

DAYS 6 & 7: PEOPLE OF THE PRAIRIE

OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to:

1. Describe Native American life on the prairie before white settlers arrived.
2. Describe early settlers' life on the prairie.
3. Discuss how the invention of the plow changed the prairie.
4. Discuss why fire is advantageous to the prairie.

BACKGROUND

See *Background* sheet.

MATERIALS

- * Book, *Addie Across the Prairie*
Journal
Yellow markers, pens or pencils
- * Student pages - *"Journal Entries" - Native Americans of the Prairies*
Timeline: What and When
Settlers of the Prairie
Prediction Exercise
Mosquito Problem
Lost on the Prairie
The Illinois Prairie - The Plow
Illinois Map
Check Up
- * Teacher pages - *Background - Native Americans*
Sample Timeline: What and When
Background - Settlers of the Prairie
Changing Prairie
Culminating Activities
Check Up Answer Page
- * Transparency
Master- *The Prairie*
Sample Timeline: What and When

Starred (*) materials are included in this packet.

VOCABULARY

ancestors: Relatives that lived before you.

archaeologist: One who studies ancient life by excavating (digging) artifacts (objects).

fertile: Producing abundantly.

furrows: Long, narrow tracks in the soil cut by a plow.

gale: A very strong wind.

harrow: To use a heavy frame with iron "teeth" to break up the soil

hazardous: Dangerous.

migrate: To move from one place to another.

oxen (plural of ox): Animals, such as cattle, buffalo, and bison, that are trained for farm work.

rivulets: Little streams.

settlers: People who come to a new place to live.

slews: Swamp-like area (currently spelled "slough")

sow: Scatter seed on the ground.

stagnant: Not moving and not fresh.

timber: An area with many trees.

yoke: Wooden frame to fasten two work animals together.

PROCESS

Predicting, comparing and contrasting, critical thinking, inferences.

PROCEDURE

Native Americans

1. Brainstorm with the class on what life was probably like on the prairie for the Native Americans before the white settlers arrived. Use transparency to show where the prairie was located in the United States. Discuss things like shelter, food and use of land.
2. Have students read *Journal Entries of Native Americans*. Use discussion questions as desired.
3. Begin timeline.
****You may wish to practice the concept of the timeline with your students by allowing them to do a personal timeline outlining significant events in their lives (i.e. birthday, first day of school, etc.).****
Hand out students' page *Timeline:What and When* and project the *SampleTimeline* transparency. Students may wish to fill in important dates from the transparency. Have students keep their timeline copies in their journals or other safe place so they can be referred to as the lessons progress.

Settlers

- 1 Read student pages *Settlers of the Prairie*. Consider large group work or cooperative groups.
2. Answer discussion questions on student pages.
3. Try a Prediction Exercise with *Mosquito Problem* and *Lost in the Prairie*.

4. Answer questions.
5. Continue timeline.
6. Continue ongoing activities.

Changing Prairie

1. Read and discuss *The Illinois Prairie - The Plow*.
2. Hand out student page *Illinois Map*.
Project and discuss transparency of Illinois map in 1820 showing the extent of the prairie. Ask students to color on their map the amount of prairie in the state. Discuss the relationship of the forested areas to the rivers in Illinois.
3. Do culminating activities.
4. Complete timeline.
5. Continue ongoing activities.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Native Americans

1. Read aloud: *Legend: Origin of the Big Dipper* found in Keepers of the Earth by Joseph Bruchas and Michael Caduto, published by Fulcrum, Inc..
2. Create a Word Web using TEN words related to Native Americans.
3. Talk to art instructor about correlating Native American art with this unit.
4. Native American Games.
American Indians are great lovers of games, particularly those having to do with sports and those based on the element of chance. The equipment used for games was fashioned out of natural materials such as sticks, seeds, bones, pebbles or corn cobs. Pieces were decorated with color, small dots or lines to identify those belonging to individual players. Small flat bowls or leather bags were used as containers. Many of the sticks were beautifully carved. Gambling was often part of the game itself. Not everyone assembled would play, as some were needed to bet on the outcome. Unlike people of today who bet for personal gain, Native American wagers were for sport. Usually everyone "broke even" or at least ended with as much as they started with. The betting merely increased the suspense of the game, making it more enjoyable.

A source for Native American games is American Indian Crafts and Games by Charles Blood, published by Franklin Watts.

5. Native American Recipe.
(This was an oral retelling. It may be used for fun or copied and given to the students for homework.)
Boiled Indian Pudding
Indian pudding should be boiled four or five hours. Sifted Indian (corn) meal and warm milk should be stirred together pretty stiff. A little salt and two or three great spoonfuls of molasses, added; a spoonful of ginger if you like that spice. Boil it in a tightly covered pan or a very thick cloth; if the water gets in it will ruin it. Leave plenty of room because Indian (corn) meal swells very much. The milk with which you mix it should be merely warm; if it be

scalding, the pudding will break to pieces. Some people chop sweet suet fine, and warm in the milk; others warm thin slices of apple to be stirred into the pudding. Water will answer instead of milk.

Settlers

1. Refer to The Illinois Period, published by the Chicago Historical Society, for a wide variety of activities.
- *2. Art Extension
- *3. Poetry Extension

Changing Prairie

- 1.**Settlers and Native Americans*

INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTION

Art, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies.

ASSESSMENT

(Answers are italicized and refer to the Student Pages indicated below. Answers are also included on the corresponding teacher answer pages.)

Native Americans of the Prairie

1. Why do you suppose the journal entries on this page had to be imaginary? (*Not sure these people had written language; such records have not been preserved; factual information had to be speculated from the remains of the mounds, etc.*)
2. What did they use their mounds for? (*for burial and for worship*)
3. List several things in the Prairie the Native Americans used for food. (*maize, beans, squash, bison, deer, small game, etc.*)
4. What does it mean when Native Americans said they took only what they needed from the prairie? (*There was no waste; killed only for survival; respect for land and its conservation.*)

Settlers of the Prairie

Compare and contrast these people's impressions of the prairie.

