Unit 5

Title: Ghost Towns of the American West

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RI.5.1, RI.5.3, RI.5.4; W.5.2, W.5.4, W.5.6; SL.5.1; L.5.1, L.5.2, L.5.4

Teacher Instructions

*Refer to the Introduction for further details.*

**Before Teaching**

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Exploring the many ghost towns in the United States gives us insight into the past.

Synopsis

Ghost Towns of the American West, an expository text, depicts how the Westward Expansion left a lasting impact on America. Settlers pushed westward over three centuries from the 1600’s to the 1900’s. The massive migration of people to the American West during the gold rush required building towns to house people. However, when all the gold and other resources in an area were depleted, the towns were often deserted. These deserted towns were called ghost towns.

1. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
2. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

**During Teaching**

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)
3. Students and teacher re-read the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e.: whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions

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| **Text-dependent Questions** | **Evidence-based Answers** |
| The author states that, “Virtually every ghost town has untold stories of people who longed for a chance at a better life.” Analyze this statement and explain what it means. (Pg. 548) | Ghost towns stand as evidence of high adventure, hopes of striking it rich, and the sudden loss of fortune-or life. |
| What motivates many people to move to the lonesome American West? (Pg. 549) | Many people were motivated to move to the lonesome American West because they wanted a better life, wanted to be rich, or sought adventure. |
| What kinds of towns became ghost towns and settlements? Why did people abandon these towns and settlements? (Pgs. 549-550) | Ghost towns were originally mining camps, cowboy towns, or settlements of the sprawling westward frontier. One main cause for abandoning a town was that prospectors gave up looking for gold near the town or that gold was depleted. Also, settlements were abandoned because the miners did not make a fortune, the crops had failed, their sources of income or wealth disappeared, or they just gave up. |
| Where are ghost towns located today? (Pgs. 549 and 551) | Ghost towns are located throughout the world. However, in the United States most are found in the Midwest and West. |
| Are ghost towns easy to find? How are ghost towns usually discovered today? (Pg. 551) | Ghost towns are not easy to find. Today ghost towns are usually discovered when historians research and explore to find them, often hiking into the isolation of the countryside. |
| What can you conclude about life in the American West during the 1800’s based on the information provided in the text? Which clues support this conclusion? (Pgs. 548-551) | Life was often difficult, risky, and unsuccessful. The fact that so many ghost towns exist and the descriptions of the fleeting prosperity led to that conclusion. |
| Mark Twain’s quote states that “nothing is left of it all but a lifeless, homeless solitude.” What does this quote refer to? (Pg. 552) | Mr. Twain was referring to a mining camp that he returned to 20 years after going there to seek his fortune. Nothing was left of the town or the 2,000 people that lived there. It had become a ghost town. |
| Why is John Sutter’s sawmill referred to as “Sutter’s Folly”? What are “squatter’s rights”? Explain how “squatter’s rights” led to the demise of Sutter’s discovery of gold. (Pg. 553) | John Sutter’s sawmill is referred to as “Sutter’s Folly” because gold was found there, but Sutter did not make any money. People took over his land without paying for it claiming “squatter’s rights.” |
| According to Charles B. Gillespie, what types of men were attracted to the California Gold Rush? Why did immigrants join in the search for gold? (Pg. 554) | The California Gold Rush attracted the following types of men: young, energetic, ragged but good natured men from all walks of life and immigrants from several countries. The immigrants joined in the search for gold because all the men were gold seekers and wanted a better life. |
| Re-read the first-hand account of J. D. Borthwick. How does his description help to paint a picture of a typical Western mining town? (Pg. 555) | Borthwick’s description helps the reader to see that the knee- deep mud streets were littered with rubbish of all sorts. There was a cacophony of noise always prevalent, 24 hours a day. The one way street created a tunnel of traffic enclosed by high hills. Wooden–plank sidewalks snaked in front of all worn, sun bleached stores and businesses. |
| How did the presence of a railroad in a town affect that town? (Pg. 556) | The effect of the presence of the railroad on a Western town meant the town would grow. If the railroad did not go through a town then that town would likely become a ghost town. |
| When did the waves of migration reach a peak? Describe what happened to the mining towns because of the migration peak. (Pg. 556) | The waves of migration reached a peak between 1860 and 1880. Some towns grew into large cities, such as Denver and Phoenix, while many others were abandoned and forgotten. |
| What does the author describe “as difficult as the search for gold”? (Pg. 557) | Finding a ghost town today Is as difficult as the search for gold. People often travel by four-wheel-drive vehicles and then hike several miles up rocky slopes or over cactus-studded deserts to locate the remains of a ghost town. |

