shut your eyes. Sleep tight.

A Day as a Pioneer Girl

5:00 AM

Time to get up! It is still dark outside, but you have chores to do. You pull on your clothes and sleepily walk outside. It is time for you to milk the cows.

6:00 AM

Breakfast time! You help your mom boil the water that your brother brought in this morning, and you help your mother prepare the meal. Like most other days, breakfast consists of corn mush, bacon and biscuits and gravy. You polish off your meal with a tall glass of milk.

7:00 AM

Now it is time to help your mom clean up the house. Even though the floor of the house is dirt, you still spend time sweeping up debris around your home. Next is time to wash the clothes. You fill a large bucket with warm water. Placing the clothes in the water, you have to scrub each garment by hand, using a bar of soap. After this is finished, you carefully wring the water out of each article and lay it out to dry. When you are finished with the wash, you notice you have used all the soap.

9:00 AM

Now it is time to make more soap because there will be more washing to do tomorrow. You fill a special soap-making contraption, called the ash hopper, with ashes from the fire. Next, you pour water on top of the ashes. This causes lye to form, and you mix this with leftover animal fat. You boil this mixture over the fire, and the soap is made!

11:00AM

It is time to take lunch to your father and brother. You fill a basket with some dried bread and leftover bacon from breakfast this morning. You also add cold beans to the lunch. After you take this to the men in the family, you join your mother inside to eat the same.

12:00 PM

This time you take your chores outside. You walk miles to gather wild vegetables. You notice your feet are a little tired because you have not sat down since you awoke this morning. You ignore the aches and continue on your journey. You finally come across some wild onions that should go deliciously with dinner. On your way home, you stop by the garden to pick some fresh carrots.

2:00 PM

You head outside again, but this time you collect eggs from the chickens. Perhaps your mom will make a delicious omelet in the morning. You finish the day by milking the cows one more time. This will provide your family with a fresh supply of milk for supper.

4:00 PM

It is time to help your mom make dinner. While your mother cleans the rabbit your brother caught, you boil the water, chop the vegetables, and tidy the house before dinner. You look forward to sitting down for a delicious meal.

5:00 PM

Dinner time! You enjoy the delicious rabbit stew and homemade bread your mother has made. But no dinner is complete without a tall glass of milk.

6:00 PM

Your work is finished, but now it is time for school! Some children in other parts of the frontier may have a schoolhouse where they go to learn, but not you. Your mom has a collection of different books that she uses to teach you to read. Tonight, you begin reading *Hamlet* by Shakespeare. This play is one of your mother's favorites, and she carried it with her during the long journey west.

8:00 PM

Playtime! You join with other children outside and decide to play *All the tigers are Gone*, which is most fun when the sun is set. The group decides that you are it. You run and hide behind a tree while the rest of the group waits at the home base. After a minute has passed, the members of the group spread out and yell "All the tigers are gone!" You listen and try to find someone to "pounce" on. You have to listen carefully because it is difficult to see at night. You hear footsteps approaching. You wait quietly, and POUNCE! You caught your brother. Good job.

9:00 PM

Bed time! What a day. Because your house is composed of only one room, your entire family goes to bed at the same time. After washing your face and ears in a basin filled with cold water, you snuggle up in bed. Your mother extinguishes the light in the kerosene lamp, and you shut your eyes. Sleep tight.

Compare Frontier Boy's Day with Frontier Girl's Day



Frontier Boy's Day

Frontier Girl's Day

Being a Frontier Boy or Girl

A Few Thoughts...

What I would like
about being a
frontier boy/girl?

If I were lived
on the frontier...

The scariest thing about
being a frontier boy/girl would be

The hardest thing about being a
frontier boy/girl would be

Being on the frontier
would be neat because...

If I lived on the frontier I would miss...