1. What are the most distinguishing characteristics of the prairie? (*It stretched for miles, looked like an ocean of grass, beautiful, dangerous, etc.*)
2. Did all the pioneers and travelers have a favorable impression of the prairie? Why or why not? (*No, some felt it was wonderful; others disliked it and found it difficult.*)
3. What were some of the hardships encountered by pioneers and travelers on the prairie? (*Snow, insects, heat, fire, cold, swamps, loneliness*)

4. If caught in a terrible storm, how did some pioneers and travelers keep warm? (*They might slit open a horse and use the warmth of the animal's body.*)
5. What time of day did people travel on the prairie in order to keep the bugs from bothering their animals? (*During the night or early morning*)

Mosquito Problem

1. Can you imagine having to live in a cabin full of smoke just to keep mosquitoes from bothering you? Describe what this might be like. (*Answers may vary.*)
2. What are some of the problems you have living in the city or suburbs? (*Traffic, hard to go from place to place, too many people, pollution, crime, noise, etc.*)
3. When it's really hot in your house what do you do to stay cool? (*Open windows, use fans, turn on air conditioner, etc.*)
4. What do you do when the mosquitoes are biting you? (*Slap them, use insect repellent, go indoors, use bug lights, etc.*)
5. Is there ever smoke in your house? (*Answers will vary.*) Why? (*People smoking, cooking, fireplace working, etc.*) What do you do to get away from the smoke? (*Leave the room, turn on a fan.*)
6. Would you rather live during pioneer times or now? (*Answers will vary.*) Why?
7. What are some of the services provided by your community which make daily living more comfortable? (*Electricity, water, gas, sewer, garbage collection, police and fire protection, hospitals, grocery stores, gas stations, etc.*)

Lost on the Prairie

Since students finish the story on their own, answers will vary.

The following list suggests journal ideas or topic questions.

- If the Mound Builders had no written language, describe how you think they may have communicated.
- Tell what your life might be like if you were a Prairie Native American. How might you live day to day? How would this be different than your present life?
- Imagine it is 1870 and your family is moving westward. You are allowed to take five things as long as they fit in a bushel basket. What would you take and why?
- If you were going west in a Conestoga wagon, how would you feel if you traveled day after day with only prairie in sight? What would be your impressions? What could you do to entertain yourself? What games could you play or invent?
- Settlers were often seen as pioneers. The dictionary says pioneers are people who do something first or prepare the way for others. Choose one of the following and find out why that person could be called a pioneer.
Jane Addams; Jean du Sable; Neil Armstrong; Amelia Earhart; Elizabeth Blackwell; Charles Lindbergh

Background

Native Americans of the Prairie

Mound Builders (300 B.C.-1500 A.D.)

Early man entered what is now called Illinois almost on the heels of the last retreating glacier. In fact, the Indians of the region told legends about an ice god who once roared down from the north and froze the entire world. The first known people in Illinois were hunters and gatherers who left little evidence of their civilization.

Between 300 B.C. and 500 A.D., Indians of the Hopewell Culture flourished in the Middle West. Thousands of Hopewellian earthwork burial mounds were built on scattered sites throughout the region. Many of the Illinois mounds have been excavated. A fascinating display of some of these excavations can be found at Dickson Mound State Museum near Lewistown in central Illinois.

Mound Builders of the Mississippian Culture lived in Illinois from A.D. 800 to 1250. The Mississippians were an advanced people who built great cities, usually along riverbanks. Their mounds were used as places of worship rather than as burial sites. Many of their mounds were shaped like flat-topped pyramids, indicating that the Mississippians probably had some contact with the sophisticated civilizations of Mexico and Central America. Monk's Mound at Cahokia near East St. Louis was the center of worship for a city that may have held as many as one hundred thousand people at the height of its development.

The mound-building cultures in Illinois dwindled about 1250 A.D. Since they had no written language, we know few details about their lives. We do know that the late Mound Builders were extensive travelers. Jewelry and tools from both the Gulf of Mexico area and the Rocky Mountains have been found in their ruins. We also know they were ambitious builders. The remains of about ten thousand mounds have been identified in Illinois alone. Some have been carefully preserved by archaeologists; others stand in the middle of farm fields, surrounded by grazing cows.

Native Americans (Approx. 1600 A.D.)

The word *prairie* (or the phrase *Prairie Plains*) is applied to the grasslands flanking the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. The difference between the Great Plains and the Prairie Plains is the amount of rainfall and the resulting type of vegetation. The Great Plains are drier than the Prairie Plains. As a result, there are more ponds and swamps on the prairies. And, with the more frequent rains, the Prairie Plains' grasses grow taller than the Great Plains' grasses. The Great Plains are located to the west of the Prairie Plains. To the east, the Prairie Plains give way to woodlands.

The Prairie Plains are located in what is now the central part of the United States. Iowa and Illinois are mostly prairie country. North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas all have prairies in their eastern parts. Minnesota has prairies in its southern and western parts. Missouri has prairies in its northern and western parts. Indiana has prairies in its northern part. Ohio has prairies in its western part. Some of these states, especially Illinois and Iowa, are referred to as "Prairie States."

The Native Americans sometimes cited as Prairie Indians shared cultural traits with both the Northeast Indians and the Plains Indians. Many of them lived in semi-permanent villages along wooded river valleys. They lived for the most part in sizable earthlodges or in grass-covered, dome-shaped houses. They had extensive cultivated fields where they grew corn, beans, squash, tobacco, and other crops. They made use of pottery for cooking, carrying, and storage.

Yet many of the prairie peoples left their homes to hunt part of the year. While on the trail, they lived in temporary lean-tos, or portable tents, and used unbreakable containers made of animal skins. Their chosen game was buffalo. Late in their history, after the arrival of Europeans, they acquired use of the horse for hunting and raiding. In addition to teepees and buffalo-hunting, the Prairie Indians shared other cultural traits with the more nomadic Plains Indians to the west.

The Prairie peoples east of the Mississippi are generally classified in the Northeast Culture Area. These include the tribes of the western Great Lakes: Fox, Kickapoo, Menominee, Potawatomi, Sac (Sauk), Winnebago, as well as tribes to their south, the Illinois, Miami and Shawnee.

