

**TITLE OF LESSON:** The History of Postcards

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS/ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:**

- How do the images chosen to be sent in communications reflect personal interpretations about important information about the current events of the time?
- Why do different forms of communication develop?

**ASSESSMENT:**

Student Brainstorm sheet and Graphic Organizer should be collected and examined for thoughtful responses. Participation evaluated with a group participation or [collaboration rubric](#).

**SETTING THE PURPOSE:**

Students will have a discussion about their knowledge of the styles of communication of the past and present. Students will then study the history of postcards to narrow in their focus on a specific type of communication, postcards. Students will then use this knowledge as a foundation to study archived postcards in an educated way.

**DURATION:** 2 class periods

**PROCEDURE:**

- Write on the board, overhead or white board: “Why do people communicate?” Discuss with the class the purpose of communication and how it is a necessary component of building community and culture.
- Distribute the [Communication Brainstorm](#) to students. This is a group brainstorm. Depending on the needs of your class, you can divide students into groups of 2, 3 or 4. Make sure one person is the recorder, one is the leader who keeps the conversation going by making sure each person answers, one person is the clock checker to make sure they are keeping paced, and one is the reporter to the whole group if you are using groups of 4. Groups that are smaller can adjust jobs accordingly.
- Explain the [Brainstorm sheet](#). Have students be as specific as possible (for example, instead of saying the style is electronic, list the different types: instant messaging, email, television, etc).
- After adequate discussion time is given (depending on the age and size of your class) pull together groups and gather a report from each. Record answers on the board, overhead, white board, etc, so students can record other groups’ answers if they didn’t think of something the others did.

## **PART 2**

- Explain that for this project, you will be studying the history of postcards. You will be examining why they came about in the first place, and how they evolved in order to both compare that to the popular or preferred form of communication today-the email and to study how primary sources (straight from the source) can teach us about the history of the time.
- Have students visit <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Meadows/2487/pchistory.htm> A Brief History of Postcards by Stefano Neis (This one is nice because it has examples students can click on) and [http://www.playle.com/IFPD/pc\\_history.html](http://www.playle.com/IFPD/pc_history.html) A Short History of the Postcard in the United States by John McClintock. If you cannot get access to the internet, you can also use the book History in Postcards: Champaign, Urbana, and the University of Illinois by Willis C. Baker and Patricia L. Miller. There is a brief history of postcards on pp. 1-3.
- Have students use [Graphic Organizer for History of Postcards](#) while reading the article. Students will fill in the cause and effect graphic organizer to make predictions and summations about why each age of the postcard evolved into the next. You may have students read in pairs to better brainstorm answers.
- Have a class discussion on the cause and effect findings from the readings. Again, make sure to record responses to that others can record answers they may have missed.
- Discuss the conclusion question. Explain to students that later in the unit they will be drawing comparing and drawing conclusions about why popular forms of communication have changed over the years.
- Next lesson preview-students will examine archived postcards and analyze these documents of history, as well as examine the different images put on postcards depending on the region where they were purchased or created.

### **ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PRIMARY SOURCES:**

Teacher may see examples of Champaign Co. Postcards in the book History in Postcards: Champaign, Urbana, and the University of Illinois by Willis C. Baker and Patricia L. Miller. More in depth analysis will happen in future lessons.

### **TIES TO NATIONAL PRIMARY SOURCE OR SOURCES:**

Students can look at historical examples of postcards as they read the history of postcards at

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Meadows/2487/pchistory.htm>

A Brief History of Postcards by Stefano Neis. More in depth analysis will happen in following lessons.

**ANNOTATED LIST OF MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:**

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Meadows/2487/pchistory.htm>

A Brief History of Postcards by Stefano Neis.

[http://www.playle.com/IFPD/pc\\_history.html](http://www.playle.com/IFPD/pc_history.html) A Short History of the Postcard in the United States by John McClintock.

