

Lesson Plan

Census Data and New Hampshire History

This is an adaptation of a lesson plan prepared by William Murphy while participating in the New Hampshire Historical Society's New Hampshire History Summer Institute.

What Students Learn

This lesson may serve as an introduction to the study of New Hampshire history or as a culminating activity in such study. Students graph population growth in selected communities and hypothesize reasons for the growth pattern in a given community and for differences among several communities. As a follow-up activity, if they are concentrating on the history of a given community, students demonstrate their knowledge of influences on New Hampshire's growth by illustrating the graph to show their understanding of events that influenced growth or decline within the town or city.

Procedures

For use as an introductory activity, students receive an overhead transparency marked with gridlines. If students have access to the Internet, let them each gather historical census data for a particular town from the New Hampshire Office of State Planning's site (<http://nh.gov/oep/programs/DataCenter/Population/PopulationEstimates.htm>). The census data is also available on the New Hampshire Historical Society's Web site (<http://www.nhhistory.org>) and on the Society's CD-ROM as well. Otherwise, provide them the census data. They plot their data on their grid as a line graph with dates on the x-axis and population on the y-axis and label the graph with the town's name at the top. Students should cover the name of the town and turn in the completed graph.

The task is for students to make reasonable guesses about the identity of each town from its pattern of population growth as the graph is displayed on an overhead projector. Begin with Manchester and see if students can identify the city. What can they hypothesize about its dramatic population growth, for example? Have them make any suggestions that come to mind. At this point in their studies, nothing is wrong. Then have them try to identify Berlin, which will be much more of a challenge. Perhaps some students will guess at the city's location in the North Country because of its late growth and be able to guess at the lumbering influence. Continue this activity using prominent towns and cities throughout the state or various towns in your area.

As a follow-up activity to a study of New Hampshire history, students illustrate the graph of a community's population history in such a way as to demonstrate their understanding of the reasons behind its growth or decline—e.g., farming, sheep herding, industrialization, ethnic migration, tax policy. The poster *The Timeline of New Hampshire*

History may prove useful for this task. (Students may also perform this activity with a graph of the census data for the entire state.)

Bibliography

Most entries, as well as other teacher resources, are available through the New Hampshire Historical Society's Tuck Library and its Museum Store.

Moyers, Judith. *The Timeline of New Hampshire History*. [poster] Concord: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1996.

New Hampshire Office of State Planning. "New Hampshire State Data Center Estimates" [accessed 12 October 2000]. Available on the World Wide Web: (<http://www.state.nh.us/osp/sdc/sdcEsts.html>).

Assessment Tools and Techniques

There is no specific assessment for the introductory activity other than observing whether or not students take part in discussion. For the follow-up activity, students should be assessed on their demonstrated understanding of New Hampshire history, the accuracy of the material presented, the appearance of their graph, and their ability to follow directions. The graph should present illustrative examples from five of the eight eras covered. The illustrated graph should be accurate, understandable, insightful, creative, colorful or otherwise pleasing to the eye and demonstrative of good space utilization.

Curriculum Information

Information relating to the *New Hampshire History Curriculum* refers to the K-12 resource in two volumes developed by the New Hampshire Historical Society in partnership with Public Service of New Hampshire, the New Hampshire Department of Education, and the New Hampshire Council for the Social Studies. The K-6 volume is available on-line through the school programs section of the Society's Web site (<http://www.nhhistory.org>).

Grade Level

High School

New Hampshire Social Studies Standards

Economics 2, 3; Geography 1, 2, 4, 5; US/NH History 4, 5

New Hampshire History Curriculum Focus Topics

Natural Environment and People; Cultures, Races, and Ethnic Groups; Politics; Technology and Science; Non-governmental Groups; Material Wants and Needs

New Hampshire History Curriculum Eras

1763–1820s: Revolution and the New Nation

1801–1861: Expansion and Reform

1850–1877: Civil War and Reconstruction

1870–1900: Development of the Industrial United States

1890–1930: Emergence of Modern America

1929–1945: Great Depression and World War II

1945–early 1970s: Postwar United States

1968–present: Contemporary United States