The Prairie peoples west of the Mississippi are generally classified as part of the Great Plains Culture Area. Most of them occupied territory in the stretch of land between the Missouri to the Mississippi rivers. These include the following tribes: Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Iowa, Oto, Missouri, Kaw, Omaha, Osage, Ponca, Quapaw, Pawnee, Wichita and some of the eastern bands of Sioux.

"Journal Entries"

Native Americans of the Prairie



Artist's rendition of Mound Builders community

Mound Builders (300 B.C.-1500 A.D.)

Imagine ancient people said this: "Our ancestors told us of a world of ice. We believe our ice god created this frozen world. As the huge walls of ice left us, what remained was rich fertile land to be used as the giver of life. The land became our heart and soul."



These people were Mound Builders living between 300 B.C.-500 A.D. These people used their mounds for places of worship and as burial sites. They traveled far, perhaps even to Central America trading goods such as jewelry and tools. Since the Mound Builders had no known written language, archaeologists have guessed about these travels because of what they have found in the mounds. Some of the mounds which have been opened have contained skeletons, cooking utensils, tools, pottery, weapons, and other items.

Prairie Native Americans (Approx. 1600 A.D. - . . .)



A possible description by a Native American before white settlers came to the prairie around 1600 may sound something like this:

"Life on the prairie is not easy for us. It is hot and dry in the summer and cold in the winter. Storms of rain, snow, and sleet come down and the great prairie winds blow strong all year.

The land is good to us. We plow small garden plots and raise crops of maize (corn), beans, and squash in the fertile soil. Two times a year, once after spring planting and again in winter, we migrate to the best hunting ground. Here we hunt bison, deer, and small game. We chase them on foot and use our spear and arrows. Sometimes we set the prairie on fire to chase up the big herd of bison.

We live in harmony with the bison, elk, and antelope who roam freely.
We listen to the 'booming' of the prairie chickens as they dance in the
grasses. We watch the marsh hawk and short-eared owl soar in the sky.
We take only what we need from the prairie and it stays good to us."

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you suppose the journal entries on this page had to be imaginary?
2. For what purpose did the early Native Americans use their mounds?
3. List several things in the prairie the Native Americans used for food.
4. What does it mean when Native Americans said they took only what they needed from the prairie?

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you suppose the journal entries on this page had to be imaginary?
(Not sure these people had written language; such records have not been preserved; factual information had to be speculated from the remains of the mounds, etc.)
2. For what purpose did the early Native Americans use their mounds?
(for burial and for workshop)
3. List several things in the prairie the Native Americans used for food.
(maize, beans, squash, bison, deer, small game, etc.)
4. What does it mean when Native Americans said they took only what they needed from the prairie?
(there was no waste; killed only for survival; respect for land and its conservation.)

Sample Timeline: What and When

(Student answers may vary)

EVENT	DATE
Mound Builders - Hopewell Culture	300 B.C. - 500 A.D.
Mound Builders - Mississippi Culture	800 A.D. - 1500 A.D.
15,000,000 Native Americans in the United States	before 1600
Prairie Native American journal	1600
21,000,000 acres of prairie in Illinois	1600
Louis Joliet and Fr. Jacques Marquette are the first Europeans to explore the Illinois region	1673
Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle and Henri de Toni reach the mouth of the Mississippi; upon their return to Illinois, they build Fort St. Louis atop Starved Rock. All this land is claimed for France.	1682
Congress passed the Ordinance of 1787, establishing the Northwest Territory. Illinois was one of the five states formed from this territory.	1787
Statehood of Illinois: the 21st state admitted to the Union.	1818
The Black Hawk War, a 15 week conflict in which the Sauk and Fox Indians fought to keep their land in Illinois. The Indians lost the battle. This was the last Indian uprising in the Old Northwest.	1832
Town of Chicago organized. Indians cede the last Illinois land.	1833
John Deere invents the steel plow.	1837
Laura Ingalls Wilder is born.	1867
The time of the novel <i>Addie Across the Prairie</i> .	1870
200,000 Native Americans in the United States	Late 1800's
Approximately 2,000 - 3,000 acres of prairie in Illinois	TODAY

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Math Extension

- Determine time passed between dates
- Calculate population growth or decline

Background

Settlers of the Prairie

**WHO WERE THEY? HOW DID THEY GET TO ILLINOIS?
WHY DID THEY COME TO ILLINOIS?**

The earliest settlers in Illinois were the French, who had established small settlements and trading posts during the first quarter of the eighteenth century in what is today the southern third of Illinois. This land was then a part of the area referred to as the Northwest Territory. With the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 the title to the Illinois region passed from France to Great Britain. The British never firmly established settlements in this region due to Indian hostilities and the obligation to curtail expenses. Thus in 1779, during the American Revolution, this region was taken from the British by the Americans with little resistance. Failure of the territory to attract settlers during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was a result of the confusion and long delay in opening the land offices in Illinois and the news of Indian hostilities. For those who did come to Illinois in those days, life was rough and often precarious.

With the establishment of statehood in 1818, pioneers began moving in greater numbers into this land of vast prairies and forests. The early pioneers came from Kentucky and Tennessee and settled in the river valleys of southern Illinois. Northern Illinois was later settled by Scotch Irish people; those of German and English descent came from New England and New York. Many, especially the Germans, Scandinavians, English and Irish, came directly from their European homelands to settle in Illinois.

The people who came to Illinois represented a variety of classes and economic statuses. Rugged woodsmen who loved the wilderness and adventure came to Illinois to escape civilization. They often lived in half-faced shelters or small, crude cabins erected without the help of a companion. Most of their time was occupied by hunting and fishing. If they had a spouse and family they would clear a small plot of land and plant crops. Many times when civilization began to encroach on the wilderness, these woodsmen would abandon their holdings and push farther west into the untamed lands. The old hunter's rule applied to their lifestyle, "When you hear the sound of a neighbor's gun, it is time to move away."