History in Postcards: Champaign, Urbana, and the University of Illinois by Willis C. Baker and Patricia L. Miller.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Communication Brainstorm](#)

[Graphic Organizer for History of Postcards](#)

[collaboration rubric.](#)

**TIES TO ILLINOIS STATE LEARNING STANDARDS, HABITS OF MIND, AND VITAL THEMES OF HISTORY**

**TITLE:** Evaluating postcards as primary sources

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS/ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:**

- How can we understand moments in history by “stepping into the shoes” of people from the past?
- How do the images chosen to be sent in communications reflect personal interpretations about important information about the current events of the time?
- How does an individual’s personal record of history reflect a larger history?
- How does the “everyman’s” writing style and content reveal information about local culture?

**ASSESSMENT:**

Students will use the information gleaned from these sheets to do the last group activity and culminating project. Teacher should evaluate these sheets as well, as well as evaluating [Student participation](#).

**SETTING THE PURPOSE:** Students will examine local primary sources (postcard samples) and national primary sources (postcard samples) to examine the history contained within the cards, and to spark discussion about the types of images that were used for postcards depending on the community context. Students will discuss how these images actually reflect the history of that region. Students will then examine local postcard samples that have script written on back (transcription provided). This examination will lead to a discussion as to how personal written communication reflects the history of the medium (postcard communication) as well as the era itself.

**DURATION:** 2 class periods

**PROCEDURE:**

- Start the class by writing on the board, overhead or white board: “Why are primary sources important?” Write down and discuss answers, highlighting the fact that primary sources are a more reliable form of historical evaluation than secondary source because a primary source is straight from the source and documented in the time period itself. Secondary sources involve perspective and opinion.
- Have students get into pairs. Depending on availability, distribute the national postcard samples as well as the local samples. (Not the ones written on back, yet). If available, have the students get on the computer and look at the digital version of these samples.

- Distribute the [Photo Analysis Worksheet](#) . (2 copies per group). Tell students to examine all the pictures, and to choose one postcard from each group to evaluate (one local, one national).
- After students finish this first step of analysis, collect them together as a group and discuss the following questions.
  - ✓ *What types of images were you seeing on the local postcards?*
  - ✓ *What types of images were you seeing on the national postcards?*
  - ✓ *How would you compare the images you see locally and nationally?*
  - ✓ *The national postcards found from this era were predominately from the West. Why do you think this is true?*
  - ✓ *Why do you think the postcard makers chose the images they did for these postcards?*
- Remind students about the last lesson around the history of postcards. Review images and the different types they saw.

## **PART 2**

- If you start this part a second day, review what you studied and learned the day before. Then have students get into the same pairs they were in for the photo analysis.
- Write on the board, overhead or white board: “How does personal written communication reflect the history of time?” Make sure to highlight the things that are discussed in communication, the style (word choice) it is written in, as well as the medium chosen.
- Distribute the [Written Analysis Worksheet](#). (4 copies per pair-you may choose to print these double sided).
- Distribute the Collection of Postcards from the Cattle Bank, with transcriptions. You may choose to give each pair a set, or choose 4 for each pair to look at. If you have a digital set of these photos, it is best to look at the digital version of the postcards, if possible.
- Have students pick and evaluate 4 postcards and their transcriptions. Tell students to be sure to divide the work up equally, and to answer the questions on the sheet carefully.
- After students finish this second step of analysis, collect them together as a group and discuss the following questions.
  - ✓ *What types of information did you find written on the postcards?*
  - ✓ *What evidence of the history of the time did you find in the writings?*
  - ✓ *Using this sample of postcards what types of things were communicated on postcards during this time period?*
  - ✓ *Many of the postcards that were read from this period (early 1900’s) were talking about sickness. Why do you think this was?*
  - ✓ *Why do you think the purchasers and senders of these postcards chose the postcards they did?*

- ✓ *How do these postcards look different from the national examples of postcards that we looked at?*
- Make sure to write student responses up on the board. Ask students to take notes as they will be helpful for tomorrow's activity, where they will compare postcards to email. Explain to students that since they do not have a lot of space to write, postcards were used to communicate quick, small bits of information (and still are). The illustration often helped the reader to visually connect to the area the sender was residing or visiting.
- Ask students what today's quick and popular form of communication is. (email). Tell students that tomorrow the group will be comparing postcard communication to email communication. For that reason, ask that students bring 2 to 4 copies of printed emails that they have had sent to them. Have them make sure they are school appropriate, and that they feel comfortable sharing these emails with others (in case someone forgets to bring copies in, or does not have email).

**ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PRIMARY SOURCES:**

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il. One set is meant to show postcard styles only; the second has transcriptions of written content. Paper copies attached. Students will evaluate these items using the NARA analysis sheets.

**TIES TO NATIONAL PRIMARY SOURCE OR SOURCES:**

[Collection of Postcards](#) from the Library of Congress' "American Memory" archives website. Paper copy attached. Students will evaluate these items using the NARA analysis sheets.

**ANNOTATED LIST OF MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:**

[Collection of Postcards](#) from the Library of Congress' "American Memory" archives website. Paper copy attached.

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il. Postcard Styles. Paper copies attached.

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il. Postcards with transcriptions of written material. Paper copy attached.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Photo Analysis Worksheet](#). U.S. National Archives and Records Photo Analysis worksheet.

[Written Analysis Worksheet](#). U.S. National Archives and Records Written Analysis worksheet.

[Student Participation.](http://www.landmark-project.com/classweb/tools/printable.php?rbrc_id=64683) From the San Diego County Office of Education website. ([http://www.landmark-project.com/classweb/tools/printable.php?rbrc\\_id=64683](http://www.landmark-project.com/classweb/tools/printable.php?rbrc_id=64683))

**TIES TO ILLINOIS STATE LEARNING STANDARDS, HABITS OF MIND, AND VITAL THEMES OF HISTORY**

**TITLE:** Culmination Activity-Capturing History Through Postcards.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS/ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:**

- How does an individual's personal record of history reflect a larger history?
- How does the "everyman's" writing style and content reveal information about a local culture?
- How can we understand moments in history by "stepping into the shoes" of people from the past?
- How do the images chosen to be sent in communications reflect personal interpretations about important information about the current events of the time?

**ASSESSMENT:** Students will be evaluated using [Create your own postcard rubric](#). Students will also self evaluate using [Self Reflection on Unit](#). This will be figured into the final assessment, as well as giving suggestions for teacher improvement.

**SETTING THE PURPOSE:**

Students will use the information learned about the use and historical relevance of postcards over the course of the unit to create a postcard of their own that reflects their personal, local and larger historical context. Students will either need familiarity with Microsoft Publisher, or the teacher will take a few minutes to review how to use this program.

**DURATION:** 2 class periods

**PROCEDURE:**

- Write on the board this question: "What images do you think represent the time period or place that you live in?"
- Distribute the [Create your own postcard rubric](#).
- Explain that during this whole unit, they have been learning about how the postcard of the past gave a window into not only personal histories, but local and national history. Now it is their turn to reflect the history by creating a postcard that reflects the time period they live in.
- Show the two examples: [London Postcard](#) and [Sweet Corn Card](#). Also show the [London and Sweet Card Explanation Essay Examples](#). Use these items and [Create your own postcard rubric](#). To explain the expectations for the project. Set the due date.

**PART 2**

- To end the unit, have students fill out [Self Reflection on Unit](#) handout. It would be useful to have a classroom discussion after the handouts are completed.

**ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PRIMARY SOURCES:**



Students can use the examples given throughout the unit for a template for their project.

**TIES TO NATIONAL PRIMARY SOURCE OR SOURCES:**

Students can use the examples given throughout the unit for a template for their project.

**ANNOTATED LIST OF MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:**

Microsoft Publisher

[Create your own postcard rubric](#)

Any materials from the previous lessons can be used as reference in completing the project.

[London Postcard](#)

[Sweet Corn Card](#)

[London and Sweet Card Explanation Essay Examples.](#)

[Self Reflection on Unit.](#)

**ATTACHMENTS:**

[Create your own postcard rubric](#)

[London Postcard](#)

[Sweet Corn Card](#)

[London and Sweet Card Explanation Essay Examples.](#)

[Self Reflection on Unit.](#)

**TIES TO ILLINOIS STATE LEARNING STANDARDS, HABITS OF MIND, AND VITAL THEMES OF HISTORY**

**TITLE:** Comparing “quick” communication-the postcard vs. the email

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS/ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS:**

- How has communication changed from the “postcard era” and the “email era”?
- Does the way a society communicates over distances affect the way the society communicates face to face, or is communication styles a reflection of the way a society communicates?
- How does an individual’s personal record of history reflect a larger history?