Vocabulary

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|  | **KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING** | **WORDS WORTH KNOWING**  General teaching suggestions are provided in the Introduction |
| **TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION**  not enough contextual clues provided in the text | Page 548-Relics  Page 549-Territory  Page 556-Economic failure  Page 557-Inhabitants | Page 548-Ghost towns  Page 549-Grubstakes, strike, tattered, crusty, cantankerous, crevices  Page 550-Frontier  Page 552-Lifeless, homeless, solitude, resourceful  Page 553-Forty-niners, Squatter’s rights  Page 554- Simpering, stalwart, dauntless  Page 556- Transcontinental  Page 557-False front |
| **STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING**  sufficient context clues are provided in the text | Page 548-Longed for, pull up stakes, evidence  Page 549-Tumbleweeds  Page 552- Faint outline  Page 554- Immigrants | Page 549-Trough, weathered, centuries  Page 550-Minerals, prosperity  Page 551-Prarie sod  Page 555-Skirted  Page 556-Migration  Page 557-Vacant |

Culminating Task

* *Using technology, create a brochure describing a ghost town. Include historical facts that show why visiting a ghost town gives insight into the past. The facts on this brochure should be based on your reading of the text and the class discussions over the past couple of days.*

Answer: Example:

* + Ghost towns show settlements of the Western frontier.
  + Mining towns were full of men seeking their fortune.
  + Mining towns became ghost towns.
  + People from all walks of life went west.
  + Ghost towns include wooden buildings of banks, general stores, mercantile stores, blacksmith shops, livery stables, telegraph offices, newspaper offices, Pony Express stations, and corrals for animals.
  + Ghost towns are located in isolated locations where gold was mined and depleted.
  + Ghost towns show a past long gone but evidence still stands of once booming, mining towns.
  + Visit a Ghost Town for a startling discovery!!

Additional Tasks

* *Create a causal chain of events that depicts why a mining town became a ghost town.*

Answer: Gold was discovered---People rushed west to find their fortunes---Towns sprang up quickly---Natural resources of an area were exhausted---Towns were abandoned and became ghost towns.

* Analyze the picture book, “Ryolite: The True Story of a Ghost Town”. Compare and contrast Ms. Diane Siebert’s book with the illustrations and text found in the story, “Ghost Towns of the American West”. Explain the similarities and differences within a cooperative learning group.

Answer: A deeper understanding of the before and after of a ghost town should be incorporated into the discussion.

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**“Ghost Towns of the American West”**

1. The author states that, “Virtually every ghost town has untold stories of people who longed for a chance at a better life.” Analyze this statement and explain what it means. (Pg. 548)
2. What motivates many people to move to the lonesome American West? (Pg. 549)
3. What kinds of towns became ghost towns and settlements? Why did people abandon these towns and settlements? (Pgs. 549-550)
4. Where are ghost towns located today? (Pgs. 549 and 551)
5. Are ghost towns easy to find? How are ghost towns usually discovered today? (Pg. 551)
6. What can you conclude about life in the American West during the 1800’s based on the information provided in the text? Which clues support this conclusion? (Pgs. 548-551)
7. Mark Twain’s quote states that “nothing is left of it all but a lifeless, homeless solitude.” What does this quote refer to? (Pg. 552)
8. Why is John Sutter’s sawmill referred to as “Sutter’s Folly”? What are “squatter’s rights”? Explain how “squatter’s rights” led to the demise of Sutter’s discovery of gold. (Pg. 553)
9. According to Charles B. Gillespie, what types of men were attracted to the California Gold Rush? Why did immigrants join in the search for gold? (Pg. 554)
10. Re-read the first-hand account of J. D. Borthwick. How does his description help to paint a picture of a typical Western mining town? (Pg. 555)
11. How did the presence of a railroad in a town affect that town? (Pg. 556)
12. When did the waves of migration reach a peak? Describe what happened to the mining towns because of the migration peak. (Pg. 556)
13. What does the author describe “as difficult as the search for gold”? (Pg. 557)

Supports for English Language Learners (ELLs)

to use with Basal Alignment Project Lessons

When teaching any lesson, it is important to make sure you are including supports to help all students. We have prepared some examples of different types of supports that you can use in conjunction with our Basal Alignment Project Lessons to help support your ELLs. They are grouped by when they would best fit in a lesson. While these supports reflect research in how to support ELLs, these activities can help ALL students engage more deeply with these lessons. Note that some strategies should be used at multiple points within a lesson; we’ll point these out. It is also important to understand that these scaffolds represent options for teachers to select based on students’ needs; it is not the intention that teachers should do *all* of these things at every lesson.

**Before the reading:**

* Read passages, sing songs, watch videos, view photographs, discuss topics (e.g., using the [four corners strategy](http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/four-corners)), or research topics that help provide context for what your students will be reading. This is especially true if the setting (e.g., 18th Century England) or topic (e.g., boats) is one that is unfamiliar to the students.
* Provide instruction, using multiple modalities, on selected vocabulary words that are *central to understanding the text*. When looking at the lesson plan, you should note the Tier 2 words, particularly those words with high conceptual complexity (i.e., they are difficult to visualize, learn from context clues, or are abstract), and consider introducing them ahead of reading. For more information on selecting such words, go [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3167/selecting-and-using-academic-vocabulary-in-instruction). **You should plan to continue to reinforce these words, and additional vocabulary, in the context of reading and working with the text. (See additional activities in the During Reading and After Reading sections.)**