In the early years of statehood, Illinois also attracted poor farmers and craftsmen from the East and Europe who sought a land of opportunities where there was no class distinction, the soil was good, and services might be needed. These pioneers came to fulfill their dreams of prosperity and happiness in Illinois.

Affluent and ambitious entrepreneurs came to Illinois, too. They bought and sold land, established towns and churches, and increased their wealth and social position in newly established communities.

Many pioneers left the South because of a dislike for slavery either on philosophical grounds or because they could not compete economically with the planters class. They came to Illinois because after 1824, Illinois was the only free state with cheap land.

In their trek to Illinois, the pioneers used many different land and water routes and forms of transportation. Some walked, while others came on horseback, in carts, wagons, keelboats, flat-boats, arks and steamboats. The pioneers coming from the South trudged over the mountains at the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky and then up into Illinois often by way of the Mississippi River.

Easterners and Europeans could take a more direct route by trekking out to Pittsburgh and then floating on a boat down the Ohio River to the Mississippi. The Ohio River served as a natural highway for these pioneers.

By 1820 pioneers who could afford passage could take a steamboat down the Ohio River and up the Mississippi River into Illinois. With the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, connecting Albany to Buffalo, pioneers could travel to the Midwest with relative ease. They could take a packet boat through the canal and then travel by steamboat through the Great Lakes to Illinois.

Many guide books, almanacs and pamphlets were published in England and Europe to promote emigration to the United States, particularly the Midwest. These books provided practical information on how to get to the United States, the price of land in the West, opportunities for craftsmen, the weather and the quality of the soil. They also included elaborate descriptions of different regions to entice people to come to the United States.

Prediction Exercise - The prediction exercise is another way to focus pre-reading predictions from vocabulary. It is a charting process which requires students to organize vocabulary in relationship to the structure of the selection. Ask the students to classify the vocabulary according to how they would predict that the author might use it in the selection to tell about the setting, or to tell about the characters, the problem, actions, solution or feelings, and mood. Discussion of placement can precede reading. This offers students input from peers and helps the teacher gauge the state of their knowledge.

Settlers of the Prairie

Background Information

When European explorers came to the Illinois country in the 1600s, they were amazed at what they saw. They had seen oceans of water, but they had never seen land that looked like an ocean of grass. Since they had no word to call this land, they used the French word "prairie," which means meadow, to describe the great grassland ocean.

When the first white settlers came to the Illinois country in the early 1800s, they were very impressed with the beauty of the prairie. They had come from the eastern United States where the land is rolling and covered with forests. Many of the settlers had felt hemmed in by the hills and trees of the East, and as they walked out onto the flat, sunny prairie and faced the prairie wind, they felt a rush of freedom.



By reading the letters, journals, and personal accounts of the Illinois pioneers you can learn a great deal about the people and their journey to the prairie and their experiences in Illinois.

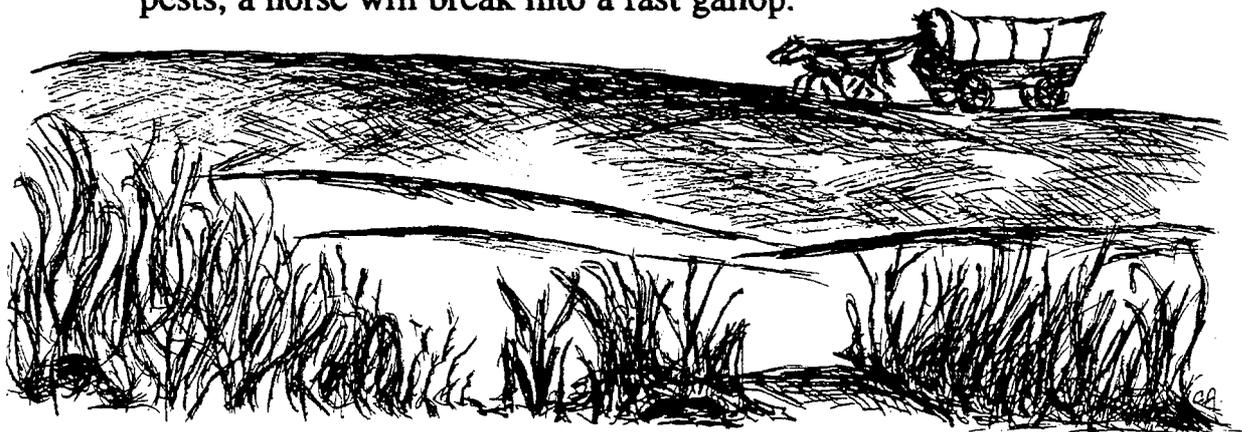
This letter was written by Lucinda Rutherford, shortly after she settled in eastern Illinois. She wrote the letter to her mother in Pennsylvania to tell her about the Illinois country.

"The prairies here were delightful, they are from 12 to 20 miles wide, and 150 long, instead of the timber surrounding them, they surround the timber, at this season they are most beautiful. The green grass has sprung up and covered the whole bosom of these wastes; with that grass there springs up a multitude of flowers of every hue, form, and scent. It is delightful to ride over this level land and every step, tramping those gems of nature underfoot. Their beautiful heads can be seen as far as the eye can reach waving in the summer wind."



This is a description of the prairie by Fred Gustorf, who visited Illinois in 1835:

"The prairies in this state are charming - great stretches of flat land, covered with wild meadows which are hemmed by thin forests. The prairies are covered all summer long with flowers that change color every month - yellow, blue, then red. By wandering from one meadow to another, one encounters a series of surprises. Huge green surfaces of unbelievable high grass which waves in the wind like the sea against a wooded background more beautiful than the English parks. These prairies are from ten to one hundred miles across, because of their size one can travel over them by horse only. In the winter, when the trails are covered with snow, people get lost and cannot find shelter. I have heard of instances when travelers, lost in the snow on the prairies, have had to slit the bellies of their horses for warmth of their bodies. In summer the prairie insects are so numerous that the horses often are stung to death by them. Therefore, one must travel during the night or the early morning hours. Flies settle by the thousands on the horses, and after a ride of several hours the blood can be seen trickling down their sides. To get relief from these pests, a horse will break into a fast gallop."





