

# Becoming Kansas: The People and the Struggles That Built the State

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Watkins Museum of History  
*Women of Wonder*  
Intermediate Lesson Plan(4-8)

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

Standard #1: 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.
- 5.2 The student will analyze the context and draw conclusions about dynamic relationships.
- 5.3 The student will investigate and connect dynamic relationships to contemporary issues.
- 5.4 The student will use their understanding of dynamic relationships to make a claim or advance a thesis using evidence and argument.



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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 intermediate and high school level (4-12). 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 *Women Who Helped Lawrence Develop and Thrive*.

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 think that Lawrence is developing and thriving? Why or why not?
- What are you doing to help your family, class, school, and/or community develop and thrive?
- What contemporary issues are most important to you?
- What is happening in Lawrence that impacts those issues?

## HANDLING MATERIALS

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

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

### Key vocabulary to front load for students:

Continuity: on-going, without interruption

Change: to replace with another, to shift from one to another, become different

Develop: to grow

Thrive: do well, grow stronger and better

Mortgage company: a business that loans money to buy land or to build a business with

Economic independence: being able to support yourself

Progress: to move forward, to develop to a higher, better, or more advanced stage

Regression: a progressive decline, moving backwards, loss of progress

Dynamic relationship: interaction between individuals that helps develop a new set of beliefs for how people make sense of the world; a guide for a new way for all of us to make meaning together.

Immigrants came to Kansas looking for change that would provide them continuity. They were often seeking economic opportunities that they could not find in their own states, regions, or homelands. If they could find that, they believed they could provide continuity and security for themselves and their families. We often hear tales of the brave men who came to Kansas. What we seldom hear is how women influenced the economic, social, and political development in the state. This lesson provides insight into how some Lawrence women encouraged the development of the community through their contributions in education, health, and business. It also shows how changes in technology allowed women to become more self-sufficient and develop an identity outside the home.

During the 1800 and early 1900s women's primary duties were to be homemakers and mothers. Their influence in society yet alone in business was very limited. In Lawrence, however, there were several women whose choices provided continuity and change within their own lives but also the lives of many other community members in the town. The choices of the women discussed in this tour helped the community of Lawrence continue to develop and thrive.

### Foundation Information:

#### Kansas History, Government, and Social Studies:

Standard 4: *Societies experience continuity and change over time. People and communities have aspects of continuity but experience some degree of change over time. Continuity refers to a society's 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 following are aspects of continuity and change:

- Change is generally constant, not simply a one-time event.
- Most often change moves us forward.
- Continuity is the connection between events, ideas or beliefs over time.

Standard 5: *People, places, ideas, and environments experience change, activity, progress, or regression. All relationships are in a constant state of adjustment. These adjustments may also result in additional change, activity, progress, or regression.*

The following are aspects of dynamic relationship:

- Relationships are the interactions, connections, or feelings that exist between two or more parties and are characterized by constant change, activity, progress, or regression.
- The interaction of a single relationship between individuals, communities, and/or their environment impacts to some degree all other relationships.
- Dynamic relationships involve circumstances which often create shifts in priorities, leading to tension and adjustments toward progress.



# Sara Robinson Sewing Machine, 1850s



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Share the information from the artifact label focusing on the adage, “a woman’s work is never done” and how the sewing machine freed up time for other activities for Sara Robinson such as her writing.

As students initially view the display ask the first 3 leading questions.

Ask students to identify other parts of the sewing machine and what function they think each part had. (i.e. – needle, bobbin holder, thread spool holder, fabric sewing foot)



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Have students look at the display and ask them if they recognize the item.

There might be various answers before getting “sewing machine.” Ask students how this item differs from the sewing machines they see today.

Ask if any of the students sew or if any of their family members sew? Follow that by asking why they sew or what the value there is to being able to sew.

Looking at the sewing machine ask how the students think it was powered. Can they name items they are familiar with that are powered the same way or in a similar manner? (i.e., bicycle, elliptical exercisers)

Point out the foot pedal with the rod attached to the wheel (which would have held a belt) that enabled the needle to go up and down when pumped. This is called a treadle sewing machine. What principle of science is employed to power the sewing machine? (A treadle is a mechanism operated with a pedal for converting reciprocating motion into rotating motion. Along with cranks, treadmills, and treadwheels, treadles allow human and animal machine power in the absence of electricity. Reciprocating motion, also called reciprocation, is a repetitive up-and-down or back-and-forth linear motion used to power the machine.)



