



# 1875-1899

## Solomon Butcher Photographs, The Sod House Frontier

### activities

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## 1

## Solomon Butcher Photographs

Activity Grade Level

8

## ■ activity

## Photograph Analysis

## Teacher Preparation

For this activity, teachers will need a class set of Butcher photographs showing farm families in Nebraska. To find a minimum of 30 different photographs, so each student has a different photo, follow these instructions:

1. Go to the History Nebraska web page listed below to obtain photographs.

<https://history.nebraska.gov/collections/solomon-d-butcher-collection>

2. You may continue the search for homestead photographs on the bottom of that page by clicking on: **Revealing History: How digital technology helped shed new light.** More photographs can be found in a search of Solomon Butcher's homestead photographs. Look for pictures showing families, ranches, family farms, life in town, cowboys, etc.

3. Print the pictures you want to use. It's helpful to mount them on construction paper, and then laminate them so you have a permanent set of Butcher photographs.

## The Activity

1. Give each student a photograph and ask him/her to examine the photograph for 1-2 minutes without talking. Ask them to look at all areas of the photograph and examine every detail.

**Note:** More advanced students may want to use the National Archives *Photograph Analysis Worksheet* located in the Resources section at the end of this document.

2. Have students write down everything they see in the photograph: people, animals, objects, buildings, plants, machinery, etc.

3. Ask students to describe the scene in the picture in 1-2 complete sentences.

4. Next, have students get together with 2-3 students close to them. In small groups, students will:

- present their photograph and explain what they see
- compare photographs and see what they have in common

5. Finally, move the discussion to the entire class.

Discussion questions:

- What did they see in common in their photographs?
- What did they see that was unusual in some of the photographs?
- Why do they think these photographs were taken? (This is a great way to start discussion about Solomon Butcher.)
- From what you see in the photograph, what do you think this family values the most? Why?

## ■ Nebraska Department of Education Content Area Standards

## Language Arts

LA 8.1.6 Comprehension; LA 8.4.1 Information Fluency



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## Solomon Butcher Photographs, The Sod House Frontier

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Nebraska Department of Education Academic Standards <https://www.education.ne.gov/contentareastandards/>

Nebraska Department of Education Social Studies and History Standards <https://tinyurl.com/ycuxo8sh>

National Archives <http://www.archives.gov/index.html>

Library of Congress Learning Page Lesson Plans <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/index.html>

# National Archives: Photograph Analysis Worksheet

## STEP 1. OBSERVATION

A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE	OBJECTS	ACTIVITIES

## STEP 2. INFERENCE

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

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## STEP 3. QUESTIONS

A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

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B. Where could you find answers to them?

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## Nebraska Department of Education Content Area Standards

### ■ Language Arts Standards

#### 8

**LA 8.1.6 Comprehension:** Students will construct meaning by applying prior knowledge, using text information, and monitoring comprehension while reading increasingly complex grade-level literary and informational text.

**LA 8.4.1 Information Fluency:** Students will evaluate, create, and communicate information in a variety of media and formats (textual, visual, and digital).