Though beautiful, the prairies were also hazardous. Summer brought mosquitoes and flies which pestered the animals. There are many accounts of animals bleeding and dying as a result of insect bites. The summer sun was unbearably hot, and the treeless prairies offered no shade for the traveler or farmer. Fall brought the threat of fire. The vast expanses of prairie grass became dry, and lightning or a careless person could set these vast expanses ablaze. Winter brought freezing temperatures, blinding blizzards and deep snow drifts which immobilized both the pioneer and animals. Warm spring weather melted the snow and turned the prairies into vast swamps and bogs which proved treacherous to travelers.

Some pioneers fell in love with the open prairies and others found the prairies desolate and lonely places. The following is a description of the prairie by Chandler R. Gilman in 1835 as he was travelling in Illinois by stagecoach:

"The appearance of the prairies disappointed me very much; the tall brown grass, coarse and scattered, gave to the whole a ragged appearance; the ground was low and marshy, and at short intervals we passed through what they here call slews. I thought, at first, that these slews were rivulets, whose streams were dried up by the long drought; but I believe their true character is long narrow ponds, or

rather mud holes. There is little or no water visible; here and there a small dark pool dots the surface of the soft black mud. Clumps of grass, the size of my hat, are also sprinkled around. 'Twas by the help of these clumps that we crossed these mud holes, as the carriage sank so deep we were all obliged to get out to enable the horses to drag it through."



All excerpts from letters, journals and personal accounts are from original materials in the collection of the Chicago Historical Society.

Discussion Questions:

Compare and contrast these peoples' impressions of the prairie.

- 1. What are the most distinguishing characteristics of the prairie?**
- 2. Did all the pioneers and travelers have a favorable impression of the prairie?
Why or why not?**
- 3. What were some of the hardships encountered by pioneers and travelers on the prairie?**
- 4. If caught in a terrible snow storm, how did some pioneers and travelers keep warm?**
- 5. What time of day did people travel on the prairie in order to keep the bugs from bothering their animals?**

Discussion Questions:

Compare and contrast these peoples' impressions of the prairie.

1. What are the most distinguishing characteristics of the prairie?

(It stretched for miles, looked like an ocean of grass, beautiful, dangerous, etc.)

2. Did all the pioneers and travelers have a favorable impression of the prairie?

Why or why not?

(No, some felt it was wonderful; others disliked it and found it difficult.)

3. What were some of the hardships encountered by pioneers and travelers on the prairie?

(Snow, insects, heat, fire, cold, swampy, lonely.)

4. If caught in a terrible snow storm, how did some pioneers and travelers keep warm?

(They might slit open a horse and use the warmth of the animal's body.)

5. What time of day did people travel on the prairie in order to keep the bugs from bothering their animals?

(During the night or early morning.)

PREDICTION EXERCISE

Predict how the journals will include these words:

PRAIRIE

LOST

MUD

FIRE

TRAMPING

BEAUTIFUL

UMBRELLA

MOSQUITOES

SETTING

CHARACTERS

PROBLEM

SOLUTION

MOOD

Mosquito Problem

The pioneers had to endure many hardships living on the prairie. The following is an account of the awful mosquito problem encountered by Mary Emily Blatchford:

"In this rough cabin, the household goods were placed giving all the comfort possible under the circumstances. The cabin was built in the midst of a hazel patch, which had to be cleared before a garden plot could be made. This close growth proved to be the shelter of swarms of mosquitoes, which during that first summer caused my mother constant annoyance for her babies. The only relief was what was called a smudge. A fire was made in an iron pot, causing a smoke which indeed drove out the mosquitoes, but made life almost unendurable for human beings. When the fire burned low, the mosquitoes would renew their attack, and my mother has told me that she often awoke in the night to find her babies heads positively black with the merciless insects. That was the summer of 1834."



Discussion Questions:

1. Can you imagine having to live in a cabin full of smoke just to keep mosquitoes from bothering you? Describe what this might be like.
2. What are some of the problems you have living in the city or suburbs?
3. When it's really hot in your house what do you do to stay cool?
4. What do you do when the mosquitoes are biting you?
5. Is there ever smoke in your house?

Why?

What do you do to get away from the smoke?

6. Would you rather live during pioneer times or now?

Why?

7. What are some of the services provided by your community which make daily living more comfortable?

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you imagine having to live in a cabin full of smoke just to keep mosquitoes from bothering you? Describe what this might be like.
(Answers may vary.)
2. What are some of the problems you have living in the city or suburbs?
(Traffic, hard to go from place to place, too many people, pollution, crime, noise, etc.)
3. When it's really hot in your house what do you do to stay cool?
(Open windows, use fans, turn on air conditioners, etc.)
4. What do you do when the mosquitoes are biting you?
(Slap them, use insect repellent, go indoors, use bug lights, etc.)
5. Is there ever smoke in your house?
(Answers will vary.)

Why?

What do you do to get away from the smoke?

6. Would you rather live during pioneer times or now?
(Answers will vary.)

Why?

7. What are some of the services provided by your community which make daily living more comfortable?
(Electricity, water, gas, sewer, garbage collection, police and fire protection, hospitals, grocery stores, gas stations.)

Lost on the Prairie

Morris Birkbeck, a wealthy English farmer, emigrated to the United States in 1817 to establish a colony. The following is one of his accounts of his travel experiences in Illinois:

"Our first experiences in prairie life were not very comfortable. Camping for the night near a pool of stagnant water, we lay down to rest, turning our horses loose to graze. In the morning our horses were missing. We wandered all day in vain search. I had separated myself from my companions in my roving. The second night found me in a small prairie, about three miles west of the one we first entered. I lay down in the open prairie without fire or supper; my umbrella, a walking stick by day, at night a house for my head. In the morning, somewhat stiff and cold, I again began my search, and soon became as wet as if I had walked through a river, from the dew on the tall grass. For once, I felt glad of the hot sun, to warm and dry me. As a resource in an emergency, I carried a small bag of ground parched cornmeal mixed with some sugar and a little ground ginger. A tablespoon of this, with water, in some shell or the hollow of your hand, is very grateful, prevents extreme hunger, and gives reasonable nutrition. On this I subsisted for a couple of days."

