

Gary Cox

Title

The Best Town in the World

Overview

After reading and discussing the book, "The Best Town in the World" by Byrd Baylor and viewing the Power Point Presentation, "Lincoln's New Salem" students will compare the towns in the book and power point with their own and write their own book entitled, "The Best Town in the World"

Illinois Learning Standards

17.A.2a

17.D.2a

Objectives

Students will compare the three towns in the lesson. They will write their own version of "The Best Town in the World"

Materials

Teacher

"The Best Town in the World" by Byrd Baylor

"Lincoln's New Salem" power point presentation

projector or smart board

blackboard or overhead projector

Student

Writing paper

Drawing paper

Pencils

Crayon or markers

Introducing the Activity

Ask the students what they think would make the best town in the world. Tell them they are going to look and compare three different towns including their own and discuss why the towns were settled the way they were and why people their engaged in the activities they did.

Procedure

Read aloud "The Best Town in the World" by Byrd Baylor. Discuss the events in the book. Which events were similar to the kinds of events people in our town engage in. What activities and customs do we engage in that the people in the book could not? What activities described in book would we not be able to do?

Share the power point presentation, Lincoln's New Salem. Discuss similarities and differences between New Salem and the town in the book and our town.

Possible discussion questions may include: Where is this place? What is the land like? What is the climate like? How was the land used? What forms of communication were used. What recreational activities were in place? What is produced or grown? What did people trade? Are there any natural barriers that would prevent transportation? What methods of transportation are available?

Brainstorm with students some of the resources, activities, social events and industries that make our town special. List these on the blackboard or overhead projector.

Ask each student to choose five of these ideas and to create their own book entitled, "The Best Town in the World." Each idea the student chooses will be expressed on one page of their book. Since "The Best Town in the World" by Byrd Baylor is a picture book, I ask my students to illustrate each page.

Assessing the Activity

Students' books will be evaluated on how well they demonstrated some of the activities that were unique to their town.

Extending the Activity

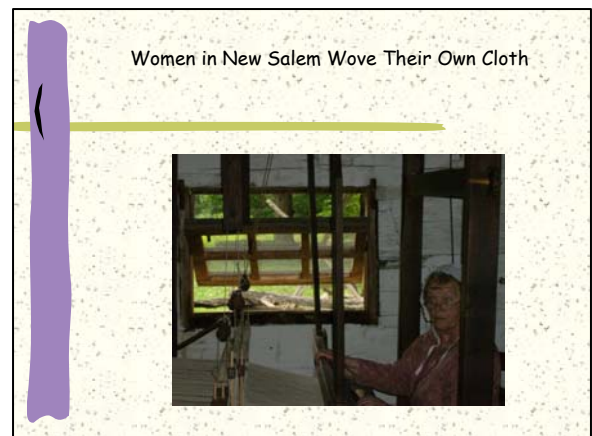
Have students come up with a model, drawing or description of a town different than the ones discussed in the lesson. The town could be in a different region or time period. A town of the future perhaps or in a mountainous or desert region.

References

Byrd Baylor, *The Best Town in the World*, Illustrated by Ronald Himler, Aladdin Books, McMillan Publishing Co. 866 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10022, 1982

Special Information

Power point created by Gary Cox created during the Illinois Geographic Alliance 2007 Summer Institute in Springfield, IL



This was one of the finest homes in New Salem



Another New Salem Home



Inside a New Salem home



In the Blacksmith's Shop



At the Carding Mill



At the first Lincoln Berry store



The second Lincoln Berry Store



Lunch at the inn



Blab School

