

Celebrating New Mexico Statehood
Lesson Plan 4
The Creation of New Mexico's Constitution
A Creative Small Group Activity

Developed by staff of the Center for Southwest Research, UNM University Libraries

Lesson Plan: Research the formation of New Mexico's Constitution and then draft your own constitution of your own fictional state including your own creative and descriptive state name.

Overview

This small group or individual activity will utilize social studies, technology, and public speaking skills by having the students research the formation of New Mexico's Constitution. The students will then draft their own constitution of their own fictional state including their own creative and descriptive state name. The student will then report their findings as well as their own original ideas both in writing and orally. Students will use digitized primary source documents for their research.

Recommended Grade Level

Grade 7, with modifications could be used for other grades.

Time Required

This lesson should take approximately four 45 minute class periods.

Objectives

- Students will explore the Celebrating New Mexico Statehood website (<http://nmstatehood.unm.edu>) and take notes on relevant materials.
- Students will formulate a written report about the formation of New Mexico's Constitution based upon the digitized historic documents.
- Students will use New Mexico history websites and library resources to fill in any missing information.
- Students will create a rough draft of their own new state's constitution.
- Students will create a final draft of their research reports.
- Students may create an oral report and present it to their classmates.

Materials/Teacher Preparation

- Paper for taking notes.
- Computers with internet and word processing.
- Other materials may be needed for the oral presentations.

Curriculum Standards

This lesson will meet several standards and benchmarks for the New Mexico Public Education Department – Check for current standards

Possible Procedures

1. The lesson will begin with the teacher asking students to define primary sources.

2. Once a definition has been established students will brainstorm different types of primary
3. The teacher will ask students to talk about any prior knowledge of New Mexico's Constitution and/or its creation process and clarify any misunderstanding as he/she introduces the lesson and objectives.
4. The teacher will read through the instructions and explain the project in detail answering questions when necessary.
5. The teacher will divide the class into groups and assign cooperative group roles within each group.

Cooperative group roles

Leader: Keeps group on task; makes decisions with consent and affirmation of group.

Recorder: Records the written information generated by the group.

Reporter: If needed, this person will make the presentation to the class; otherwise, this task falls on the Leader.

Timer/Illustrator: Keeps track of time elapsed/time remaining and provides drawings and illustrations as part of the group's presentation.

6. The teacher will explore the Celebrating New Mexico Statehood website with the students.
7. Students will explore the statehood website with their groups and take notes on relevant materials.
8. Students will formulate a rough draft of a written report based upon the digitized historic documents.
9. Students will use New Mexico History websites and library resources to fill in any missing information.
10. Students will create a rough draft of their own new state's constitution.
11. Students will create a final draft of their reports.
12. Students may create an oral report and present it to their classmates.

New Mexico History Resources Online:

Celebrating New Mexico Statehood <http://nmstatehood.unm.edu>

American Memory (Library of Congress) <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

New Mexico Centennial (Official Web Site) <http://www.nmcentennial.org/>

New Mexico Office of the State Historian <http://www.newmexicohistory.org/>

New Mexico Secretary of State Blue Book <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/sos-bluebook.html>

New Mexico Tourism Department <http://www.newmexico.org/>