

**“It’s News to Me!”**  
**Teaching with Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection**  
**Model Lesson Format**

*Fill out the list of the components to be included in a lesson using primary source materials that is aligned to Colorado Model Content Standards.*

**Lesson Title:**

Discovering differing points of view on the development of railroads in Colorado

**Subject(s) and Grade Level(s):**

Colorado History, 9-12

**Focus of Lesson:** A brief explanation of what students are to learn in this lesson (content and/or skills). What is the purpose of the lesson?

Students will explore how differing newspapers, editors, and even communities had differing points of view on the development of the railroad through Colorado. They will explore different ways of searching in Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection.

**Objective 1:** Students will use the Colorado Historic Newspaper Project database and other historic materials databases to research the development of the railroads in Colorado. They will learn about different ways to effectively search the database.

**Objective 2:** Students will prepare an historical reenactment that compares and contrasts at least two differing points of view related to the development and construction of the railroads or the individuals involved in their development. These points of view might come from different publications, or might have been published at different times during its development, or might represent different community or political points of view concerning the railroad.

**Standards Assessed:** Which standards will you be assessing in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

Information Literacy 2: The student who is information literate evaluates information critically and competently.

Information Literacy 3: The student who is information literate uses information accurately and creatively.

History 2: Students know how to use the processes and resources of historical inquiry.

**Assessment:** Explain the assessment. (Include the formal 'assessment assignment' and any forms, worksheets, etc. in the Materials Section)

Students will prepare an historical reenactment that compares and contrasts points of view concerning the railroad, its development, or one of the individuals involved in its development. The presentation may be done individually or in a small group, reenacting a discussion or debate that might have taken place in historic times. Assessment will be done using a rubric for historical reenactment

**Standards Addressed:** Which standards will you be addressing (but not assessing) in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

Information Literacy 1-9

History 4: Students understand how science, technology, and economic activity have developed, changed, and affected societies throughout history.

**Time:** The number of class periods required for the lesson as well as the length of class period.

**Materials / Teacher Preparation Section:** List the technology, handouts, chart paper, text resources, etc. needed to complete the lesson. Include what you need to do to prepare ahead of time for your students to complete the lesson.

Computer (s) with internet access: optimally, teacher will access the Internet with a multimedia projector for the demonstration period of the lesson, and students will access the internet individually or in small groups to complete work. However, this can be accomplished with printouts of articles gathered by the teacher from the Colorado Historic Newspaper Collection website and other primary source websites.

Documents:

Search Strategies and Tips

Guide to Developing a Historic Reenactment

Historical Reenactment Rubric

Teacher responsibilities:

Know and understand the structure and content of the Colorado Historic Newspapers Project website. know and be able to demonstrate effective searching strategies (keyword, publication, date) within the website clearly define expectations for the oral presentation to be done prepare students to understand

railroad development as an important force in Colorado's development

Librarian responsibilities:

Know and understand the structure and content of the Colorado Historic Newspapers Project website. know and be able to demonstrate effective searching strategies (keyword, publication, date) within the website provide Internet access on teacher computer and student computers. prepare students to understand concepts of difference of opinion and how to present comparisons and contrasts of those differences of opinion. provide historical resources that show historic costume and equipment so that students might identify appropriate costume and equipment for their presentation. prepare a pathfinder or bookmark sites that may be used in this project: American Memory, CDP, and other history sites).

**Possible Procedures:** Enumerate the procedure teachers can follow to teach the lesson to students. Provide the URL for the digital primary sources that you will use.

Session 1: This demonstration session focuses on David Moffat and the development of the Denver, Northwestern, and Pacific Railroad, otherwise known as the Moffat Railroad from Denver to Craig Colorado.

Teacher and librarian demonstrate the search strategies that can be used in the CHNC website. This will allow for exploration of a variety of articles, editorials, and advertisements about the development of the railroad and the historic time period in which it developed. Teacher and librarian will demonstrate keyword searching, publication searching, and date searching as means to locating information. Teacher and librarian will address the use of advertisements and artwork, as well as related articles, in developing understanding of a historic period. (Use the Search Strategies and Tips handout.)

Teacher and librarian may begin with a search using keywords "Denver northwestern", searching the entire archive. This will result in some useful results, as well as some that are not. Teacher and librarian will discuss determining the validity of search results if the students are not familiar with searching this type of database. This search will help students determine a time period for their work, as it reveals the initial proposals for the railroad, the date of incorporation of the railroad, prominent people involved in its development, as well as its reorganizations over time, any of which might be used in the creation of the reenactment.

Teacher and librarian will then demonstrate the use of "Moffat railroad" as search terms, and determine if this search using a related term gives a different result set. Teacher and librarian discuss with students the use of other related terms: the changes of name of the railroad, and changes of people involved.

Teacher and librarian may demonstrate use of names as search terms. Search "David Moffat" using the entire archive. This search will result in many articles

related to his retail, banking, mining, and other railroad interests. This is one means of providing background information for the project.

Teacher and librarian may demonstrate use of location names as a means to refine a search.

During this demonstration, the objective is to begin to discover differing points of view or perspective on the development of railroads in Colorado. As these are found in research, teacher and librarian will point them out, and begin to record them on whiteboard, overhead, computer, or chart paper. After a number of perspectives are recorded, students and teacher can begin to categorize the perspectives and points of view.

Session 2: Students will search in pairs or individually to find examples of differing points of view concerning the railroad development in Colorado, as well as background knowledge of the time period. They will use keyword, publication, and date searching. Name searching will allow students to focus on the perspectives and involvement of individuals. Location searching may demonstrate community perspectives. Searching a variety of related terms will assist in development of their character and background knowledge.

Students will record differing perspectives or points of view found in their research and categorize them.

Session 3: Students will refine their opinions about the different points of view represented in their research, and prepare a 3-5 minute per person oral presentation comparing and contrasting the points of view, i.e. if the group is three people, the presentation may be 9-15 minutes. See Guide to Developing a Historic Reenactment. The oral presentation/reenactment will include use of background historic knowledge gained in searching; it must present clearly, and demonstrate an understanding of, the differing points of view; it must be supported with at least one historically accurate (or replica) prop, and it must be historically and chronologically correct.

Session 4: Students will gather information about historic costume and equipment that will enhance their oral presentations. This may come from the website itself, or from other print or non-print resources in the library/lab. (American Memory [www.memory.loc.gov](http://www.memory.loc.gov), Colorado Digitization Project [www.cdphheritage.org](http://www.cdphheritage.org), and other history sites may be accessed.)

Session 5: Students will present historical reenactments that demonstrate the different perspectives on the railroad. Assessment will be done using a rubric for historical reenactment (see above).