All excerpts from letters, journals and personal accounts are from original materials in the collection of the Chicago Historical Society.

Discussion Questions:

1. Using your imagination finish this frontier story.
2. Does this man find the horses?
3. Does he find his traveling companions?
4. Does he meet any pioneers?
5. What does he do when his food runs out? Remember he does not have a gun, just an umbrella.

6. Draw a picture of this man sleeping under his umbrella in the tall prairie grass.

7. Have you ever gotten lost? Describe where, when, and how you got lost.

8. What did you do when you got lost?

9. Did you have any things with you to help you? (money to make a phone call, food, a map)

10. List the differences between your experience of being lost and Mr. Birkbeck's experience of being lost on the prairie.

Background

The Changing Prairie

Illinois Prairie Settlement: Illinois earned the nickname "Prairie State" because over half the state was covered by vast prairies. Most of the central and northern region of Illinois is prairie land. The timbered regions are found in southern Illinois. When pioneers saw the prairie for the first time, many were overwhelmed by these flat and seemingly endless expanses of tall grass and flowers. The pioneers first chose to settle in wooded areas where they could continue to use the skills and techniques of Eastern and European farming - clearing the land of trees and using their wooden plows with cast iron blades to break up the soil for planting. The wooded areas also provided a cheap and accessible source of building material and fuel.

Many pioneers believed the vast treeless prairies could not support crops because no trees grew on them. Later they discovered how rich the prairie soil was and then began to farm the prairie. Many new farm tools and techniques were developed to farm the prairies. For example, John Deere perfected the steel plow in 1837 which cut cleanly through the sod and required less animal power.

The settlers had worked hard to come to Illinois, and they were determined to tame the land and make it work for them. So, just like a person "breaks" a wild horse, the settlers "broke" the prairie by plowing up the prairie grasses and wildflowers and planting the seeds of corn and wheat in the prairie soil. And if they didn't plow up a piece of prairie, they grazed cows on it and the delicate prairie plants soon became what was called "eat out." In this way, the hungry cows broke the prairie as surely as the sharp blades of the steel plow.

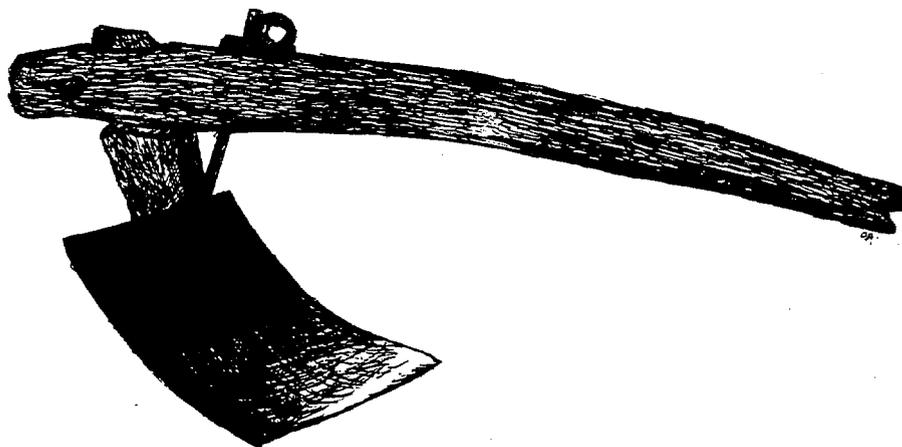
The Illinois Prairie - The Plow

Since they needed logs to build their cabins, most pioneers shunned the prairies and settled near the forests. But when the woodlands were fully occupied, settlers were forced to try farming on the prairies. At that time, it was widely believed the treeless prairie land would not be fertile enough to support crops. But the new farmers quickly discovered the prairie soil was rich beyond their dreams. Plowing the thick, gummy sod, however, was a frustrating chore. Wooden plows broke, and the "gumbo," as the sod was called, clung stubbornly to iron plowshares. Then, in 1837, a young Illinois blacksmith named John Deere invented a new type of polished steel plow that cut effortlessly and cleanly through the prairie sod. Deere built a factory in the town of Moline to manufacture his new plows and eventually became a millionaire.

The fertility of the black prairie soil so astounded farmers that they wrote excited letters to relatives who owned less-productive farms in other parts of the country. Mattie Huffman recalled:

"On April 1, 1875, we got to our home near the southern state line. Father had located the place several months before. All the improvements that the place had on it was a meager log house from which the chimney had fallen out. We had barely gotten unloaded when a neighbor man rode up on a donkey and brought us the key to our house. You are no doubt wondering what was locked in the house. Well, it was something very precious - a plow. Father had stored it there after he had located the place. It was to be our means of support. Not a single tree was there; just bare prairie."

Usually, it took the strength of several yoke of oxen and several hardy farmhands to push the plow through the rigid soil. Turning a strip of sod twenty to thirty inches wide, the farmers were ready to sow their seeds. "We prepared the soil for planting with a breaking plow," explained Mrs. J. H. O'Loughlin, "and then used an ax or hatchet to make a hole in the sod, then dropped the seed and closed the hole with our heels. The ground squirrels got part of our seed, but we had very good crops the first year. The next year we ran the sod cutter over this ground, harrowed it, and then seeded it with wheat."

