



Title: Going to the Promised Land: Dust Bowl Migration (Photograph Database Research)
Grade: 6-8th grade; 9-12th grade | **Subject:** Social Studies/Visual Arts
Created by: Verna Simons, Norfolk, Nebraska (Dec. 2005)

Project Overview:

This project was developed for students 6-8 and 9-12. Students are familiar with the Great Depression events of the 1930s. This project will expand understanding of the migration from the Dust Bowl states to the west primarily California. Students have been introduced to NebraskAccess and have done PowerPoint projects before. The project could be expanded for secondary students, for example the students could search the American Memory database of Great Depression audio recordings of people in the migrant camps in California and songs from the era and include these in PowerPoint projects.

In this lesson students are introduced to photographs as primary documents, as government documents and as historical records. Students access American Memory through the NebraskAccess Web Sites portal. Students will observe access routes a teacher demonstration on an LCD projector then practice finding the American Memory Web site. Students will search the *Depression Era to World War II ~ FSA/OWI ~ Photographs ~ 1935-1945* collection for necessary information.

Objectives:

1. Students will analyze primary resources and a map in order to draw conclusions regarding migrant workers experiences during the Great Depression.
2. Students will understand and explain the impact of economic and ecological events on individual during the Great Depression.
3. Students will understand the importance and impact of an image during a historical period.
4. Students will access a photographic database in American Memory via NebraskAccess.
5. Students will search a photographic database and view and select photographs from the Dust Bowl Migration.
6. Students will copy and paste selected photographs into a file.
7. Students will analyze photographs and infer relevancy to Dust Bowl Migration and write annotations for photographs to relate there conclusions.
8. Students will organize photographs in a chronological sequence reflecting the Dust Bowl Migration.
9. Students will construct a Power Point chronicle of the Dust Bowl Migration using collected and created materials.
10. Students will share information with and support skill development of a learning partner in the research process.

Standards Addressed:

1. *Nebraska Standards: Reading & Writing*

- 8.1.2 Students will identify, locate, and use multiple resources to access information on an assigned or self-selected topic.
- 12.1.2 Students will locate, evaluate, and use primary or secondary resources for research.

2. *Nebraska Standards: Social Studies*

- 8.4.2 Students will demonstrate skills for historical analysis.
 - Identify, analyze, and interpret primary document .e.g., photographs....
- 12.1.7 Students will analyze and explain the Great Depression.
- 12.1.13 Students will develop skill for historical analysis.
 - Analyze documents, records, and data e.g., photographs ...

3. *Nebraska L.E.A.R.N.S.: Social Studies*

- 8.2.4 Student will explain the Great Depression and its effects.

4. *National Arts Standards for Arts Ed. (Consortium of National Arts Ed. Assc.): Visual Arts (5-8)*

- 4. Understanding visual arts in relation to history and cultures.
- 6. Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.

5. *ALA Information Literacy Standards:*

The student who is information literate:

- Standard 1: Accesses information efficiently and effectively.
- Standard 2: Evaluates information critically and competently.
- Standard 3: Uses information accurately and creatively.
- Standard 9: Participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information.

Materials/Teacher Preparation:

1. Computers with access to the Internet, a data processing program and PowerPoint.
2. LCD projector and Highway to the West/Dust Bowl Refugees/Migrant Mother in computer file for viewing on LCD screen.
3. Internet access with LCD monitor to demo accessing NebraskaAccess/American Memory.
4. Dust Bowl Map worksheets (completed in classroom prior to this project).
5. Vocabulary lists.
6. New terms on chalkboard: *chronicle, government documents, primary documents, and record.*
7. Concept maps (attached).
8. Self evaluation form (attached).
9. Rubric to assess research process.

Resources for Students:

Gregory, James N., *American Exodus: The Dust Bowl Migration and Okie Culture in California*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989

Partridge, Elizabeth, *Restless Spirit: The Life and Work of Dorothea Lange*. New York: Viking, 1998

Steinbeck, John, *The Grapes of Wrath*. New York: Knopf, 1993. Based on firsthand interview with refugees and originally published in 1939, Steinbeck's novel is a moving fictional account of

one family's experience traveling west in search of a better life and joining the world of California's migrant agricultural labor force.

Anticipatory Set – Day 1:

1. Show photographs in following sequence and prompt discussion with questions.
2. Read quotation from Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* and focus discussion on the journey and plight of the Dust Bowl refugees.

