

# 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

Primary Lesson Plan (K-3)

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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 and consequences that have impacted our lives and futures.
- 1.2 The student will analyze the context and draw conclusions about choices and consequences.
- 1.3 The student will investigate and connect examples of choices and consequences with contemporary issues.

Standard #2: Individuals have rights and responsibilities

Benchmarks:

- 2.1 The student will recognize and evaluate the rights and responsibilities of people living in societies.



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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 primary level (K-3). 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 with the class. Follow that by reviewing the foundation information with students. It may help to focus the conversation on the guiding questions:

Do you make choices at school each day?

Who do your choices effect?

Do you have rights at home at school?

#### Foundation Information:

Kansas Social Studies Standard 1: Choices have consequences. Choices made by individuals and groups have consequences, and the desirability of the choices are dependent on the perceived positive and negative consequences. Often choices are built and dependent upon earlier choices and consequences.

Standard 2: Individuals have rights and responsibilities Rights are the basic freedoms of individuals while responsibilities view the collective obligations of people.

The classroom teacher should review the information in the Overview prior to arriving at the museum. Ensure that students understand the terms choices, consequences, rights and responsibilities as well as how they are connected.

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

**Artifact:** objects that are made, used, or modified by humans and give us information about life in the past

**Invention:** new thing made or created that is often the reason an artifact is no longer used or needed

**Journal:** an account of day-to-day events

**Tardy:** late, especially to school or class

**Dialogue:** a memorized verse delivered by a single person

The following are aspects of choices, consequences, rights and responsibilities:

- Every choice comes with a cost.
- Human choice is affected by culture, geography, politics, economics, social emotional attachments, and other people.
- Rights are something that societies often guarantee and come with responsibilities.
- A responsibility is a duty or obligation to perform or complete.

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

Read the information below the cover picture to the students and note these items:

- Maggie's picture was taken in 1871.
- Maggie was 17 when she got married.

As students view the cover photos ask the leading questions below.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Ask students how long ago 1871 was.  
(Answers may include things like “a long time,  
lots of years, or a specific number.)

Have students look at the cover photo of  
Maggie. Ask them if they think she looks 17  
in that picture. Why or why not?

Maggie was married at 17. Do you think  
that is a good age to get married?

Looking at Maggie's picture what do you  
notice about her?

(Younger students may need prompting such  
as, “Does she look happy to you?”.)

How is this photo different from your school  
photos?



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Divide students into groups of 2 or 3  
Provide each group with a copy of  
Maggie's journal.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Look at the picture on the inside of the  
cover of the Methodist Church group. Help  
the students located Maggie and her  
sister Mollie. Ask how much older they  
think Maggie was than Mollie. What  
makes them think that?

Have students look through the journal in  
their groups. Each group selects one entry  
they would like to read aloud or have  
read to them – depending upon the age  
of the student. Younger students could  
call out a page number or season of the  
year and let the docent select the entry.

## HANDLING MATERIALS

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



# The Journal of Maggie Herrington



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Show students photos 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 the leading questions below.

Tell student in advance that students will be called on to answer questions.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

What is one differences you notice between the 1800s photo and the current view of Mass Street?

What similarities do you see? (This may be harder for them so you many have to prompt with things like "How are people getting up and down the street?" Although the cars have replaced the horses and wagons there are still people walking)

Do you think it was easier to get around Lawrence in Maggie's time or is it easier today?

## HANDLING MATERIALS

Provide each group with a copy of Maggie's Downtown map and crayons or colored pencils.



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Students will continue working in their groups for this activity.

Give each group a copy of Maggie's downtown map. Remind them of the image of the Methodist church group in the front of the journal. Help them locate the church on the map and ask them to color it yellow.

One at a time, read a passage from Maggie's Journal in which each one of the locations below are mentioned and have students take turns in their groups coloring the appropriate location. Call out the color after reading the passage.

Maggie's house - red.

Maggie's school - green

Bullene's Dry Goods - brown

Kansas River bridge - blue

Mrs. Blodgett's house - purple

Mr. DeWolf's house - pink

Kimball Foundry - orange



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Ask why it is important for us to read journals like Maggie's. (i.e., history being passed down, understanding what contributed to the growth of the community, understand change and the challenges of change...)

Can anyone give me an example of a choice Maggie made in one of the passages? Was there a consequence?



# The Journal of Maggie Herrington



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Share with the students that they are going to view a number of items that would have been used during the 1800s and perhaps by Maggie herself. Show them the spinning wheel first and ask if any of them know what it might have been used for. Explain that it was used to spin cotton from the fields into thread that then was woven into material or use to sew with. Next show the dress and handkerchief as example of items of necessity that would have been made from the cotton material made from the thread spun on the spinning wheel. Show the type of dishes that Maggie may have used in her home. Follow that by showing the dress that Maggie may have worn to school at one time. Explain that dresses were worn multiple days since students did not have numerous outfits.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Do you know anyone who carries a handkerchief?

Why do you think a handkerchief was an item of necessity?

## HANDLING MATERIALS



*Raw cotton; dress; school slate;  
handkerchief; embroidery hoop*



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Have students pass around raw cotton; the school slate and the handkerchief. Call on students to make observations about each as they are passed around.

Follow that by passing around the embroidery hoop. Ask students what they think it was used for.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Can you see any connection between the cotton, handkerchief, and embroidery hoop?

Here's the tricky one...can anyone suggest a connection between the slate and the handkerchief? (If the younger ones need prompting ask them what they need to use a marker board or hand-held white board...the board, marker, and something to wipe the marker off the board when finished.)



# Wrap Up Activity

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

Have students hold up 1, 2, 3, or 4 fingers to indicate what their favorite item was.



# Leading Questions

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Think about how your school day today compared to Maggie's school days.

What is something that you and Maggie have in common?

What is something that is very different about your school day from Maggie's?

What example can you give of how Maggie's choice to follow school rules resulted in a good consequence?

If you are quiet does your teacher let you go home early?

Why do you think that Maggie's teacher could do that?

# 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 a single school week.
- Have all students write about the same week so that they can compare their observations of the same classroom/school events.

Addressing Social, Emotional Learning (SEL) skills:

- Include SEL skills by asking 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.
  - Discuss whether or not changing their feelings or behavior would have changed the event for themselves or others.
- Read Maggie's entries from Friday April 19 and Thursday November 14.
  - Have a volunteer explain how Maggie and her friends spent their recess time on those two days.
  - Ask students to identify how those two day show how Maggie's created healthy relationships with her classmates as well as to making positive or negative choices.

Providing Scaffolding:

- Younger students or those who are challenged by the writing can create these entries by drawing one event for each day that illustrates something important that made the day memorable, wonderful, or emotional.
- Allow the student to share their day with a scribe who writes it down for them.

Providing Enrichment:

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.

To challenge the more advanced students have them illustrate their journal entries or specify a requirement such as each entry must be at least three sentences in length.

Make entries more complex by having advanced students include one success and one challenge for each day.