

# Becoming Kansas:

## The People and the Struggles that Built the State

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Watkins Museum of History

Maggie's Journal: Opening a Window to the Past

High School Lesson Plan

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### History, Government, and Social Studies Standard(s)

Standard #1: Choices have consequences

Benchmarks:

1.1: The student will recognize and evaluate significant choices made by individuals, communities, states, and nations that have impacted our lives and futures.

1.4: The student will use their understanding of choices and consequences to make a claim or advance a thesis using evidence and argument.

Standard #4: Societies experience continuity and change over time.

Benchmarks:

4.1 The student will recognize and evaluate continuity and change over time.

4.2 The student will analyze the context and draw conclusions about continuity and change.

4.3 The student will investigate and connect continuity and change to a contemporary issue.

Standard #5: Relationships among people, places, ideas, and environments are dynamic.

Benchmarks:

5.1 The student will recognize and evaluate dynamic relationships that impact lives in communities, states, and nations.



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This *Becoming Kansas* lesson plan has been made possible in part by the National Endowment for the Humanities: Democracy demands wisdom.

# Overview



This plan is designed to support classroom instruction in history, government, and social studies at the high school level. It can be completed in 1-3 hours depending upon how many pre and post activities and which displays you choose to include. The specific theme of this lesson is *Journal Writing: Opening a Window to the Past*. Prior to arriving at the museum, review the key vocabulary and the foundation information with the class. Focus the conversation on the guiding questions: What choices do you make every day that impacts how your school day goes? What are the consequences of those choices? How do the choices you make change your day, friendships or community? How do choices you or others make provide you with continuity?

#### Foundation Information:

Kansas Social Studies Standards 1, 4 and 5 focus on choices having consequences and how choices promote continuity and create change. The desirability of choices are dependent on the perceived positive and negative consequences. Often choices are built and dependent upon earlier choices and consequences.

Based on choices made, people and communities have aspects of continuity but experience some degree of change over time. Continuity refers to a societies ability to hold on to what is important, to remain stable, anchored. Change refers to a society's ability to adapt and make the adjustments necessary to protect and advance the society.

The classroom teacher should review the information in the Overview prior to arriving at the museum. Ensure that students understand the terms choice, consequence, change, and continuity as well as how they are connected.

#### Key vocabulary to front load for intermediate students:

Journal: an account of day-to-day events

Exhibition: show publicly especially for the purpose of demonstration or evaluation

Dialogue: a memorized verse delivered by a single person

Social: gathering of people from a certain locale usually for a special purpose

Ravine: a small narrow steep-sided valley

Ought: logical consequence

Dynamic: marked by continuous and productive activity or change.

The following are aspects of choices, consequences, change and dynamic relationships:

- Every choice comes with a cost.
- Human choice is affected by culture, geography, politics, economics, social emotional attachments, and other other people.
- Change is generally continuous.
- Relationships are characterized by constant change, activity, progress, or regression.

Maggie Herrington, an early Lawrence resident, kept a journal of her experiences during the year 1867. Keeping the journal was a school assignment made by Maggie's teacher, Miss Brown. Maggie's entries follow the day-to-day life of a girl living in a mid-19th century frontier town. In her journal, 13-year-old Maggie writes about her friends, the challenges of muddy streets, visiting family on their farms outside of town, and fears of being tardy to school and issues of the times such as women's suffrage.

By reading Maggie's journal students can experience the real-life record of a young girl's thoughts, feelings, and experiences over a particular time in her school career. Her journal contains details that may seem unimportant at first, but which add to the reader's appreciation and understanding of Maggie as a writer, student, and family member.

## HANDLING MATERIALS

Watch for this icon for opportunities to use hands-on artifacts or materials to make each stop more interactive.



# The Journal of Maggie Herrington



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Allow students to read the information below the cover picture asking them to note details contained in the reading. They should also look carefully at Maggie's photo making note of details such as clothing style and jewelry.

After allowing the students adequate time to complete the tasks above, then ask the leading questions below.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

How has photography evolved from Maggie's time to the present?

In this picture Maggie was 17 and this was taken on her wedding day. Do you think that was the average age to marry in 1871?

What changes in daily life, society, community standards have taken place that caused the average age of marriage to change from 1871 to the present?

How is Maggie's mode of dress, hair style, and expression different from what you see in a picture of a typical 17-year-old girl today?

What societal expectations for a girl of Maggie's age would have influenced how she looks in this picture?

What major historical events might have impacted the expectations for young women in the 1800?

## HANDLING MATERIALS

*Copies of Maggie's journal for each group of students*



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Divide students into groups of 2 or 3. Provide each group with a copy of Maggie's journal. Ask groups to read each journal entry one at a time and pay close attention to the additional information that is included below each.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

When Maggie was in school journal writing was a popular school assignment but also a popular personal activity across many age groups. Today, however, journal writing is a dying art. Why do you think that is?

Journal writing was a way for people to create a historical record of their lives. After you pass away how will people be able to locate a historical record of your life?