Photo # 1: Highway to the West/US 54 in Southern New Mexico

[To view photo # 1 go to:

http://www.getty.edu/education/for_teachers/curricula/dorothea_lange/lange_zm_highway.html]

1. What time of day is shown here? Can you tell the season?
2. How might you feel if you were driving down this road? Why do you think people might have driven down this road during the Great Depression when Lange photographed it? How do you think they felt?
3. Find Highway 54 on a map. Which part is pictured here?
4. Read the following excerpt from John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) aloud and discuss in relation to the image "Highway to the West."

"And then the dispossessed were drawn West--from Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico; from Nevada and Arkansas, families, tribes, dusted out, tractored out. Car-loads, caravans, homeless and hungry; twenty thousand and fifty thousand and a hundred thousand and two hundred thousand. They streamed over the mountains, anything, any burden to bear, for food. The kids were hungry. We got no place to live. Like ants scurrying for work, and most of all for land."

Photo # 2: Dust Bowl Refugees

[To view photo # 2 go to:

http://www.getty.edu/education/for_teachers/curricula/dorothea_lange/lange_zm_dustbowl.html]

1. What objects are tied to the car? Why do you think these items are packed?
2. How many people are in the car?
3. Can you tell if these people are moving or just taking a trip somewhere? Why do you think these people are traveling? What do you think is their destination?
4. What problems might they have along the way?
5. What do you think is the date of the photograph? Why do you think the photographer took this photograph?

Procedures:

Day 1 - Introduce Project

1. Tell students about the government's hiring of photographers to take pictures in the field of people's lives during the Great Depression. (Background sheet included.)
2. Brainstorm for concepts and names of places that relate to Dust Bowl Migration journey; as a group complete Dust Bowl Migration concept map. (This will serve to give them ideas for subject terms when they are searching in American Memory.)
3. Review terms: *chronicle*, *government documents*, *primary documents*, *record*.
4. Introduce PowerPoint Project assignment: Students will search this photographic database, choose a collection of 7-10 photographs that tell the story of Dust Bowl refugees migrating from the Dust Bowl states to California. For each photograph write a one or two sentence annotation that helps the viewer understand the picture in place and time. Example: This 1930s family has packed all of their belongings and is leaving Nebraska setting out for a new life in the west. Students will cut and paste pictures from the database into a data processing file and compose sentences under each picture on the computer. (These are government documents and are public domain, no copyright restrictions.) Students will cite NebraskAccess and American Memory for document sources.
5. Learning partners are assigned for the project. Partners support each other with searching and technology questions.
6. Each student will complete a PowerPoint Project of their own.
7. Teacher demonstrates in small steps on LCD projector accessing NebraskAccess and locating link to American Memory and photographic database. Students watch and then try each step.

Plan for Independent Practice:

1. Assign learning partners. Explain goals and responsibilities of partnerships for the project.
2. Students practice accessing the databases by searching for the famous photograph: "Migrant Mother" photographed by Dorothea Lange. Search in the *Depression Era to World War II ~ FSA/OWI ~ Photographs ~ 1935-1945* database collection in American Memory.

Photo # 3 Migrant Mother/Dorothea Lange



Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA-OWI Collection [LC-USF34-009058-C]

3. Check with each pair of students for successful location of this photograph.
4. Hand out written instructions for the research projects. Review time period for searching, writing annotations before creating the PPP. If a photograph has been chosen that really doesn't fit in the chronology students will search for another.

Days 2-6 - Research and PowerPoint Project

1. Students research, gather photographs, cut and paste into files organizing photographs chronologically, write annotations for each.
2. When students have gathered information and created annotations they develop PowerPoint Presentations of these chronologies.

Closure:

1. Share PowerPoint projects in groups.
2. Self Evaluate research projects. (Form attached)

Assessment:

1. Rubric for Research Assessment.

Adaptations:

1. Visually challenged students could listen to downloaded audio narratives and songs from the period and make selections as to relevance and appropriateness for the era.
2. Secondary and advanced students could access databases in other museum web sites that have collections of Dust Bowl documents: newspaper articles, photos, documentaries etc.
3. Gifted students could chronicle a period of time in their lives by taking photographs with a digital camera over a determined period of time, make annotations about the photos, and place them in a chronological sequence in PowerPoint or a scrapbook.

VOCABULARY

agriculture: the science or occupation of farming.

chronicle: **n.** a record or narrative description of past events **v.** record in chronological order.

ditch bank: irrigation ditch in which many migrant workers set up their camps.

Dust Bowl: refers to the time period in 1932, when dust storms descended over Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, and Missouri, causing residents to abandon their farms and homes, and move west to California.

government documents: any material which is published by the federal, state, or local government. Government documents come in many formats: paper, microfiche, microfilm, floppy disc, CD-ROM, videotape, and online. All publications of the US Government Printing Office.

labor camps: camps set up for migrant workers to live in while they were working in one area.

