1850-1874
Notable Nebraskan: J. Sterling Morton

LESSON PLAN
Notable Nebraskan: J. Sterling Morton, A Life of Service

Nebraska Department of Education Content Area Standards

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


Created by Michael Young,
former History Department Chair, Omaha Burke High School

nebraska studies.org
LESSON PLAN
Notable Nebraskan: J. Sterling Morton, A Life of Service

This lesson plan was funded in part by the Cooper Foundation, Abel Foundation, and the Nebraska Humanities Council.

Lesson Objectives
1. Students will locate electronic sources on J. Sterling Morton.
2. Students will identify examples of J. Sterling Morton's contributions to his family, community, state, and nation.
3. Students will interpret sources to determine most important contributions.
4. Students will create visual symbols for these contributions.

Introduction
J. Sterling Morton was a great Nebraskan who served others in many ways. In this lesson, students will search the Nebraska Studies website to discover information about J. Sterling Morton's life and accomplishments. Students will learn why J. Sterling Morton has been honored as an outstanding citizen and notable Nebraskan.

The Task
Using a variety of online sources, students will gather information about the life of J. Sterling Morton, and use this information to make symbols that stand for his greatest accomplishments and contributions to his family, community, state, and nation. Students will then arrange their symbols on one of 4 puzzle pieces, with each piece representing one of these 4 levels of service mentioned above. Together these 4 puzzle pieces form the state of Nebraska.

Nebraska Department of Education Content Area Standards

Social Studies: SS 4.3.1; SS 4.3.2; SS 4.3.5; SS 4.3.6; SS 4.4.2; SS 4.4.3; SS 4.4.4; SS 4.4.5
Language Arts: LA 4.1.6 Comprehension; LA 4.4.1 Information Fluency
LESSON PLAN
Notable Nebraskan J. Sterling Morton: A Life of Service

The Resources
The teacher will need to review the information available on this and related Web sites and print a copy of a map outline of the state of Nebraska for each student. Determine the size of the map by deciding how you want to display the projects. It can be small enough to fit on a notebook page or large enough to be displayed on a wall.

Nebraska Outline Maps
http://www.netstate.com/states/maps/ne_maps.htm
http://www.enchantedlearning.com/usa/states/nebraska/outline/

Julius Sterling Morton, National Statuary Hall Collection, Architect of the Capitol
http://www.aoc.gov/cc/art/nsh/morton_j.cfm

Nebraska Studies 1850-1874 website, J. Sterling Morton section
http://nebraskastudies.org/1850-1874/j-sterling-morton-founder-of-arbor-day/

Nebraska Dept. of Education Academic Standards.
https://www.education.ne.gov/contentareastandards/

Nebraska Dept. of Education State Social Studies/History Standards.
https://tinyurl.com/ycuuo8sh

Nebraska State Historical Society.
http://nebraskahistory.org/oversite/research.htm

Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska History magazine
https://history.nebraska.gov/publications/nebraska-history-magazine

Nebraska State Historical Society: Nebraska Trailblazer
http://www.nebraskahistory.org/museum/teachers/material/trailist.htm

Rubrics: General Rubric http://www.socialstudieshelp.com/rubric.htm

School Improvement in Maryland. Instruction. Social Studies Rubric.

The Library of Congress Learning Page: The Historians’ Sources: Analysis of Primary Sources. “Questions for Analyzing Primary Sources.”
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/psources/analyze.html
LESSON PLAN
Notable Nebraskan J. Sterling Morton: A Life of Service

This lesson plan was funded in part by the Cooper Foundation, Abel Foundation, and the Nebraska Humanities Council.

The Process

The teacher should prepare for this lesson by becoming familiar with all phases of the lesson and Nebraska Studies website, determining procedures best for the situation, setting up and making resources available in the classroom and/or computer lab, and by obtaining a copy of an outline map of Nebraska for each student.

Then guide students through the following steps:

1. Introduce the lesson. Discuss:
   a. What makes someone an outstanding citizen?
   b. What is the difference between a good citizen and an outstanding citizen?
   c. How is citizenship related to responsibility and service?