Look at the picture on the inside of the cover of the Methodist Church group. The church was often considered the center of any community in Maggie's time. Is that still true? Why or why not?



# The Journal of Maggie Herrington



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Take students to the 2nd floor and ask them to stand in the middle of the gallery, then turn around to get a general impression of the display area. Ask question #1 in the Leading Questions list.

Show students photo of downtown Lawrence - Massachusetts Street in the 1800s and see if anyone can identify it. Follow that by displaying a current view of Mass Street and ask leading question #2 below.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

What do you see here that you believe is from the time period in which Maggie lived?

What are some of the changes in businesses – number, type, services?

What dynamic changes (productive activity or change) do you see in the photos?

## HANDLING MATERIALS

Maggie's Downtown map; a copy of the Birdseye View image of Lawrence



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Students will continue working in their groups for this activity.

Give each group a copy of Maggie's downtown map and a copy of the Birdseye View image of Lawrence from 1869.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Working in pairs or small groups have each group indicate where on the Birdseye View image certain items on Maggie's Downtown Map would be located.

Group 1 – Maggie's House and the Dry Goods Store

Group 2 – The School and Mrs. Blodgett's House

Group 3 – The Church and Mr. DeWolf's House

Group 4 – The Foundry and the Kansas River Bridge

Allow time for each group to complete their task. Then ask each group to provide present an explanation of how they decided where their assigned items would be located.

Did they find this difficult? Why?



# The Journal of Maggie Herrington



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Take students to the 3rd floor and repeat the “stand and turn” activity allowing enough time for them to get a general impression of the gallery.

Working in their groups ask the students to move quietly around the gallery looking for displays that illustrate people, items or events related to Maggie’s time period. Let them know that there should be only one group at a display, that it is not necessary for them to see all of the displays, and that you will provide a signal that cues them to move to a different display. (How much time is allowed at each display depends on the schedule of each individual tour.)

Have the groups move back to the middle of the gallery. Then have each group take the class to a display of their choice where that group will answer the Leading Questions below.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

How might the information in the display be connected to continuity and change in Lawrence from the Maggie’s time to the present?

How is it connected to a contemporary issue.

How does this display relate to people making choices that have consequences?

**HANDLING MATERIALS**   
Copy of Maggie’s Journal entry from  
Wednesday October 9



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Move students to the *Common Causes: People with Purpose* window exhibit. Ask for a volunteer to read the information from the “Votes for Women” section of the display.

Provide students with a copy of the October 9 entry from Maggie’s journal explaining that this is not one that is included in the reproduction. Allow students time to read that entry as well as the one from May 20 on pg. 4 of Maggie’s journal. Once they are done reading move to the leading questions.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

How are these two entries related to the *Common Causes* exhibit?

What is Maggie’s opinion about the upcoming vote on whether to allow women to vote.

What information from Maggie’s journal might have influenced her opinion?

Looking at the other exhibits displayed in the windows; what do you do see that illustrates choices made that influences how Lawrence developed to become the city it is today?

What choices provided continuity?

What choices provided change?



## Wrap Up Activity

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Remind the students of 4 aspects about her school day that Maggie shared in her journal. (i.e., how she got to school, how concerned she was about following the rules; preparing for her dialogue)

Ask students to think about whether or not those same items would be in a journal entry about their own school day.



## Leading Questions

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What issue from Maggie's journal do you believe is still ongoing today?

Journal writing is not as popular today as it was in Maggie's day. Do you see any value to starting a journal of your own? Why or why not?

# Follow Up Activity

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Journal writing can provide a method of reflection and allow students to express feelings regarding their educational experiences. The format of this writing can vary depending on the students' needs and the instructor's goals.

- Have each student create a journal entry for each day of an entire 7-day week beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday.
- Each day must include at least one choice the student made concerning a contemporary issue and what the consequence of that choice was.
- They must then include a statement of what decision they think that Maggie would have made concerning that issue and why.
- Once the student has completed their journal entries, they should add a summary page analyzing how their lives and decisions are influenced by the society in which they live.

Addressing Social, Emotional Learning (SEL) skills:

- Ask students to include words in their entries that show how they felt about the events and/or how their behavior influenced their reaction to the events.
- Ask students to include at least one event during the week that helped them develop their understanding of or compassion for others' backgrounds or cultures.
- Ask students how the choices they made created change in their day?
- Ask students how choices impacted their relationships with the people around them? (friends, teachers, family members)

Providing Scaffolding:

- Allow students to dictate their thoughts to a scribe then work together to proof-read and edit their thoughts into complete sentences and paragraphs.
- Provide student with a topic outline that they can use to create their daily journal entries.

Providing Enrichment:

- Advanced students can be asked to locate a contemporary piece of music that they believes represents an event or day from their week of journal entries. Explain why they made this choice.
- Advanced students can create journal entries for a week in different seasons of the school year. They can also include events from each class each day rather than creating just a summary of each day.