Highway 66: a road stretching east and west across the United States, which was traveled by many migrant workers. It provided a direct route from the Dust Bowl to California.

migrant workers: casual and unskilled workers who move about systematically from one region to another offering their services on a temporary, usually seasonal, basis. In North America, migrant labor is usually employed in agriculture; it generally involves harvesting activities and is manual, repetitive, and easily learned.

"Okies": term used to describe migrant workers from Oklahoma and the surrounding areas, such as the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, Arkansas, Missouri, and Texas.

primary sources: Primary sources enable the researcher to get as close as possible to what actually happened during an historical event or time period. Primary sources were either created during the time period being studied, or were created at a later date by a participant in the events being studied (as in the case of memoirs) and they reflect the individual viewpoint of a participant or observer.

record: anything (such as a document, a phonograph record, or photograph) providing permanent evidence of or information about past events.

tenant farmers: owners of the farm on which migrant workers are employed.

NAME _____

WORKSHEET

The Dust Bowl



On the map above, locate and label and/or draw the following:

1. States that experienced major erosion and dust storms, known as "The Dust Bowl": Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas.
2. Other states affected by the mass migration of farm workers: California, Arkansas, Nevada, Arizona, Missouri.
3. The only major highway leading into the breadbasket of California and the road of choice for many migrants: Route 66.
4. Cities along Route 66 and cities in California affected by the influx of migrants: Denver, Topeka, Oklahoma City, Austin, Santa Fe, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Sacramento.

Background:

The FSA (Farm Security Act) photography project was active from 1937-1942. Roy Emerson Stryker, the head of this government project, hired many photographers – including Gordon Parks, Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, and Ben Shahn – to document the plight of rural Americans during the Dust Bowl and Great Depression. As the project developed, photographers also began to record life in urban areas as well. Specific subjects and geographic locations were assigned to the photographers. The main office in Washington, D.C. maintained files of photographs deemed suitable and distributed them to newspapers, magazines, and book publishers. As a result of this project, 77,000 black and white and 644 color documentary still photographs were produced that depicted life in the United States during this difficult period in U.S. history. When speaking about the other documentary photographs while working for the FSA, Parks (1979) said, “Their memorable photographs, full of tolerance for the poor, indicted America and could only have been done under a president like Roosevelt.” (Mitchell, Martin-Hamon, and Anderson 2002, p. 24).

Lange’s *Migrant Mother* is a truthful depiction of the living conditions and emotional experiences of migrant workers during the Depression. The tenderness portrayed between family members and the messages beneath the surface elicit a variety of responses that support the multiple uses of this photograph in the classroom.

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Retrieved from <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2191/>

Resources for teachers:

http://www.getty.edu/education/for_teachers/curricula/dorothea_lange/downloads/lange_lesson05.rtf
The Getty museum in California

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s/PRINT/document/exodus/exodus.html>
Information on *An American Exodus*, Lange and Taylor’s documentation in photographs and text of the mass westward migrations of the 1930s.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/fsowhome.html>
A vast and searchable collection of documentary images in the Farm Security Administration-Office of War Information Collection, created by a group of U.S. government photographers. Approximately 500 photographs by Lange are included.

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/dustbowl/index.html>
PBS: *Surviving the Dust Bowl*

Name _____

1. What did I learn?

2. What did I learn how to do that I can use again?

3. How can I use it?

4. How well did I do on my project?

Great! I did my best work!

Pretty well. I almost did my best work.

Not very well. I could do better next time.

I did not try hard and did not do my best.

5. Did I work well with my partner?

Yes!

Most of the time

No

6. What did I do well working on this project?

7. What could I do better next time?

8. What did I like most about doing this project?

Rubric for Assessing Photograph Database Research

	Minimal Evidence 1pt	Gaining Proficiency 2pts	Proficient 3pts	Total Points
NebraskaAccess American Memory	Needs direct assistance to log-in and use	Accessed and logged in with minimal assistance	Accessed and logged in independently	
Locate Resources	Needs direct assistance (strategies) to identify and locate appropriate resources	Needs minimal assistance to locate appropriate resources	Locates appropriate resources independently	
Access Resources and Information	Needs direct assistance to identify, comprehend and record relevant information	Needs minimal assistance to identify, comprehend and record relevant information	Identifies, comprehends and records relevant information, independently	
Evaluate Resources	Needs direct assistance to determine information to be accurate, useful and current	Needs minimal assistance to determine information to be accurate, useful, and current	Accurately determines information to be accurate, useful, and current	
Use Resources	Needs direct assistance to compare or relate and use information related to the information need	Needs minimal assistance to see comparisons and relationships in information related to the information need	Compares, relates and incorporates ideas from information sources related to the information need	

