

Getting the Most Out of Your Visit to the Museum

Although walking around the museum can be an entertaining experience for students, it is often difficult for them to synthesize all of the exhibits in such a short time. Without focus, they sometimes hurry through the museum and then sit in the lobby waiting for the rest of the group. The museum can be made into a more valuable education experience by choosing activities they link to your lesson plan in class and provide a structured environment for the students to explore the museum. Enclosed are four suggested activities for you and your students to take part in while visiting the museum.

MUSEUM RULES

Welcome to the Idaho State Historical Museum. In order to make your visit a pleasant experience for everyone, please follow this list of DO'S and DON'TS.

DO!



STAY with your chaperon or group leader.

USE a clipboard when writing answers to any questions that you may have to answer.

KEEP all shop purchases in a bag with a receipt until you leave the Museum.

DON'T!



BRING candy, food, or drinks into the museum.

RUN in the museum. You may fall into a case or run into other people and hurt yourself or them.

RUN OR JUMP up or down the stairs. You may fall and hurt yourself.

SIT on the stairs. Other people need to walk up or down the stairs.

SHOUT or scream. Other people may be listening to a program.

We hope you enjoy today's visit to the Idaho State Historical Museum.

When Did it Happen?

Sometimes when you study history, it seems like you have to memorize an awful lot of dates. Although knowing some of those dates is useful, it would be very difficult to remember every day something significant happened in Idaho. Another way to study history is to learn in what order events happened. Then, even if you can't remember the exact date, you can make a good guess about when an event happened.

Below are a few important events in Idaho history. Before you arrive at the museum, try to put them in order from the oldest to the most recent. When you get to the museum, break into groups and explore "The Story of Idaho" exhibit. By searching through the exhibit, you can find the exact year all of these important events happened. Write down the year next to the event and then put them in order again. How many did you get correct? Are there ways you can tell which event came first without knowing the dates?

_____ **An early group of fur trappers, the Hunt Expedition, runs into trouble on the Snake River and has to walk all the way to the Pacific Ocean to find help.**

_____ **Idaho becomes a state**

_____ **Pioneers began to cross southern Idaho on the Oregon Trail**

_____ **The forest and fields of Idaho are home to mammoths and giant ground sloths**

_____ **Mormon settlers coming north from Utah build Fort Lemhi**

_____ **Tired of conflict with gold miners and pioneers, The Nez Perce Indians try to escape to Canada**

_____ **A great forest fire destroys 3 million acres of trees and kills 100 people**

_____ **The Carey Act allows the government to sell land to homesteaders in Idaho**

_____ **E.D. Pierce is the first to discover gold in Idaho**

_____ **Lewis and Clark begin their difficult journey through the unexplored mountains of Idaho**

_____ **Idaho becomes a territory**

Idaho's People

Idaho history is really a story about the people who lived here. The exhibits at the Idaho Historical Museum tell us about these people.

Directions: Divide your students into small groups. Assign each group of students a group of people to study from Idaho's past (listed below). As they look through the museum, they are to look for exhibits that deal with their assigned group and answer the suggested questions. Students can present this information to the rest of the class when they return to school.

GROUPS

Native Americans

Chinese

Miners

Pioneers

Cattle and/or sheep ranchers

Lumberjacks

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

(You may not be able to answer all of these areas for your group.)

- * When did these people come to Idaho?
- * What did they eat?
- * How did they dress?
- * What did they do for entertainment?
- * Describe their homes.
- * What problems did they face?
- * How did they earn a living?
- * List three tools used by these people.

Museum Storytelling

When it comes right down to it, teaching history is all about storytelling. Dates and famous documents are essential tools, but without a good story to weave things together, history classes can be dry and uninspiring for the student. One way to excite children about the past is to leave the storytelling to them.

The Idaho historical museum has many exhibits that lend themselves well to lessons that tie together historical facts and creative writing skills. Upstairs in the museum, there are several historic rooms or scenes that can be used as a spark for historic storytelling.

Before you come to the museum have the children put together a small notebook with blank paper in it. When you arrive at the museum take them upstairs and have them pick their favorite scene (the general store, the Chinese temple, the saloon, the Victorian parlor, etc). Once they've picked their exhibit, give them time to draw a picture of the scene in their notebooks. Ask them to look carefully and record the artifacts in the room that make the scene unique. If there are educational signs at the exhibit, let them take a few notes to help put the scene in historical context.

Later when they return to the classroom, have them write a story that takes place in the scene they recorded. The story doesn't have to be historically accurate or based on fact, the only restriction is that the student must use the exhibit as the setting for the piece.

If time allows share the stories as a group. Have students who picked the same setting team up and describe the room to the rest of the class before they begin their storytelling.

Idaho Historical Museum

Scavenger Hunt

A scavenger hunt is a game where you are given a list of things to find in a certain amount of time. Your teacher has set aside the time for you to find answers to the following questions. The answers can be found by looking at the exhibits of the Idaho State Historical Museum. See how many answers your team can find in the time allowed. Good Luck!

Downstairs Lobby

1) Idaho has many symbols that help represent the state. Pick one of them (bird, fish, etc.) and describe it. Do you think it's a good choice? If not, what would you pick instead to represent Idaho?

The Story of Idaho (Downstairs Exhibit)

2) Archeologists have found many kinds of spear, dart, and arrow points in Idaho. Draw two types below and describe how they are different.

3) In 1811, a group of fur trappers led by Wilson Hunt sunk their canoes in the Snake River and had to walk all the way to the Pacific Ocean for help. In 1938 some of their supplies were recovered from the river bottom. What are two of the items that were found?

