

Stories of the American West Study Guide

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Program Description

Stories of the American West captures the powerful, heroic imagery of the American Frontier. Students are transported through time to the most exciting American era, the days of the cowboys and cowgirls, wilderness exploration, blazing new trails, the days that our great nation was expanded from 13 humble colonies along the Atlantic ocean to the dynamic leader of the free world that spans *from sea to shining sea*. A Master StoryTeller, dressed in authentic western attire captures the students attention as well as their imagination. The images are powerful and compelling. Students are thrilled as they are led on a journey through America's robust frontier history. Don't be surprised if the audience erupts in cheers. Knee slapping laughter often punctuates a performance that is as much fun as it is educational. Enthusiastic participation gives this performance the feel of an outdoor recreational activity while presenting amazing facts about our history.

Artist Bio

As a boy, Calvin Sims needed heroes. Perhaps more than some, he grew up in a foster home. Luckily, one Saturday morning, he stumbled onto a virtually unlimited source of strong, positive role models. His heroes were the Saturday matinee idols who rode across the screen. Inspired by the character and integrity of these American Icons, Calvin emulated their work ethic and adventurous attitude which he credits to being the key to his success in business. A former international computer consultant, Calvin has developed powerful, programming based on exciting, true stories from America's frontier history. These stories are designed to give student that same spark of inspiration that built the greatest nation in the history of the world. Today Calvin's programming is welcomed in schools across America as well as locally where he has hosted international audiences. Today, Calvin Sims is a much sought after author, lecturer and master storyteller.

Background on Art Form

Anthropologists, psychologists, and historians believe that storytelling has been with us since the beginning of time - in fact, they argue that storytelling is that which defines our humanity. Stories of the American West uses storytelling to effectively capture student's interest. When true stories are presented in a format that is entertaining and rich, the audience can relate to the normally staid deeds and dates on a more personal level. History is presented in a way that the students are able to witness the events as if they are there. StoryTelling was an integral part of the era in which these stories take place and provides the excellent medium for dispensing facts and figures in a way that is as entertaining as it is informative. Because students are able to relate to the characters and circumstances on a more personal level, they are able to retain more of the material.

Prepare (Pre- or pre-performance)

Teachers, please read this to your students.

Today we will be visited by a real cowboy. He lives on a ranch and daily carries out many of the same tasks that our ancestors did as they settled the American West. Pay special attention to how he is dressed. A cowboy's clothes did more than cover his body, his clothes were actually tools which transformed his entire body into a working machine. Our visitor is also a storyteller who will share with us true stories of the American West.

Warm Up Questions to set the stage for engaging students:

Can you name something that a cowboy might wear?

How did a cowboy get from place to place?

Would you find a cowboy in a city or on a ship or in an office or on a farm?

Why is a cowboy named for an animal?

Is being a cowboy hard work?

Is being a cowboy dangerous?

What does a cowboy wear on his head, why is it so big?

What does a cowboy wear on the back of his boots?

Can a girl be a cowboy?

What would you have to learn to do to be a cowboy?

Where would you live if you were a cowboy?

Warm Up Questions for meeting the Georgia Performance Standards for

"Listening/Speaking/Viewing":

How can the performer tell if we are really listening?

How can we make the performer glad that he came to our school?

What should we do if we have a question?

How should we sit or stand during a performance?

How do we show someone we appreciate their visit?

Describe behavior that should not take place during a performance?

What effect does bad behavior have on the performance?

Why is it importance not to talk to the person next to me, behind me or in front of me during a performance?

How can bad behavior make it hard for others to enjoy the performance?

How would this make the performer feel?

How do we want the performer to feel when they leave our school or classroom?

Questions

- Name the animals that might be found of a farm or ranch
- Name some of the chores that a cowboy may have
- What food would you take on the trail
- What direction would you travel to get to Texas
- What color uniform would a soldier from New York wear in the Civil War
- Why would an Indian want to become a cowboys friend
- What kind of job would a woman have before the civil war
- What kind of toys did children have
- Where did cowboys get their tools
- What is the cavalry

Activities

- Draw a cowboy outfit
- Draw a map of the state of Oklahoma
- Make a US Deputy Marshall Badge using construction paper & crayons
- Draw a wanted posted
- Make a Slave Pass
- Wear a cowboy/cowgirl outfit to school
- Design a Brand for your own cattle ranch
- Make up a song to sing on the trail
- Write a menu for a cattle drive
- Write an oath for a Deputy Marshall or a Soldier

Additional Activities

- Find the thirteen original colonies on a map. Find the Louisiana Purchase Territory.
- Divide the class into Indians & The Lewis & Clark Expedition. Have a Treaty signing ceremony. Chose a student to represent the major personalities, Lewis, Clark, York, Sacagawea, The Chief.
- Using yarn, feathers, beads, construction paper and other materials, have each student make a coup stick and explain what it represents.
- Form a large circle with student sitting on the floor. Have students take turns pretending to be York and entertaining the members of the Lewis & Clark Expedition.