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Divide students into groups of 2 or 3  
Provide each group with notecards and markers.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Ask to students to list one duty/chore that they think fell solely to women in the 1800s when “a woman’s work was never done.” Write each item on a separate notecard.

Have each group share their answers by revealing their answers one at a time. Follow that by having each group write the name of something that has made each task easier in the current day. If the task no longer exists have the group place an X on that card.

Share those items. As they share these ask if any might have created tension in the community. Would each be considered progress or regression?

## HANDLING MATERIALS



*Sara Robinson Sewing Machine: spools of thread, bobbins, pictures of modern sewing machines, modern shirt vs handmade shirt to compare stitches, pieces of material, bobbins, thread spools, vintage patterns*



# Milburn Electric Car, 1900s



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Have students look at the surrey on the 3rd floor stair hall landing and then compare it to the Milburn Electric Car just inside the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor gallery.

Review the information from the artifact label. Have the students raise their hands each time they hear a fact that shows how Eleanor Henley helped Lawrence develop and thrive. (i.e., established a children's reading room at the library, helped create Robinson Park, addressed issues of poverty, housing and public health, helped establish Lawrence Memorial Hospital)



## LEADING QUESTIONS

What similarities do you see between the buggy and the car? Answers might include that both have wheels, you can ride in both, there is room for more than one person...

What changed from the buggy to the car? Answers might include the addition of lights, addition of a motor, glass windows in the car, buggy powered by horses and the car by electricity.

What does the information on the display placard mean by the phrase saying this car was more desirable for "a modern woman on the go" than the gasoline powered cars?

Electric powered cars are becoming popular again. What is happening in our society that is driving that change?)

## HANDLING MATERIALS

*Milburn Electric Car: price tags so students can guess the cost of the car, copy of Mrs. Henley's letter referred to in the display information, recording of Eleanor Henley in the display*



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Select students and provide each with a price tag to hold up where the others can see each tag. (\$100, \$500, \$1000, \$2000 \$5000)

Pass around a copy of the letter of Eleanor Henley's letter telling of her experiences driving the car. Have volunteers read passages aloud.

Select students to access the recordings of Eleanor Henley's recordings of Using Her Car, Challenges of Driving, Helping Women.

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## LEADING QUESTIONS

Share that this car is a Milburn Brougham that was purchased in 1921. With a show of hands have the students indicate which price tag they think is the closest to the original price of the car. (\$2685)

How much does a modern total electric car cost? (average cost in 2022 is approximately \$33,000)

Students can be asked to share what they have experienced as a passenger.

Ask why it is important for us to read and listen to Eleanor Henley's letter/recordings. (i.e., history being passed down, understanding a woman's contribution to the growth of the community, understand change and the challenges of change...)

How will you document your life experiences?



# Watkins Memorial Hospital, 1930s

(Note: If the tour needs to be shortened this display could be skipped and the students could move to the switchboard.)



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Share this information:

*Elizabeth Miller Watkins began working for J.B. Watkins' land mortgage company when she was 15 years old. She rose through the ranks, eventually taking on considerable responsibility for managing and promoting the land mortgage business. She married J. B. 30 years after she started working for him. After his death she ran his businesses and began an effort to donate his fortune to support education and public health in Lawrence. One of her projects was building and furnishing a hospital to serve KU students on campus. The bed was one of the furnishings she ordered for the hospital—it has a Jayhawk and the initials "K U" carved at the top of the headboard. KU's student health center is still known as the Watkins Health Center.*



## LEADING QUESTIONS

How old was Elizabeth Watkins when she went to work?

Are there jobs that 15-year-olds can hold today?

How old was she when she married J.B. Watkins? (students should be able to use math reasoning skills to identify that 15 years old at age of employment plus 30 years of work before marrying him meant she was 45.)

What did Elizabeth Watkins do to help Lawrence continue to develop and thrive?



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Have students identify items they notice about the hospital furniture in the display. (i.e., wood composition, table bends, chair back is high, seat can be raised or lowered, Jayhawk on headboard of bed...)

Provide students with cards with the images of the Jayhawk throughout the years. Be sure the date below each image is covered with a sticky note. As a group ask the students to arrange the images in chronological order.

Reveal the years below each Jayhawk to see if the students put them in the correct order.