4) Early visitors to Idaho often brought trade goods to exchange with the local Indians. What was one of the items used in trade? Why do you think the Indians thought it was valuable?

5) From 1840 to 1860, many people traveled through Idaho on the Oregon Trail. The long trip could be very hard and dangerous. Name one of the dangers the early pioneers faced during their travels. Do we have to worry about the same dangers today?

6) In 1860, E.D. Pierce discovered gold in Idaho. Soon after, many people rushed to Idaho to strike it rich. Name two of the tools miners used to collect gold from the rivers and the earth.

7) Idaho became a territory in 1863. Unfortunately keeping a governor in the state proved to be difficult. Name one of our first territorial governors and explain why he didn't keep his job for long.

8) Farmers and ranchers used many strange tools to do their jobs. Draw one of these odd tools and explain what you think it does.

9) Although Idaho had many valuable trees in its forests, early loggers found it difficult to move them from the steep mountains to the saw-mills. What was one of the ways the lumberjacks moved the giant logs?

Downstairs Exhibits (behind the main staircase)

10) The Native Americans of Idaho often used intricate beadwork to decorate their clothing and equipment. Pick the Indian artifact on display that you like best and draw a picture of its bead design. What was the item used for?

11) Toys have gone through many changes over the years. Look at the toy display and find a toy that you think is very different from the toys kids play with today. Why don't children of today play with toys like that one? On the other hand, is there a toy in the case that you think would still be fun to play with? Which one?

Upstairs Exhibits

12) Lewis and Clark were the first to describe many animals of the west. Name two of the animals they saw while they were on their journey.

13) In 1915, most houses in Idaho still didn't have gas, electricity, or running water. How did an early Idaho family keep their food cool? How did they protect their food from mice and bugs? How did they get water into the kitchen?

14) Originally, Chinese settlers came to Idaho to mine for gold, but they quickly branched out and found other jobs. In addition to gold mining, name one other job a Chinese resident might have had in early Idaho.

15) Different saddles were used for different jobs. Try out all of the saddles on display. Which one do you think is more comfortable? Which one is a cowboy most likely to use?

16) The first Idaho flag was made in 1907. Thanks to a group of 4th graders who loved history, the museum now has that original flag on display. What is one of the pictures that flag has on it? Why do you think this picture was used to represent Idaho?

Answers to “When did it Happen?”

12,000 years ago: mammoths and ground sloths
1805: Lewis and Clark cross Idaho
1811: The Hunt expedition runs into trouble
1840: Pioneers began crossing the Oregon Trail
1855: The Mormons settle Fort Lemhi
1860: E.D. Pierce discovers gold
1863: Idaho becomes a territory
1877: The Nez Perce War
1890: Idaho becomes the 43 state
1894: The Carey Act
1910: The Great Forest Fire

Discuss how you can use logic to put some of the event in rough order. Could Idaho have been a state before it was a territory? Would the Nez Perce have been upset with miners before gold was even discovered in Idaho? If the Hunt party had to go all the way to the ocean for help, what does that tell us about the population of the state at that time?

Answers to Scavenger Hunt

- 1) State Seal, State Flag, State Bird-the mountain bluebird, State Flower-syringa, State Vegetable-potato, State Fruit-huckleberry, State Gem-star garnet, State Horse-appaloosa, State Tree-western white pine, State Dance-square, State Fossil-Hagerman Horse, State Fish-cutthroat trout, State Insect-monarch butterfly
- 2) Answers will vary. If you are discussing this in class you can talk about how archeologists use the different shapes to date the points. At certain times in Idaho history, the native people made a certain kind of tip.
- 3) axe head, beaver trap, musket stock
- 4) knives, beads, blankets, tobacco, flint and steel, pipes, magnifying glass, axe head, brass bracelet. In most cases, the Indians desired these items because they could not make them themselves.
- 5) river crossings, conflict with Indians, shortage of food and water, disease, and accident
- 6) gold pans, picks, shovels, rockers, hydraulic giants, dredges, stopper (rock drill), hammer and jack, miners spoon, dynamite, candlestick
- 7) William Wallace-Left for congress, William Daniels-Temporary position, Caleb Lyon-Public didn't approve of his policies so he snuck out of the state, he was later put in charge again and he promptly stole all the states money and fled, C. Dewitt Smith-Died, H.C Gilson-Stole states money and fled.

8) Many answers possible, some possibilities are: cattle weaners, curry combs, horse snowshoes, corn planters, hay crooks, corn huskers, and cradle scythes.

9) Water flumes, log rafts on rivers, skidding tongs, wagons, trains, and later, trucks.

10) Many answers possible some possibilities are awl case, belts, blanket strips, storage bags, moccasins, gloves, cradleboards, and pipe bags.

11) Answers variable

12) Mountain goat, great grey owl, ruffed grouse, salmon, western tanager, Clark's nutcracker, Lewis's woodpecker, marmot

13) Pie safes protected food, hand pumps brought water to the kitchen, ice box kept food cool

14) Farmer, Laundry, shop keeper, restaurant owner, doctor

15) Saddle types: Stock, Native American pad saddle, ladies sidesaddle, McClellan military. A cowboy would have used a stock saddle.

16) Agriculture is represented by grain, horn of plenty, and a man plowing a field. The miner with the pick and shovel and the stamp mill in the middle show the importance of mining. The elk head above the shield tells us of the plentiful game and wildlife. The woman on the left represents justice and liberty and the fact that the woman is the same size as the man shows us that Idaho men and woman are considered equal. *Esto perpetua* means may she endure and suggests the wish that Idaho may last forever.