Vocabulary

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Spurs – small wheel attached to the back of a cowboy's boots. Used to kick the horse and get his attention while riding.

Lasso – a rope with one end threaded through a small loop called a Hondo. The lasso is used to catch and hold livestock.

Saber – the long knife or sword worn by all cavalry soldiers

Cavalry – soldiers who ride and fight from horseback

Warrant – an order to arrest someone who has committed a crime. Sometimes Wanted Posters serve the purpose of a Warrant

Chaps – cowhide pants worn over a cowboy's regular pants for protection. Chaps are to legs what gloves are to hands

Buckaroo – an Americanized version of the Spanish word Vaquero which means cowboy

Fort – a settlement surrounded by walls and populated by mostly soldiers but often civilians, as well. A fort was a military post that provided protection to settlers on the frontier

Coup Stick – a stick of varying length adorned with feathers, beads, and other items that each represented a significant event in an individual's, tribe's or family's history or life

Resources for Teachers & Students

StoryTellers of the American Frontier <http://www.storytellers.net>

American West: A Celebration of the Human Spirit <http://www.americanwest.com/>

American Western Magazine <http://www.americanwesternmagazine.com/>

Links to All Things Cowboy <http://www.cowboys.com/>

Virtual Civil War <http://www.mikelynaugh.com/VirtualCivilWar/Welcome3.html>

The American Civil War Links <http://sunsite.utk.edu/civil-war/>

Africans in America: The Civil War <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4narr5.html>

Virtual Library - American Indians <http://www.hanksville.org/NAresources/>

Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian <http://www.nmai.si.edu/>

Books

"When the Student is Ready, the Teacher Will Appear" by Calvin G. Sims <http://www.storytellers.net>

"B is for Buckaroo: A Cowboy Alphabet" by [Louise Doak Whitney](#), [Gleaves Whitney](#), [Susan Guy](#)

"Lewis and Clark for Kids : Their Journey of Discovery with 21 Activities For Kids": by [Janis Herbert](#)

Great Rulers of the African Past by Lavinia Dobler and William A. Brown, illustrated by Yvonne Johnson

"The Civil War for Kids: A History With 21 Activities": by Janis Herbert

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StoryTellers of the American Frontier

United States of America Statehood Order and Major US Events - Timeline

Benchmark: Revolutionary War – 1775 – 1783 Benchmark: US Constitution Ratified 9-17-1887				
#	State	Date Admitted	1 st Census	First Settlements (Focus on English)
1	Delaware	1787-12-7	1790	1664-English Capture Dutch Territory; 1631-Lewes (Dutch)
2	Pennsylvania	1787-12-12	1790	1682-William Penn Settles Philadelphia; 1643-Swedes
3	New Jersey	1787-12-18	1790	1664-English Capture Dutch Territory; 1660-Bergen (Dutch)
4	Georgia	1788-1-2	1790	1733-Oglethorpe Settles Savannah; ~1600-Spanish Settle
5	Connecticut	1788-1-9	1790	1639-English Settle Wethersfield, Hartford, Windsor
6	Massachusetts	1788-2-6	1790	1620-Plymouth; 1630-Boston
7	Maryland	1788-4-28	1790	1634-St. Mary's River; 1649-Annapolis (from Virginia)
8	South Carolina	1788-5-23	1790	1670-Albemarle Point; 1680-Charles Towne; 1730s-Others
9	New Hampshire	1788-6-21	1790	1623-English Settle Portsmouth and Dover
10	Virginia	1788-6-25	1790	1607-English Settle Jamestown
11	New York	1788-7-26	1790	1664-English Capture Dutch Territory; 1614-Albany (Dutch)
Admitted Under Presidency of George Washington 1789 - 1797				
12	North Carolina	1789-11-21	1790	1585-Roanoke (Vanishes in 1587); 1670-Settlement Begins
13	Rhode Island	1790-5-29	1790	1636-English Settle Providence
14	Vermont	1791-3-4	1790	1724-English Capture French Territory (Ft. Dummer)
15	Kentucky	1792-6-1	1790	1774-Harrodstown Settled (US)
16	Tennessee	1796-6-6	1790	1769-Watauga Valley Settled (NC & VA)
Admitted Under Presidency of John Adams 1797 - 1801				
17	Ohio	1803-3-1	1790	1747-Virginians are Granted Charter in Ohio Valley
Benchmark: Louisiana Purchase – April 30, 1803 Benchmark: Lewis & Clark Expedition May 14, 1804 – September 23, 1806 Benchmark: War of 1812 – 1812 - 1814				