**Examples of Activities:**

* Provide students with the definition of the words and then have students work together to create [Frayer models](http://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/frayer-model) or other kinds of word maps for the words.
* When a word contains a prefix or suffix that has been introduced before, highlight how the word part can be used to help determine word meaning.
* Keep a word wall or word bank where these new words can be added and that students can access later.
* Have students create visual glossaries for whenever they encounter new words. Then have your students add these words to their visual glossaries.
* Create pictures using the word. These can even be added to your word wall!
* Create lists of synonyms and antonyms for the word.
* Have students practice using the words in conversation. For newcomers, consider providing them with [sentence frames](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion) to ensure they can participate in the conversation.
  + Practice spelling the words using different spelling practice strategies and decoding strategies. Students could take turns spelling with a partner.
* Use graphic organizers to help introduce content.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students fill in a [KWL chart](http://www.nea.org/tools/k-w-l-know-want-to-know-learned.html) about what they will be reading about.
* Have students research setting or topic using a pre-approved website and fill in a chart about it. You could even have students work in groups where each group is assigned part of the topic.
* Have students fill in a bubble map where they write down anything that they find interesting about the topic while watching a video or reading a short passage about the topic. Then students can discuss why they picked the information.

**During reading:**

* Read the text aloud first so that ELLs can hear the passage read by a fluent reader before working with the text themselves.
* Allow ELLs to collaborate in their home languages to process content before participating in whole class discussions in English. Consider giving them the discussion questions to look over in advance (perhaps during the first read) and having them work with a partner to prepare.
* Encourage students to create sketch-notes or to storyboard the passage when they are reading it individually or with a partner. This will help show if they understand what they are reading as they are reading it.
* Ask questions related to the who, what, when, why, and how of the passage. For students that may need a little more help, provide them with [sentence stems](https://achievethecore.org/page/3159/ell-supports-for-writing-and-discussion).
* Continue to draw attention to and discuss the words that you introduced before the reading.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students include the example from the text in their glossary that they created.
* Create or find pictures that represent how the word was used in the passage.
* Practice creating sentences using the word in the way it was using in the passage.
* Have students discuss the author’s word choice.
* Use graphic organizers to help organize content and thinking.

**Examples of Activities:**

* Have students fill in a chart to keep track of their 5ws while they read to help them summarize later and figure out the central idea of a passage.
* It may again be beneficial to have somewhere for students to store new words that they encounter while reading the text. Students could use a chart to keep track of these new words and their meanings as they read.
* If you had students fill in a KWL, have them fill in the “L” section as they read the passage.
* Utilize any illustrations or text features that come with the story or passage to better understand the reading.
* Compare/contrast the passage with what the illustrations convey about the passage. Have students consider if the illustrations look the way they visualized the passage in their own minds or if the passage matches their predictions based on the illustrations.
* Identify any text features such as captions and discuss how they contribute to meaning.

**After reading:**

* Present directions for any post-reading assignments orally and visually; repeat often; and ask English Language Learners to rephrase.
* Allow ELLs to use English language that is still under development. Students should not be scored lower because of incorrect spelling or grammar (unless the goal of the assignment is to assess spelling or grammar skills specifically). When grading, be sure to focus on scoring your students only for the objective(s) that were shared with students.
* Scaffold questions for discussions so that questioning sequences include a mix of factual and inferential questions and a mix of shorter and more extended responses. Questions should build on each other and toward inferential and higher-order-thinking questions. There are not many factual questions already listed in the lesson instructions, so you will need to build some in as you see fit. More information on this strategy can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/aligned/creating-sequencing-text-dependent-questions-support-english-language-learners/).
* Reinforce new vocabulary using multiple modalities

**Examples of activities:**

* Using the words that you had students work with before reading, have students write sentences in reference to the passage that you just finished reading.
* Require students to include the words introduced before reading in the culminating writing task.
* For newcomers, print out pictures that represent the words that you focused on and have students match the words to the pictures.
* Based on different features of the words, have the students sort them into different categories and explain their choices. For example, the students could sort the words by prefixes, suffixes, connotation, etc.
* After reading the passage, continue to examine important sentences (1–2) in the text that contribute to the overall meaning of the text. Guide students to break apart these sentences, analyze different elements, and determine meaning. More information on how to do this, including models of sentence deconstruction, can be found [here](https://achievethecore.org/page/3160/juicy-sentence-protocol).
* Provide differentiated scaffolds for writing assignments based on students’ English language proficiency levels.

**Examples of Activities:**

* For all students, go over the prompt in detail, making sure to break down what the prompt means before having the students get to work. Then have the students explain the directions back to you.
* Have students create an evidence tracking chart during reading, then direct them to look back over their evidence chart and work with a group to see if their evidence matches what the rest of the class wrote down. If some of the chart does not match, students should have a discussion about why.
* For students who need more support, model the proper writing format for your students and provide them with a properly formatted example for reference.
* For newcomers, you may consider creating sentence or paragraph frames to help them to write out their ideas.
* To further discussion about the passage, have students create their own who, what, when, where, why, and how questions related to the passage to ask each other and have students pair up and practice asking each other the questions. If available, pair students of the same home language to support the use of language still under development.