

Westward Expansion

Contributed by The Preservation Society of Newport County, adapted from Lifelab.org's "Westward Expansion"

RI – SS – GSEs:

- HP 2
- HP 4
- G 3

Recommended for Grade(s) 6 – 8

Description:

Students will use the gardens to see what fruits and vegetables were available when Americans moved West in the 1800s. Settlers used different routes and faced challenges along the way.

Objective:

Students will understand that food is integral for survival and develop insight to the interaction between geography and food.

Green Animals Connection:

Using the fruits and vegetables available in the garden, students will sample some of the foods available to Western settlers and talk about supply.

Background:

Westward Expansion resources:

- <http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/topic/viewdetailshis.aspx?TopicId=1000>
- http://www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/lesson_plans/
- http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson179.shtml
- <http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/outlines/history-1994/westward-expansion-and-regional-differences/westward.php>

Procedure:

1. Upon arrival, students will have an introduction to the garden and the lesson plan by the instructor
2. The instructor will talk about the regional differences moving west and who would embark on the journey
3. Talk about the cultural influences and consequences in moving west
4. Discuss the regional differences of food found along the way
5. Students will go into the vegetable and fruit gardens to try foods available on the way
6. Upon returning to the classroom students will discuss their experience and the interaction between geography and food

Take – Home:

Students will choose which trail they would embark on and write a short story, imagining what their challenges would be along the way.