

#8825

MOUNTAIN STATES

Grade Levels: 3-9

26 minutes

FILM IDEAS, INC. 1998

1 Instructional Graphic Enclosed

DESCRIPTION

Six states form the Mountain States region of the United States: Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and Idaho. Maps, graphics, and old photos help present an overview of this spectacular region. Describes each state, its size, population, geographic regions, commerce, capital, points of interest, history, and resources. The physical geography of the region keeps its population low, but its tourism high.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Subject Area: Places and Regions

- ◆ Standard: Understands the physical and human characteristics of place
 - Benchmark: Knows the physical characteristics of places (e.g., soils, land forms, vegetation, wildlife, climate, natural hazards)
- ◆ Standard: Understands the concept of regions
 - Benchmark: Understands ways regional systems are interconnected (e.g., watersheds and river systems, regional connections through trade, cultural ties between regions)



INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To study the history of the Mountain West region.
2. To identify the geographical significance of the Mountain West region.
3. To review how the Continental Divide determined the course of the Mountain West region's rivers.

VOCABULARY

1. Anasazi
2. Battle of Little Bighorn
3. Continental Divide
4. Francisco Coronado
5. Four Corners
6. Gold Rush
7. Louisiana Purchase
8. Mountain West region
9. nomadic Indians
10. North America
11. Oregon Trail
12. Rocky Mountains
13. Sauk Sea
14. transcontinental railroad
15. Yellowstone National Park

AFTER SHOWING

Discussion Items and Questions

1. Today such conveniences as computers, telephones, automobiles, electricity, etc., are used to enhance modern-day lives. Explain how these enhancements differ to those used during the time the Mountain West region was being discovered.
2. Imagine what it would be like to be an early explorer. Discuss issues which may have concerned these early settlers: weather conditions; commerce; regional terrain; food/vegetation; issues on foreign policy with Mexico, Spain, France; and other issues.
3. Both geographical and historical information has been documented throughout the world. Explain why this type of information is important when studying the Mountain West region, and how it relates to our everyday lives.
4. Most of the Mountain West region was unsettled until the mid- to late 1800s, during which time many rapid changes were taking place. Discuss some of those changes and how they impacted the region and the progress for the rest of the country.



Applications and Activities

1. Draw a map of the Mountain West region, indicating significant points of interest. For example, the capital cities, important events, the names of early explorers, or other interests.
2. The Mountain West region is well known for its beautiful mountains. Explain how these mountains were formed. Use maps, scientific illustrations, clay models, or other models. Perhaps use a computer to illustrate the project.
3. Arrange a trip to visit museums, cultural centers, state parks, etc., to stimulate the imagination to explore the rich history and geography of the Mountain West region.
4. Use the chronology of the Mountain West region to create a time line. Illustrate it and display it in the classroom. (See INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHICS.)

SUMMARY

The first European settlers, mostly from Spain, began to explore this region during the mid-1500s. 500 million years ago this land was flat as the entire area was covered by an inland sea called the Sauk Sea. Eventually, this inland sea began to withdraw and ice glaciers entered the region. As these ice glaciers slowly began to recede, their forceful weight carved the formations known today as the Rocky Mountain range.

These early settlers were experiencing rapid changes as the Union continued to expand from east to west. Known for its natural beauty, the Mountain West has become a haven for national parks.



Along with its rich history, the Mountain West region also has geographical significance. From the high mountain peaks of the Rockies to the geysers of Yellowstone National Park, the Mountain West region offers an array of adventure.

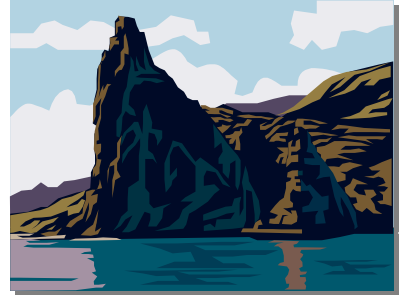
As we study the Mountain West region, we not only begin to witness the results of nature but also the birth of a nation. Embedded in rich tradition, this region cultivates the knowledge from the past, which reexamines the present, to further inform the future.

RELATED RESOURCES



Captioned Media Program

- National Parks of Utah #7762
- The Rocky Mountains #2426
- The United States: Geography of a Nation #8939



World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid-safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **COUNCIL ON INDIAN NATIONS**

<http://www.cinprograms.org/history/anasazi.html>

Gives a brief history of the Anasazi Indians. Also provides links to Southwest Indian history—the past and present.

- **FRANCISCO VAZQUEZ DE CORONADO**

<http://www.desertusa.com/mag98/sep/papr/coronado.html>

Explains Coronado's journey in search of treasures in the New World. Includes topics such as "People & Culture" and "Minerals & Geology."

- **THE OREGON TRAIL**

<http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/oregontrail.html>

Thorough site about the Oregon Trail. Includes interesting facts and legends.

INSTRUCTIONAL GRAPHICS

- CHRONOLOGY OF THE MOUNTAIN STATES

Chronology of the Mountain States

- 500 million years ago:** The entire Mountain West region is covered by an inland sea called the Sauk Sea.
- 30,000-40,000 years ago:** Nomadic and the Anasazi Indians migrate from Asia into North America--by using a land bridge which at one time connected Asia with Alaska.
- 10,000 years ago:** Glaciers from the last Ice Age begin forming the Rocky Mountain range.
- 1541:** A Spaniard, Francisco Coronado, is the first European to explore the Colorado territory.
- 1806:** Montgomery Pike leads an expedition to survey headwaters of the Arkansas River, known today as part of the Colorado region.
- 1840:** Because of competition among different companies, the beaver population is depleted, thus ending the fur trade in Idaho.
- 1841:** The first settlement, Saint Mary's Mission, is founded by Father Pierre Jean De Smet.
- 1844:** The founder of the Mormon Church, Joseph Smith, is murdered in Nauvoo, Illinois. To escape religious persecution, the new leader, Brigham Young, begins to establish new Mormon settlements throughout the Mountain West region.
- 1848:** Mexican War begins.
- 1858:** The Mountain West gold rushes begin.
- 1863:** One of three U. S. Mints is founded in Denver, Colorado.
- 1864:** Nevada becomes the 36th state of the Union.
- 1866:** Livestock industry begins in Montana.
- 1869:** In Wyoming, women are granted the right to vote. Two major railroads, the Union and the Pacific, merge to create the Transcontinental Railroad--allowing travel and transport of goods from coast to coast.
- 1872:** Yellowstone National Park is founded as the first national park in the United States.
- 1876:** The Battle of Little Bighorn takes place near Montana. Colorado becomes the 38th state of the Union.
- 1889:** Montana becomes the 41st state to join the Union. Oil is discovered in Wyoming.
- 1890:** Idaho becomes the 43rd state and Wyoming becomes the 44th state of the Union.
- 1896:** Utah becomes the 45th state to join the Union.