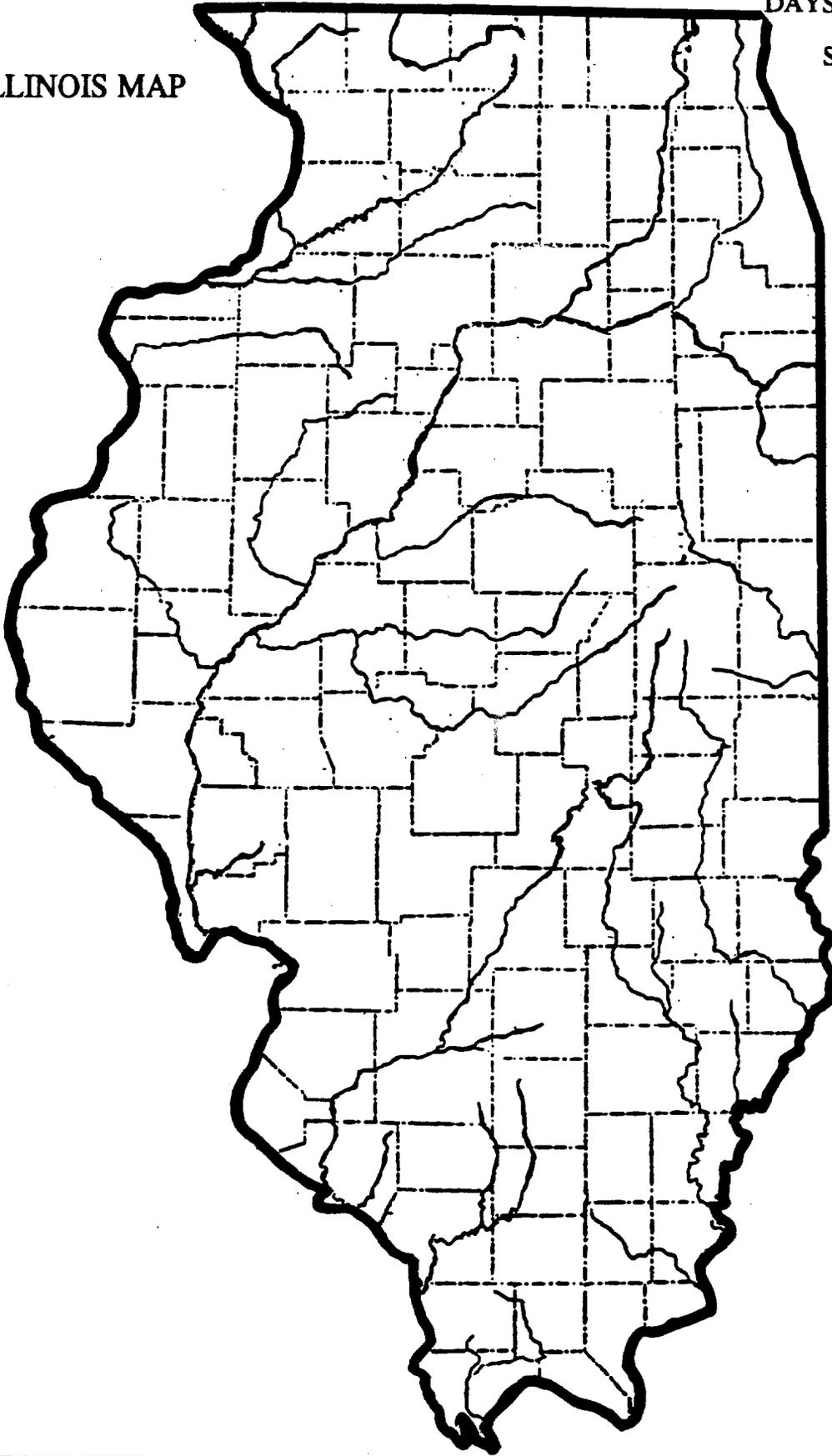


John Deere's invention of the plow in 1837 changed the prairie forever.

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ILLINOIS MAP

DAYS 6 & 7 - PEOPLE
ILLINOIS MAP
STUDENT PAGE



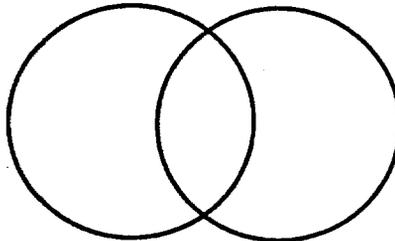
CULMINATING ACTIVITIES

Use of prairie, food, clothing, transportation, tools, animals, chores, homes, values, communications. Below are some formats may be used to record student answers.

1. Chart

Native Americans	Settlers	Other

2. Venn Diagram



3. Illustrations

4. Role Playing

5. Creative Writing -

- a. Students take on roles of either Native Americans or Settlers and describe their lives.
- b. Students then compare and contrast Native Americans to Settlers and to themselves.

Check Up

1. What did the grassland look like to the European settlers?

What word did the explorers use to describe the grassland?

2. Describe how the Native Americans made a living on the prairie.

How did the Native Americans live in harmony with the prairie?

3. Why were the first white settlers impressed with the prairie?

4. How and why did the settlers "break" the prairie?

Did the settlers live in harmony with the prairie?

5. How much prairie is left in Illinois and where can it be found?

6. Who is responsible for protecting and caring for our prairie natural heritage?

Why do *you* think it is important to take care of our natural heritage?

Check Up

1. What did the grassland look like to the European settlers?
Some thought it was beautiful, charming and fell in love with it. Others found it desolate and lonely, disappointing and ragged.)

What word did the explorers use to describe the grassland? (*Prairie*)

2. Describe how the Native Americans made a living on the prairie.
(Plowed small plots to raise corn, beans, and squash; hunted bison, deer and small game with spears and arrows; sometimes started fires to chase bison.)

How did the Native Americans live in harmony with the prairie?
(There was no waste; killed only for survival, respect for land and its conservation.)

3. Why were the first white settlers impressed with the prairie?
(Felt freedom in the flat sunny prairie. They had come from the eastern states where land was rolling and forested. They felt hemmed in by the trees.)

4. How and why did the settlers "break" the prairie?
(Used a plow to break the soil to plant crops)

Did the settlers live in harmony with the prairie?
(No)

5. How much prairie is left in Illinois and where can it be found?
(2,000 - 3,000 acres; mostly in small restored plots)

6. Who is responsible for protecting and caring for our prairie natural heritage?
(Each of us.)

Why do you think it is important to take care of our natural heritage?
(Answers will vary.)

