



Smithsonian *Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage*

Designed by Lynn Gayno

Smithsonian's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage's Timeline

Scavenger Hunt Activity for Students in Grades K-3 and 4-6

Celebrating the 150th anniversary of land-grant universities and the USDA in America.

Lesson Plan Overview:

Land-grant universities were first established in 1862 when Abraham Lincoln signed into law the Morrill Act. The purpose of this legislation was to create public universities that focused on the importance of learning and research for the betterment of society. That same year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) was formed to begin study of essential topics for agricultural research. In [2012 the Smithsonian Folklife Festival](#) celebrated the 150th anniversary of these important institutions through a program featuring over twenty-two of these universities.

Students will use the [timeline feature of the 2012 Smithsonian Folklife Festival Campus and Community's Web site](#) to discover research and comprehend the historic and cultural importance of land-grant universities and the USDA in a fun scavenger hunt format. By answering questions on a wide variety of topics that relate directly to the Social Studies National Standards, learners will demonstrate their understanding of historical events from the 1860's through the 2000's. Some of the many topics included are: food safety, 4-H programs, animal health, cleaner fuels for vehicles, all described in the context of historical events such as the Civil War, World War I, The Great Depression, The Vietnam War and the advent of the internet.

By exploring the events in the timeline and answering the attached questions, students will learn how these universities and the USDA have contributed to society, as well as how broad historical events have impacted these institutions and their communities. Students will examine the ways in which institutions address human needs, how they change over time, and they will discuss how institutions can be used to promote the common good. Teachers can encourage learners to see the connections between the culture and values of a community and the policies created for the society as a whole.

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

Using the facts collected from researching with [the Smithsonian Institution's interactive timeline](#) students will answer questions based on the information found within each decade shown from the 1860s -2000s. These questions pertain to the creation and growth of land-grant universities and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Students will:

1. comprehend what land grant universities and the USDA are and why they are important for public policy.
2. gain insight into the historical and cultural impact of research done by land grant universities and the USDA.
3. understand the positive affects these institutions have on society as well as how society affects the USDA's and universities' research and policies.
4. study the past and see how historical events and developments have shaped land grant universities and the USDA in the modern world.
5. demonstrate the understanding of concepts through reading and answering questions based on the interactive timeline website.

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS) CURRICULUM STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL STUDIES USED IN THIS LESSON:

- **Standard #2: TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE:**
 - Students will study the past and the legacy that land grant universities and the USDA have left behind as students gain an understanding of how important historical events and developments have shaped the modern world.
 - Students will comprehend how the students of land grant universities and the researchers of the USDA continually create new policies and practices which positively affect societies in the United States and world-wide.
 - Students will study and gain understanding of how important historical events and developments have shaped the USDA's and land grant universities' policies in the modern world.

- **Standard #5: INDIVIDUALS, GROUPS, AND INSTITUTIONS**
 - Institutions such as educational organizations exert a major influence on people's lives. This theme allows students to understand how institutions are formed, maintained, and changed, and to examine their influence.
 - Students will understand how a public institution's programs can positively affect and influence society through creation, learning and sharing their groundbreaking studies.

- **Standard #8: SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, AND SOCIETY**
 - Students will explore the relationship among science, technology and society as they understand the past and present advances in science and technology and their impact.

Big Questions:

How can institutions such as land-grant universities and the United States Department of Agriculture help to create a society which benefits its citizens?

What is the relationship between historical events and the advancement of technology?

Why do public policies change over time?

Time frame: This lesson can take up to an hour to complete or may be shortened by removing questions.

Procedure: Divide students into groups, or pairs, have them work individually or as a class with you guiding the lesson on one computer with projection ability. To answer the questions on the worksheet for the scavenger hunt provided in this lesson. Each group or student needs access to a computer with internet access and a copy of the questions.

There are two levels of questions; one suitable for students in grades K-3 and another for grades 4-6.

Explain and read over the questions together before beginning the lesson if necessary.

Guide students to the proper web page:

http://www.festival.si.edu/2012/campus_and_community/timeline.aspx and allow them to read the paragraphs under each photo to discover and research the answers to the questions. Students can write their answers as a self-assessment tool and for you, the teacher.

Class discussion could take place with the open ended questions at the end of the worksheet or during the scavenger hunt.

Resources:

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/execsummary>

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands>

http://www.ehow.com/about_5347625_ncss-curriculum-standards-social-studies.html

NCSS Curriculum Standards for Social Studies | eHow.com

http://www.ehow.com/about_5347625_ncss-curriculum-standards-social-studies.html#ixzz22sjwsxGS

<http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/images/documents/7404217.pdf>