

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

A UNIT in Two Lessons

Unit Overview:

Historic and antique images are a valuable part of understanding history. They provide the clearest and most accurate depiction of the past. By studying a photograph, we can draw conclusions about places, people and events that we may otherwise not be able to fully understand. This unit will teach students local Fresno County history through photographs from the turn of the century as well as helping to improve visual literacy and critical thinking skills.

Unit Summary:

With photos from the Fresno County Historical Society Archive and from the Pop Laval Collection students will learn to view historic images and analyze them. They will learn about the founding of Fresno County and see how the city grew over time by comparing and contrasting photos from different decades. Students will also use a historic photo as the basis for a creative writing assignment prior to learning the true history behind the image of Zapp's Park.

Time Allotment:

Two 30-40 minute lesson plans.

Grade Level: 6-8

Standards

History-Social Science Content Standards

Chronological and Spatial Thinking

1. Students explain how major events are related to one another in time.

Research, Evidence, and Point of View

1. Students frame questions that can be answered by historical study and research.
2. Students distinguish fact from opinion in historical narratives and stories.
3. Students detect the different historical points of view on historical events and determine the context in which the historical statements were made (the questions asked, sources used, author's perspectives).

Historical Interpretation

1. Students explain the central issues and problems from the past, placing people and events in a matrix of time and place.
2. Students understand and distinguish cause, effect, sequence, and correlation in historical events, including the long-and short-term causal relations.
3. Students explain the sources of historical continuity and how the combination of ideas and events explains the emergence of new patterns.
4. Students recognize the role of chance, oversight, and error in history.
5. Students recognize that interpretations of history are subject to change as new information is uncovered

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

Analyze historic images

Understand life in the early 20th century in Fresno County

Compare and contrast Then and Now.

Materials

Video:

As Pop Saw it: Valley Stories as photographed by Claude C. "Pop" Laval by Valley PBS

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=4370276781091>

Images:

1912 Photo from Zapp's Park

Collection photos of early Fresno County school children from the Pop Laval Collection

Reading:

Celebrating the Journey: Early and Developing Fresno County

Zapp's Park: Fresno's Best Amusement Park

Worksheets:

Compare and Contrast City Scenes (3 options)

What is the same/What is Different worksheet

Introduction Activity

Set-up: Watch the *As Pop Saw it: Valley Stories as photographed by Claude C. "Pop" Laval* video (2:50 min.) to introduce the topic. Remind students of the old saying "a picture is worth a thousand words," and tell them that they will have the opportunity to analyze historic photos of Fresno collected by the Fresno County Historic Society. Explain that Pop Laval was well known for capturing and cataloging the history of Fresno.

Learning Activity #1: Zapps Park

Set-up: As a class, give students 5 minutes to look at the photos of Zapp's Park and discuss the following questions. When a student makes an observation, ask the student how he or she knows that. This will help focus the student's looking and allow the students to notice details and make assumptions about those details.

- What do you notice?
- What are the people doing?
- Describe the environment.
- What would it be like to live there?
- What sounds would you hear?
- What would you smell?
- Study each person and object in the picture. What can you tell about the time frame, the people, the environment, and the culture based on these observations?
- What does the photograph tell you about the life of these people?

Next, have the students write a 1-2 page short story using clues from the photograph. Tell them to continue to analyze the people and activity in the photograph, paying close attention to characters and details to create a story for the photo.

Once completed, ask for volunteers to share their short stories with their classmates.

Lastly, share with the students the story of Zapp's Amusement Park in Fresno. Discuss the history of Fresno and compare their stories to the history.

Learning Activity #2: Historic Downtown Fresno

Think-Pair-Share: Have the students read the *Celebrating the Journey: Early and Developing Fresno County* to learn about the development of the County. Then have each student select a set of photos of downtown Fresno to compare and contrast the changes throughout the years. Have them complete the *compare and contrast worksheet* to write down their observations (see *Materials*). Students will share their findings from their worksheet with a classmate. Lastly, ask some students to share their worksheet findings with the entire class.

Assessment

Use the following questions to guide a recap discussion, as a quiz, or a guideline for a quick writing assignment.

Learning Activity #1:

Recap discussion: Discuss the significance of collecting photos to capture a moment in time. What iconic structures, places, locations in Fresno would they like to see represent this current time?

Learning Activity #2:

Quick write: Have students write a reflection paper on the historical photos from downtown Fresno and respond to the following questions:

- What major changes you notice from each time period?
- What is significant about these changes?
- What kinds of work did people do?

Extension Activity

Learning Activity #1: Have students bring a recent photo to class that they believe that would best represent who they are during this place and time in Fresno.

Learning Activity #2: Have students select a photo from the Fresno County Historical Society's photo collections and write a brief summary of their observations from the photos, identifying the historical significance and life during that time period.

Distance Learning Options

- Hold discussions via video conferencing software like Zoom or Teams.
- Alternatively, require students to contribute to an online discussion board 1-2 times per week.
- Hold live stream or video presentations in which each student is required to fill 1 minute of time.
- Each group share out to class to ensure all students comprehend the content.
- Assign a short reflection essay.