2. Have each student fold a regular sheet of notebook paper in half and in half again. When opened the sheet should then be divided into 4 sections. Label each of the sections with one of these 4 titles: • home • community • state • nation

Students will use this note sheet to record information about Morton’s contributions and accomplishments in these 4 areas.

3. Guide students to the NebraskaStudies.org website [http://nebraskastudies.org/], and show them how to use it. Have students read the J. Sterling Morton section of the 1850-1874 timeline on Nebraska Studies:
   http://nebraskastudies.org/1850-1874/j-sterling-morton-founder-of-arbor-day/

Use the information to collect data about Morton’s accomplishments and contributions. Categorize each of these into one of the 4 areas, and record notes in the appropriate section of the note sheet.

4. Allow time for the students to locate and read through several sources. At some point during this research time, stop and discuss where students are finding the most interesting or most useful information. If necessary, have students exchange information to complete their notes.

5. As a class and/or individually, prioritize the list of accomplishments and contributions. Think of visual symbols (pictures) for those deemed most important.

6. Give each student a copy of the Nebraska outline map. Have students cut out the map. Turn the map over to the “wrong side” and draw lines that divide the map into a puzzle with 4 pieces. Also on the “wrong side” label each piece to match the 4 categories on the note sheet (family, community, state, nation). Turn the puzzle pieces over, draw or find pictures to symbolize Morton’s greatest accomplishments and contributions, and arrange these pictures artistically on the appropriate piece.
LESSON PLAN
Notable Nebraskan J. Sterling Morton: A Life of Service

The Process, continued

7. Mount the 4 pieces of the Nebraska “puzzle” on a larger sheet of construction paper or on a page in each student’s notebook. Decorate with colors, and write a title that includes J. Sterling Morton’s name and the word “Nebraska”.

8. Have each student put the finished project on his/her desk. Lead the students in a “gallery walk” up and down the rows of desks so that everyone in the class will get to see each project. When the walk is complete, have a short “brag fest” where the class talks about the positive and creative aspects of student work on this project.

9. Debrief the class by discussing why J. Sterling Morton was an outstanding citizen and a notable Nebraskan. Talk about how his actions influenced the lives of today’s Nebraskans and write a generalization about the most important thing they learned from studying Morton’s life.

Learning Advice

Teachers should take care to make sure students understand puzzle directions and should monitor successful completion of the project. Teachers may also need to adjust this lesson to suit the amount of available time or the abilities of the learners. Some suggestions for adjusting include:

1. Students can work in pairs from the beginning of the project. Give each student in the pair 2 categories to research and 2 sections of the Nebraska puzzle to complete. Students could even work in groups of 4, giving each student only one category to research and 1 piece of the Nebraska puzzle to complete. Completed projects would then have to be displayed where all students could look at them.

2. To control the amount of time spent on this lesson, teachers may set a certain amount of time for research. When this time is up, have students share their answers with others who researched the same categories.

3. To extend the lesson, have students draw and label some key physical features of Nebraska before cutting the map into puzzle pieces. Students can then add their symbols to the map.

4. To add interest, use old Nebraska road maps to mount projects or to form the puzzle pieces.

5. To extend the lesson, list the important character traits that allowed J. Sterling Morton to achieve his goals.

LESSON PLAN
Notable Nebraskan J. Sterling Morton: A Life of Service

Conclusion
To conclude this lesson, complete steps 8, 9, and 10 listed in the section labeled Process.

Assessment Activity
To assess this lesson, simply note the completion of Lesson Objectives. This can be done by noting participation on a class roster. Listen carefully to student discussions. Also note the generalizations generated by the students. These can be easily graded if the teacher chooses to do so.
1850-1874 Notable Nebraskan: J. Sterling Morton

Nebraska Department of Education
Content Area Standards
appendix

Social Studies Standards

4
SS 4.2.1 Students will recognize prices are what consumers pay when they buy a good or service.
SS 4.2.3 Students will make observations about the purpose of various financial institutions in Nebraska.
SS 4.3.1 Students will explore where (spatial) and why people, places and environments are organized in the state.
SS 4.3.2 Students will compare the characteristics of places and regions and their impact on human decisions.
SS 4.3.4 Students will compare and contrast the characteristics of culture statewide.
SS 4.3.5 Students will identify how humans have adapted to and modified different environments in Nebraska.
SS 4.3.6 Students will use geographic skills to make connections to issues and events.
SS 4.4.2 Students will describe and explain the relationships among people, events, ideas, and symbols over time using multiple types of sources.
SS 4.4.3 Students will describe and explain multiple perspectives of historical events.
SS 4.4.4 Students will analyze past and current events, issues, and problems.
SS 4.4.5 Students will develop historical research skills.

