

“It’s News to Me!”
Teaching with Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection
Model Lesson Format

Lesson Title:

“All I Want for Christmas Is...” - Toys of the Past

Subject(s) and Grade Level(s):

Reading and Writing Grades 1-2

Focus of Lesson: A brief explanation of what students are to learn in this lesson (content and/or skills). What is the purpose of the lesson?

During this lesson, students will be searching newspaper advertisements to locate Christmas toys which were popular during the years 1897 to 1922. They will use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast these toys with toys which are popular today. As a culminating activity, each student will choose a newspaper ad from the past to serve as the resource for a writing activity. In this writing activity, the child will assume the identity of a young child from the time of the date of their ad. They will then write a letter to Santa requesting toys listed in their ad.

Standards Assessed: Which standards will you be assessing in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

History Standard 2.1: Students know how to formulate questions and hypotheses regarding what happened in the past and to obtain and analyze historical data to answer questions and test hypotheses.
Reading and Writing Standard 3: Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
Reading and Writing Standard 4: Students apply thinking skills to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing.

Assessment: Explain the assessment. (Include the formal 'assessment assignment' and any forms, worksheets, etc. in the Materials Section)

1. Small groups - Venn diagram comparing and contrasting “Toys of the Past” and “Toys of Today” - informally assessed by teacher using three criteria (pass/fail).
2. Individual project - Letter to Santa - assessed using teacher-made rubric evaluating content and conventions used (see attached rubric).

Standards Addressed: Which standards will you be addressing (but not assessing) in this lesson? Identify the content area, the standard number and any key components or benchmarks that are applicable.

History Standard 2.3: Students apply knowledge of the past to analyze present-day issues and events from multiple, historically objective perspectives.

Reading and Writing Standard 2: Students write and speak for a variety of purposes and audiences.

Reading and Writing Standard 5: Students read to locate, select, and make use of relevant information from a variety of media, reference, and technological sources.

Information Literacy Standard 3: The information literate student uses information accurately and creatively.

Time: The number of class periods required for the lesson as well as the length of class period.

The lesson requires four 30-minute lessons.

This lesson would be presented during the month of December.

Materials / Teacher Preparation Section: List the technology, handouts, chart paper, text resources, etc. needed to complete the lesson. Include what you need to do to prepare ahead of time for your students to complete the lesson.

Materials:

Copies of Christmas toy advertisements from 1897 to 1922; computer; overhead transparency of one advertisement; overhead projector; large poster-sized Venn diagram form charts; sticky notes; highlight markers; pencils; writing paper; copies of Christmas toy newspaper ads from current newspapers (if desired).

Teacher Preparation:

1. Copies of newspaper Christmas toy advertisements (1897-1922)

Teacher can conduct a search from the CDP website.

<http://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

(Use "Search All"; Search Term: "Christmas toys"; Content: ads)

Alternative: Teacher can use the pre-selected list of 19 ads appropriate for primary-age students (see attached annotated list).

(If necessary, enlarge the ads' size so they are more easily read.)

2. An overhead transparency of one of the ads (or the first ad on the attached list)
3. Poster-size Venn diagram charts (one for class use and one for each small

group)

4. Copies of the teacher-made rubric

Prior Knowledge:

Students will need to be familiar with Venn diagrams and the correct format of a friendly letter. They will also need to be experienced working in cooperative groups.

Possible Procedures: Enumerate the procedure teachers can follow to teach the lesson to students. Provide the URL for the digital primary sources that you will use.

Session 1: Introduction of the Lesson - "What do you want for Christmas?"

Lead whole class in a discussion of what type of toys they want for Christmas. If desired, look at some toy advertisements from current newspapers. Choose ten of the students' suggestions and write these toys on sticky notes. Place the sticky notes on the Venn diagram chart in the "Toys of Today" circle.

Explain that newspapers have printed toy ads for many years. Ask students to hypothesize some of the toys that children might have wanted 100 years ago. Show the overhead transparency of the Dec. 11, 1987, *Morning Times* ad (or a similar ad).

Use the highlighter to highlight the names of the toys listed in the advertisement. Write each toy on a sticky note and add them to the class Venn diagram in the "Toys of the Past" circle.

Compare the toys in the two circles to see if there are any common toys between the two circles. If there are, move these toys to the intersection area of the class Venn diagram.

Have the class discuss how the two groups of Christmas toys are alike and different.

Session 2: Venn diagram - Cooperative Small Groups

Review Session 1 activity using the completed class Venn diagram. Tell students that they will be completing the same activity in small groups. Place students in small cooperative groups of 4-5 students. Give each group a copy of the teacher-made Venn diagram poster and a copy of one of the newspaper Christmas toy ads from the search or from the attached pre-selected list.

Have students work in small groups to locate the toys listed in the advertisement and highlight them with the marker. They will then complete the “Toys of the Past” side of the Venn diagram sheet using the information from the ad. To complete the “Toys of Today” circle, they can use the current newspaper advertisements or they can volunteer to write toys of their choice in the circle.