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18	Louisiana	1812-4-30	1790	1714-Natchitoches (Fr); 1718-New Orleans (Fr); 1803 (US)
Admitted Under Presidency of James Madison 1809 - 1817				
19	Indiana	1816-12-11	1790	1732-Vincennes (Fr); 1763-English Gain Control
Admitted Under Presidency of James Monroe 1817 - 1825				
20	Mississippi	1817-12-10	1790	1699-Ft. Mauripas (Fr); 1763-English Gain Control
21	Illinois	1818-12-3	1790	1680-Ft. Creve Coeur (Fr); 1763-English Gain Control
22	Alabama	1819-12-19	1790	1702-Mobile (Fr); 1763-English Gain Control
23	Maine	1820-3-15	1790	1607-Popham (1 Year); 1691-Part of Massachusetts
24	Missouri	1821-8-10	1790	1735-Ste. Genevieve (Fr); 1764-St. Louis (Fr); 1803
Benchmark: Fall of The Alamo – March 6, 1836				
Admitted Under Presidency of Andrew Jackson 1829 - 1837				
25	Arkansas	1836-6-15	1810	1686-Arkansas Post (Fr); 1803-US Purchases
26	Michigan	1837-1-26	1790	1668-Saule Ste. Marie (Fr); 1701-Detroit (Fr); 1763-England
Admitted Under Presidency of James K. Polk 1845 - 1849				
27	Florida	1845-3-3	1820	1565-St. Augustine (Sp); 1763-English Gain Control
28	Texas	1845-12-29	1820	1682-El Paso (Sp); 1718-San Antonio (Sp); 1821-Rep
29	Iowa	1846-12-28	1830	1803-US Purchases; 1833-First Settlement by US
30	Wisconsin	1848-5-29	1820	1701-Green Bay (Fr); 1763-English Gain Control
Admitted Under Presidency of Millard Fillmore 1850 - 1853				
31	California	1850-9-9	1830	1776-SF (Sp); 1781-LA (Sp); 1826-US Migration
Admitted Under Presidency of James Buchanan 1857 - 1861				
32	Minnesota	1858-5-11	1830	1650-1680-French Exploration; 1784-US Gains Control
33	Oregon	1859-2-14	1850	1805-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1811-Astoria (US)
Admitted Under Presidency of Abraham Lincoln 1861 - 1865				
34	Kansas	1861-1-29	1850	1804-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1827-Ft. Leavenworth (US)
Benchmark: The US Civil War April 12, 1861 – April 9, 1865				
35	West Virginia	1863-6-20	1860	1726-Bunker Hill (Br); 1861-Secedes from Virginia
36	Nevada	1864-10-31	1860	1849-Mormon Station (US); 1859-Virginia City (US)

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United States of America Statehood Order and Major US Events - Timeline

Admitted Under Presidency of Andrew Johnson 1865 - 1869				
37	Nebraska	1867-3-1	1850	1804-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1819-Ft. Atkinson (US)
Admitted Under Presidency of Ulysses S. Grant 1869 - 1877				
38	Colorado	1876-8-1	1860	1806-Zebulon Pike Explores; 1833-Bent's Old Fort (US)
Admitted Under Presidency of Benjamin Harrison 1889 - 1893				
39	North Dakota	1889-11-2	1870	1797-Pembina (Fr); 1812-Pembina (Br); 1818-US Control
40	South Dakota	1889-11-2	1870	1804-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1817-Ft. Pierre (US)
41	Montana	1889-11-8	1860	1806-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1841-Bitterroot Valley (US)
42	Washington	1889-11-11	1860	1805-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1811-Ft. Okanogan (US)
43	Idaho	1890-7-3	1860	1805-Lewis & Clark Explore; 1809-Pend Oreille Post (US)
44	Wyoming	1890-7-10	1870	1807-John Colter Explores; 1834-Ft. William (US)
Admitted Under Presidency of Grover Cleveland 1893 - 1897				
45	Utah	1896-1-4	1850	1776-Franciscan Friars Explore; 1847-Salt Lake City (US)
Benchmark: Spanish American War - 1898				
Admitted Under Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt 1901 - 1909				
46	Oklahoma	1907-11-16	1860	1803-US Acquires; 1811-Cherokee Reservations Established
Admitted Under Presidency of William Howard Taft 1909 - 1913				
47	New Mexico	1912-1-26	1840	1610-Santa Fe (Sp); 1848-US Gains Control
48	Arizona	1912-2-14	1830	1776-Ft. Tucson (Sp); 1848-US Gains Control
Benchmark: World War I – 1914 – 1918 Benchmark: The Great Depression – 1929 Benchmark: World War II – 1941 - 1942				
Admitted Under Presidency of Dwight David Eisenhower 1953 - 1961				
49	Alaska	1959-1-3	1800	1784-Kodiak (Russia); 1867-US Gains Control; 1896-Gold
50	Hawaii	1959-8-21	1840	1820-Missionaries (Br); 1898-US Annexes
Not Yet Admitted				
	Puerto Rico	1889	?	1508-Colony Established (Sp); 1898-US Gains Control
	Washington, DC	1800	1800	1791-Site Selected by George Washington (MD & VA)