8
SS 8.1.1 Students will summarize the foundation, structure, and function of the United States government.
SS 8.1.2 Students will describe the roles, responsibilities, and rights as local, state, national, and international citizens and participate in civic service.
SS 8.2.1 Students will explain the interdependence of producers and consumers in a market economy.
SS 8.2.5 Students will identify the basic economic systems in the global economy.
SS 8.4.2 (US) Students will analyze the impact of people, events, ideas, and symbols upon US history using multiple types of sources.
SS 8.4.3 (US) Students will analyze and interpret historical and current events from multiple perspectives.
SS 8.4.4 (US) Students will identify causes of past and current events, issues, and problems.
SS 8.4.5 Students will develop historical research skills.

12
SS 12.1.1 Students will analyze and evaluate the foundation, structures, and functions of the United States government as well as local, state, and international governments.
SS 12.2.1 Students will assess how market forces guide the owners of land, labor, and capital and determine the allocation of wealth in the economy.
SS 12.1.2 Students will address local, state, national or international issues and policies through meaningful civic participation.
SS 12.2.10 Students will analyze the roles and responsibilities of government in various economic systems.
SS 12.2.12 Students will evaluate how international trade benefits individuals, organizations, and nations.
SS 12.3.2 Students will examine how regions form and change over time.
SS 12.3.1 Students will analyze where (spatial) and why people, places, and environments are organized on the Earth’s surface.
SS 12.3.4 Students will analyze and interpret patterns of culture around the world.
SS 12.3.6 Students will analyze issues and/or events using the geographic knowledge and skills to make informed decisions.
SS 12.4.1 (US) Students will analyze how major past and current US events are chronologically connected, and evaluate their impact(s) upon one another.
SS 12.4.2 (US) Students will analyze and evaluate the impact of people, events, ideas, and symbols upon US history using multiple types of sources.
SS 12.4.4 (US) Students will identify and evaluate the effects of past, current, and potential future events, issues, and problems.
SS 12.4.5 (US) Students will develop historical research skills.
1850-1874 Notable Nebraskan: J. Sterling Morton

Nebraska Department of Education
Content Area Standards

Language Arts Standards

**4**
LA 4.1.5 Vocabulary: Students will build and use conversational, academic, and content-specific grade-level vocabulary; LA 4.1.5.b Apply context clues (e.g., word, phrase, and sentence, and paragraph clues) and text features to infer meaning of unknown words.
LA 4.1.6 Comprehension: Students will construct meaning by using prior knowledge and text information while reading grade-level literary and informational text.
LA 4.2.1 Writing Process: Students will apply the writing process to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other conventions of standard English appropriate for grade-level.
LA 4.2.2 Writing Modes: Students will write in multiple modes for a variety of purposes and audiences across disciplines.
LA 4.3.1 Speaking: Students will develop, apply, and refine speaking skills and strategies to communicate key ideas in a variety of situations.
LA 4.3.2 Listening: Students will develop and demonstrate active listening skills across a variety of situations.
LA 4.4.1 Information Fluency: Students will evaluate, create, and communicate information in a variety of media and formats (textual, visual, and digital).

**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 8.2.1 Writing Process: Students will apply the writing process to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other conventions of standard English appropriate for grade-level.
LA 8.3.1 Speaking: Students will develop, apply, and refine speaking skills and strategies to communicate key ideas in a variety of situations.
LA 8.3.2 Listening: Students will develop and demonstrate active listening skills across a variety of situations.

**12**
LA 12.1.6 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 12.2.1 Writing Process: Students will apply the writing process to plan, draft, revise, edit, and publish writing using correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other conventions of standard English appropriate for grade-level.
LA 12.3.1 Speaking: Students will develop, apply, and refine speaking skills and strategies to communicate key ideas in a variety of situations.