Each group needs to have at least five toys listed in each circle to receive a passing grade on their project. At the end of the activity, the teacher will informally evaluate the sheet to see that at least ten toys are on the sheet (minimum of five in each circle); that the toys of the past are taken from the primary source advertisement; and that the Venn diagram is completed correctly.

Session 3: Writing Activity - Letter to Santa of the Past

Review correct format of a friendly letter. Explain to students that today they will be writing a letter to Santa. However, they will not be writing to Santa as themselves -- but as a child from the past. They will be asking Santa to bring them some of the toys listed in the newspaper advertisement of their day. Show students the teacher-made rubric so they will be aware of the expectations and evaluation. Also, review with students where to find the date on the advertisement. (They will be using this date as the date of their letter.)

Allow each child to choose one of the advertisement copies. (Multiple copies of ads may be required.) Give students time to compose, write, and proofread their letters. Allow them to look at the rubric as they proofread their letter.

Session 4: Verbal Sharing of Writing Projects - Letters to Santa

During this last session, students will show their advertisement to the class. They will then read their letter to Santa aloud. Class will give positive comments and ask questions of the writer. Teacher will use the rubric to evaluate each letter.

“Letter to Santa” - Writing Rubric

	4	3	2	1
Date	<i>All</i> elements of the date are written accurately with correct capitalization and punctuation.	<i>Most</i> elements of the date are written accurately with correct capitalization and punctuation.	<i>Some</i> elements of the date are written accurately with correct capitalization and punctuation.	<i>No</i> elements of the date are written accurately with correct capitalization and punctuation.
Use of Newspaper Advertisement	<i>All</i> toys listed are taken from ad.	<i>Most</i> toys listed are taken from ad.	<i>Some</i> toys listed are taken from ad.	<i>No</i> toys listed are taken from ad.
Content	Writing is <i>very well</i> organized. Individual voice is <i>very evident</i> . <i>Very high</i> degree of creativity is shown.	Writing is <i>well</i> organized. Individual voice is <i>evident</i> . Creativity is <i>evident</i> .	Writing shows <i>some</i> organization. <i>Some</i> degree of individual voice is shown. <i>Some</i> creativity is shown.	Writing <i>lacks</i> organization. Individual voice is <i>absent</i> . Creativity is <i>absent</i> .
Conventions	Correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure and grammar are used <i>consistently</i> . Developmentally-appropriate spelling is used <i>consistently</i> .	Correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure and grammar are used <i>often</i> . Developmentally-appropriate spelling is used <i>often</i> .	Correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure and grammar are used <i>sometimes</i> . Developmentally-appropriate spelling is used <i>sometimes</i> .	Correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence structure and grammar are <i>seldom</i> used. Developmentally-appropriate spelling is <i>seldom</i> used.

Suggested Newspaper Advertisement Resources - Annotated List
“Letters to Santa” / “Toys of the Past”

Source: Colorado’s Historic Newspaper Collection

<http://www.coloradohistoricnewspapers.org>

NOTE: Teachers may conduct their own general search for ads by using the search term “Christmas toys” on this site. However, that search will produce 324 ads.

This resource is included to provide primary-grade teachers with a pre-selected list of 19 Christmas toy newspaper advertisements which are appropriate for young students. Fourteen of these ads will be displayed in various locations on the general “Christmas toys” search. (Five of the ads were found using other searches and keywords.)

Rapid location of ads by using newspaper names:

Teachers can quickly locate these particular advertisements by using the “**Search All**” tab. Use the search term “**Christmas toys.**” **Highlight the publication name.** Use “**ads**” as your content area. Click “**Go.**”

You can easily find the ad in the resulting **publication search** by using the Item # listed with the ad information below. Place the ads in “My Collection” as you find them.

The five ads that were found by other methods are marked with an *. Please use the special directions for accessing them.

1. *Morning Times* (Cripple Creek, El Paso County); Date: 1897 Dec. 11 *
*Special search directions: Search term: “**toys**”. Content: “**ads.**”
Ad will be Item #73 on page 10 of search list.
This is a great ad with a picture of Santa Claus in the toy store with a young girl. The ad lists 26 toys and their prices.
This is a wonderful example of a Christmas toy ad of the past.
2. *Longmont Ledger* (Longmont, Boulder County): Date: 1897 Dec 10 *
*Special search directions: Search term: “**toy department**”; Content: “**all**”
Ad will be Item #1 in publication search.
An article/ad mentioning 27 different toys. Includes checker boards, card game, picture books, etc.
3. *Morning Times* (Cripple Creek, El Paso County); Date: 1897 Dec 18 *
*Special search directions: Search term: “**Christmas toys**” Content: “**all**”
Ad will be Item #2 on page 1 of search list.
An ad listing 14 toys with prices also listed. Includes ten pins, iron trains, books, tool chests, etc.
4. *Morning Times* (Cripple Creek, El Paso County): Date: 1899 Dec 10 *
*Special search directions: Access this ad by using the “**Browse All**” tab.
Search the “Morning Times” by date of Dec. 10, 1899. This ad will be on

page 2 of the newspaper.