Sample Timeline: What and When
 (Student answers may vary)

EVENT	DATE
Mound Builders - Hopewell Culture	300 B.C. - 500 A.D.
Mound Builders - Mississippi Culture	800 A.D. - 1500 A.D.
15,000,000 Native Americans in the United States	before 1600
Prairie Native American journal	1600
21,000,000 acres of prairie in Illinois	1600
Louis Joliet and Fr. Jacques Marquette are the first Europeans to explore the Illinois region	1673
Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle and Henri de Toni reach the mouth of the Mississippi; upon their return to Illinois, they build Fort St. Louis atop Starved Rock. All this land is claimed for France.	1682
Congress passed the Ordinance of 1787, establishing the Northwest Territory. Illinois was one of the five states formed from this territory.	1787
Statehood of Illinois: the 21st state admitted to the Union.	1818
The Black Hawk War, a 15 week conflict in which the Sauk and Fox Indians fought to keep their land in Illinois. The Indians lost the battle. This was the last Indian uprising in the Old Northwest.	1832
Town of Chicago organized. Indians cede the last Illinois land.	1833
John Deere invents the steel plow.	1837
Laura Ingalls Wilder is born.	1867
The time of the novel <i>Addie Across the Prairie</i> .	1870
200,000 Native Americans in the United States	Late 1800's
Approximately 2,000 - 3,000 acres of prairie in Illinois	TODAY

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ART EXTENSION

Prairie Quilt (for 30 students) -

Tape neutral/white butcher paper together to form a 5 ft. X 6 ft. rectangle. Give each student a 9" X 11" sheet of white construction paper. During the course of the unit, each child can illustrate an incident, flower, creature, etc. related to the Prairie which can then be attached onto the butcher paper as a "square" on the quilt. Have children illustrate a border when complete, or trim the excess to fit the children's artwork. Teacher may want to read or pass around *The Josefina Story Quilt* by Eleanor Coerr, as a beginning activity.

POETRY EXTENSION

DIAMANTE - a diamond-shaped poem which begins with a topic noun and ends with its opposite. Transition occurs in line 4 with last two nouns in that line.

Example:

jungle
abundant, soggy
growing, stretching, living
vegetation, overgrowth, void, wasteland
decaying, drying, dying
brown, arid
desert

Line 1 - one topic noun
Line 2 - two adjectives
Line 3 - three words ending in -ing or verbs
Line 4 - two nouns relating to topic noun
Line 5 - three words ending in -ing or verbs
Line 6 - noun which is opposite of topic noun

Suggestion: Have children create a diamante poem using "Native American/Settlers" or "Prairie Then/Prairie Now" topics.

CINQUAIN - an oriental pattern poem of five lines.

Example:

winter
icy, cold
piercing, chilling, freezing
changing greenness into white
winter

Line 1 - title - noun
Line 2 - description of title - two adjectives
Line 3 - action of title - three verbs
Line 4 - statement or feeling - four-word phrase
Line 5 - repeated title or synonym - noun

Suggestion: Have children create a cinquain about Native Americans, Pioneers, Prairies, etc. They may choose to illustrate them, also.

CONCRETE POETRY - a poem written in the shape of an object or thought relating to the poem itself.

Settlers and Native Americans

Most experts agree that there were at least 15,000,000 people inhabiting the continental United States before European settlers arrived in the 1600s. By the late 1800s, however, American census figures showed there were only 200,000 Native Americans left. One historian noted that such a big change in population would be comparable to the present-day United States being reduced to the population of Cleveland, Ohio.

Here in Illinois, the prairie and its native people were doomed. By 1835, the mighty bison, which needed wild land to survive, had fled its Illinois home for the still-untamed lands of the West. About the same time, the last Native Americans were being forced to leave their ancestral home in Illinois and herded to a reservation in Kansas.

The Black Hawk War

The Rock River country in northwestern Illinois was once the exclusive territory of the Sauk and Fox Indians. When settlers entered this region, skirmishes broke out between them and the Indians. In 1831, the federal government ordered the Indians to move beyond the Mississippi River to Iowa. Most of the Fox and Sauk left immediately. Only the followers of a determined Indian leader named Black Hawk refused to be pushed off the land where they had been born. Finally, pressure from the United States Army forced even Black Hawk and his people to move west of the Mississippi.

The following spring, Black Hawk and about four hundred Sauk Indians recrossed the Mississippi. Although they wanted simply to plant corn in Wisconsin, frontier settlers believed Black Hawk was on the warpath. The army was called in and an ugly war broke out. Both sides committed acts of savagery

that included scalplings, the murder of women and children, and the torture of captives. An editorial in a Galena newspaper called for a "war of extermination until there shall be no Indian [with his scalp on] left in Illinois."

Facing a huge army, Black hawk tried to retreat across the Mississippi. The last battle in the war was one of shocking cruelty. Black Hawk and his people were trapped with the Mississippi River at their backs and hundreds of soldiers in front of them. Though Black Hawk tried to surrender, the soldiers' fury had raged out of control. Troops set upon the Indians with clubs, knives, and guns. The massacre lasted eight hours. One observer claimed that the waters of the Mississippi River were "tinged with the blood of Indians."

The Black Hawk War closed the sad chapter of Indian history in Illinois. By the end of the 1830s, few Indian communities remained in the state. The original Illinoisans moved farther west while the relentless settlers took over the land the Indians had once called their own.

Even though Black Hawk was not a chief, he was an important leader. This is an excerpt from Black Hawk's surrender speech:

"I fought hard. But your guns were well aimed. The bullets flew like birds in the air, and whizzed by our ears like the wind through the trees in the winter. My warriors fell around me. . . . The sun rose dim on us in the morning, and at night it sunk in a dark cloud, and looked like a ball of fire. That was the last sun that shone on Black Hawk. . . . He is now a prisoner to the whitemen. . . . He has done nothing for which an Indian ought to be ashamed. He has fought for his countrymen, the squaws and papooses, against white men, who came year after year, to cheat them and take away their lands. You know the cause of our making war. It is known to all white men. They ought to be ashamed of it. Indians are not deceitful. The white men speak bad of the Indian and look at him spitefully. But the Indian does not tell lies. Indians do not steal."