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Does the Jayhawk you see look like the one you see today? Why not? (Hopefully that will lead them to the fact that the mascot has changed over the years.)

Ask students why they think the mascot continued to be a Jayhawk, but the images changed.

Why do you think that Elizabeth Watkins thought it was important to start a hospital on the KU campus?

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## HANDLING MATERIALS

*Watkins Memorial Hospital: images of Jayhawk mascot through the years, cards with Jayhawk mascot images including 1<sup>st</sup> year of each mascot.*



1912

**1912 – 1920:**  
The original Jayhawks logo, introduced in 1912, featured a blue bird with yellow legs and blue shoes with red accents. It was standing with its legs crossed and looked easy and cool.



1920

**1920 – 1923:**  
The redesign of 1920 made the logo more professional and strict, by redrawing the bird in a more realistic and detailed way and placing it on the “KU” monogram in red and white, executed in a strong and straight geometric serif typeface. The bird was still executed in the same blue and yellow palette, which evokes a sense of dynamics, energy, and professionalism, while red added some passion and warmth.



1923

**1923 – 1929:**  
In 1923 the emblem was redrawn again and this time in a more refined caricature style. The Jayhawk’s head was colored red, while his yellow beak was enlarged and harmonized by yellow and red shoes. The bird had a Ted “KU” monogram placed on its blue



1929

**1929 – 1941:**  
The iconic Jayhawk was redrawn again in 1929. Now the bird was placed in profile, walking to the left, with a determined look and a serious attitude, it was still executed in the same color palette, but with the contours refined and strengthened.



1941

**1941 – 1946:**  
The white color appeared on the Kansas Jayhawks visual identity in 1941. The bird, facing left, was refined and drawn with more details, having two white “KU” letters on its blue jersey. The beak of the Jayhawk was now a bit opened, creating a visual sense of smile and making the whole image friendly and welcoming.



1946

**1946 – 2006:**  
The Jayhawk changed its direction from left to right in 1946. The bird’s face gained a bigger smile and a kinder look, making the whole image lighter and brighter. As for the other elements, they all feature the same palette and style as on the previous version of the logo, but with their contours cleaned. This emblem stays with the team for sixty years, being the most long-standing and recognizable logos in the Kansas Jayhawks history.



2006

**2006 – Today:**  
The iconic badge was redesigned in 2006, but the only visible change was about the typeface of the “KU” inscription. The style of the lettering was switched from a bold and simple sans-serif to a more elegant and chic serif font, with the lines of the letter “K” elongated.

Source:  
[www.1000logos.net/  
kansas-jayhawks-logo/](http://www.1000logos.net/kansas-jayhawks-logo/)



# Telephone Switchboard, 1960s



## DISCUSSION/TOUR

Have students look over the switchboard and share what they notice. After a brief examination, ask the first question.

Review information from the display placard. Point out that this display does not show how a particular woman changed the community but rather how this item, as well as other new technologies such as the bicycle and typewriter, changed the lives of women and how they contributed to the continuing change in the community. (This was a new employment opportunity for women: one that gave them some economic independence and an identity outside the home.)



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Does anyone know what this is?

This exhibit is called “The New Woman.” Why do you think it is called that? (Some students may have read some of the information when they examined the exhibit and provide answers from that text.)

Ask students how they use the phone today. Do they ever talk to an operator? What has replaced a switchboard connecting their calls?

Do you think that women were better suited to be telephone operators? Why or why not?



## HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

Allow students to use the interactive exhibit to try connecting calls themselves. (all students or select students)



## LEADING QUESTIONS

Why were the operators called “Hello Girls”?

What do you think was the most difficult part of the job?

## HANDLING MATERIALS

*Telephone Switchboard: crank and or dial telephones, pictures of “Hello Girls” operating a switchboard, interactive part of the display that allow students to try to connect calls.*



# Wrap Up Activity

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Remind the students of the 4 stops on their tour today.

Hold up 1, 2, 3, or 4 fingers to indicate which was your favorite display.

Hold up 1, 2, 3, or 4 fingers to indicate which you think had the greatest impact on the development of Lawrence.



# Leading Questions

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What do all 4 displays have in common?  
(All focused on women and how they helped Lawrence develop and thrive.)

How did the women discussed in this tour cause “shifts” in Lawrence?  
(community priorities, values, society standards, etc...)