This ad lists 19 toys and their prices. Also, it is surrounded on either side by additional text listing 86 different types of Christmas toys. It is a great teacher resource for toys of 1899.

NOTE: Ad text would need to be enlarged for reading purposes.

5. *New Castle Nonpareil* (New Castle, Garfield County); Date: 1899 Dec 21
Ad will be Item #3 in publication search.
A simple ad listing 10 different toys. Includes harmonicas, balls, animals, workboxes, cuff boxes, etc.
6. *Akron Weekly Pioneer Press* (Akron, Washington County); Date: 1904 Dec 16
Ad will be Item #1 in publication search
An ad with examples of a variety of fonts. Includes all types of gifts, air guns, hobby horses, etc.
7. *Weekly Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1904 Dec 21
Ad will be Item #3 in publication search.
An ad with a picture of Santa. Includes chinaware, handkerchief, hoops, etc.
8. *Summit Country Journal* (Breckenridge, Summit County); Date: 1905 Dec 16
*Special search directions: Search term: "toys"; Content: "all". Ad will be Item #1 in search list.
A simple ad mentioning 32 toys. Includes megaphones, musical instruments, cheap dolls and expensive dolls. **WARNING: Racial offensive language in reference to one of the dolls. This ad could be used (with much teacher supervision) to discuss how our society has changed since 1905. Individual teacher judgment advised.**
9. *Daily Journal* (Telluride, San Miguel County); Date: 1908 Dec 22
Ad will be Item #3 in publication search.
A simple ad mentioning 10 toys. Includes teddy bears, blocks, steam toys, go carts, etc.
10. *Record Journal of Douglas County* (Castle Rock, Douglas County); Date: 1915 Dec 10
Ad will be Item #2 in publication search.
A simple ad listing 18 toys. Includes ice and roller skates, flash lights, pocket knives, pop guns, etc.
11. *Weekly Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1915 Dec 10
Ad will be Item #1 in publication search
An ad with a picture of Santa Claus and 10 toys. Prices are listed. Includes dolls to dress, folding doll carriages, new games, etc.
NOTE: Ad text would need to be enlarged for reading purposes.

12. *Record Journal of Douglas County* (Castle Rock, Douglas County); Date: 1916 Dec 08
Ad will be Item #5 in publication search.
A simple ad listing gift suggestions for mother, father, and children.
Children's column lists 13 different toys. Includes sleds, wagons, wind mills, tinker toys, Erectors, etc.
13. *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1920 Dec 10
Ad will be Item #6 in publication search.
An ad with pictures of Santa and products for sale, including the two toys mentioned. Includes velocipedes and shoo fly rockers. Prices are also listed.
14. *Range Ledger* (Hugo, Lincoln County); Date: 1920 Dec 11
Ad will be Item #5 in publication search.
An ad with pictures of children looking at their Christmas toys. Ad mentions 6 toys. Includes stuffed animals, dolls, furniture, etc.
15. *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1921 Dec 19
Ad will be Item #2 in publication search.
An ad with a Christmas tree and many pictures, including a tricycle. Ad mentions 10 toys. Includes wheel toys, tricycles, Kiddie Kars, wheelbarrows, blackboards, rocking horses, etc.
16. *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1922 Dec 22
Ad will be Item #4 in publication search.
An ad listing 19 toys and their sale prices. Includes giant tinker toys, aluminum dish sets, quiet games, yellow cabs, picture cubes, woolly kittens, coaster wagons, etc.
17. *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1922 Dec 01
Ad will be Item #5 in publication search.
An ad with pictures of Santa, children, and toys. Price ranges are added. Ad has a letter from Santa to the children of Fort Collins and three rhymes about toys. Includes boxing gloves, footballs, floppy Ragg'dy Ann, ma-ma dolls, Radio Rex, dogs, etc.
NOTE: Ad text would need to be enlarged for reading purposes.
18. *Longmont Ledger* (Longmont, Boulder County); Date: 1922 Dec 01
Ad will be Item #6 in publication search.
An ad that is simple and very visual. Ad has pictures of 10 toys along with their names and prices. Includes dancing tops, derby rider push toy, white enameled doll furniture, toy tea sets, etc. This would be a great ad to use with young students.
19. *Fort Collins Courier* (Fort Collins, Larimer County); Date: 1922 Dec 11
Ad will be Item #3 in publication search.

An ad with a home decorated for Christmas and lots of pictures of products including a rocking horse. Ad mentions 15 toys. Includes velocipedes, wheeled toys, furniture, wooden items, etc.

NOTE: Ad text would need to be enlarged for reading purposes.