**ASSESSMENT:** Students will be evaluated by responses given on the [Comparing postcards to email worksheet](#), as well as using the [Debate Rubric](#) for the final discussion.

**SETTING THE PURPOSE:** Students will examine and compare the written content of archived postcards and current day email content to draw conclusions regarding how communication has changed over the last century. This comparison will be used to contemplate how changing forms of communication effect every day life (or is a reflection of changing lifestyles). In other words, does technology affect lifestyle, or does lifestyle dictate technological advances? Finally, students will use the methods used to find historical information in archived materials to see what history is present in their current day emails.

**DURATION: 1 TO 2 CLASS PERIODS**

**PROCEDURE:**

- Have students get into the same pairs each were in for lesson two. Have them pull out completed [Written Analysis Worksheet](#) from lesson 2.
- Write on the board: “How has communication changed over the last century?” Discuss this information and put responses on the board, overhead, or white board.
- Tell students that today, the pairs will be comparing two forms of communication that are used to communicate small, quick bits of information-the postcard craze of the early 1900’s, and the email craze of the early 2000’s.
- Distribute [Comparing postcards to email worksheet](#) (one per pair).
- Have students get out printed emails they were to bring in (told at end of lesson 2). If students didn’t bring some, ask if others would be willing to share.
- Go over [Comparing postcards to email worksheet](#) together. Tell students they will be comparing similarities and differences between the postcards they evaluated in lesson two and their personal emails they have brought in. Remind them to think of subjects like content, style, artwork, delivery method, cost, etc.

- After students have finished, gather the group together to discuss results and record these responses on the board, overhead or whiteboard for the class to see and take notes on.
- Then, ask:
  - ✓ *How might life be different if we didn't have email (or instant messaging) now?*
  - ✓ *Why do you think that postcard use became popular? Why not just stick to letters, which are more informative?*
  - ✓ *What was happening in the country at this time that may have propelled the popularity of postcards?*
  - ✓ *Do you think that the way we communicate with each other face to face would change if we never had email?*
  - ✓ *Some people say that our attention spans are shrinking. Do you think that the quickness of communication is causing this, or do you think quicker communication could be a reflection of a community with a shorter attention span? Or, do you think neither of these things are true. Support your answer.*
- To close this discussion, tell students that for the culmination activity, they will be creating their own postcards that reflect the time in history they live in.

**ANALYSIS OF LOCAL PRIMARY SOURCES:**

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il. Postcards with transcriptions of written material. Paper copy attached.

Completed [Written Analysis Worksheet](#). U.S. National Archives and Records Written Analysis worksheet. (used in lesson 2)

**TIES TO NATIONAL PRIMARY SOURCE OR SOURCES:**

None used in this lesson.

**ANNOTATED LIST OF MATERIALS AND RESOURCES:**

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il. Postcards with transcriptions of written material. Paper copy attached.

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il. Postcards with transcriptions of written material. Paper copy attached.

[Written Analysis Worksheet](#). U.S. National Archives and Records Written Analysis worksheet. (used in lesson 2)

[Student participation](#). From the San Diego County Office of Education website (<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/>)

[Debate Rubric](#) from ERTC online (<http://www2.lhric.org/ertc/>)

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Collection of Postcards from the Champaign Cattle Bank, Champaign, Il.  
Postcards with transcriptions of written material. Paper copy attached.

[Written Analysis Worksheet](#). U.S. National Archives and Records Written Analysis worksheet. (used in lesson 2)

[Student participation](#). From the San Diego County Office of Education website (<http://www.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/>)

[Debate Rubric](#) from ERTC online (<http://www2.lhric.org/ertc/>)

**TIES TO ILLINOIS STATE LEARNING STANDARDS, HABITS OF MIND, AND VITAL THEMES OF HISTORY**