

SESSION TWO

Topic: *“Life Before Electricity — Hard Work!”*

Description: Students will compare and contrast the standard of living (quality of life) for ordinary Americans before and after the introduction of electricity. Working in groups, students will plan a class party — complete with refreshments, decorations, and entertainment — without electricity.

Curriculum Components:

- **Language Arts:** Writing descriptive essay
- **Art:** Visual discrimination, matching skills
- **Critical Thinking:** Analyzing, planning
- **Cooperative Learning:** Group discussion and planning

Handouts (Masters for Copying):

Grades 3 - 5

- Handout #1: “Then and Now”
- Handout #2: “Getting Ready for School”
- Handout #3: “Planning a Party”

Grades 6 - 8

- Handout #1: “Without electricity, I would...”
- Handout #2: “Getting Ready for School”
- Handout #3: “Planning a Party”

Classroom procedure:

Setting the Stage

- Distribute Handout # 1 and instruct students on how to complete it. Discuss.
- Distribute Handout # 2; read aloud (or have one student read aloud) before class begins rewriting.

- Allow students to read some of their revised essays aloud.
- Ask questions: What were the primary sources of energy used to perform these tasks? (Wood, coal, waterpower, horsepower, human labor?)
- Remind students of time and human energy savings through electricity.

Activity: Planning a Party

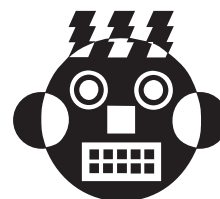
Distribute “Planning a Party”. Explain that due to mysterious circumstances, the class has been transported back in time and must plan a party for Friday — yes, a real party! — as though there were no electricity.

Divide class into four or five working groups.

Lead brief discussion of possibilities and limitations — i.e., without electricity, there would be no mass production... so how can you have Coca-Cola?

Suggestion For Further Study

1. Invite an older person — a grandparent, someone from a local senior citizens group, or even a school staff member — to visit your class, reminisce, and answer questions about lifestyles before the days of plentiful electricity.
2. Have students interview an older person in their family or community about their earliest memories, when electricity was scarce and there were few electrical appliances in the home or the workplace.

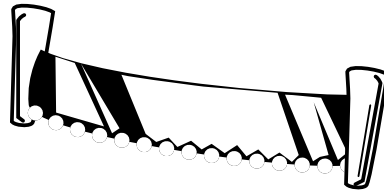
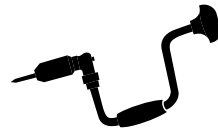
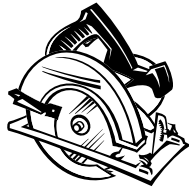


SESSION TWO: HANDOUT #1

(Grades 3 - 5)

"THEN AND NOW"

Match these modern electrical items with the things your great-grandparents might have used.
How has electricity changed the way we live?



SESSION TWO: HANDOUT #1

(Grades 6 - 8)

“WITHOUT ELECTRICITY, I WOULD...”

Without electricity, even the most ordinary routines of modern life would be much more difficult. In the spaces below, describe the steps you would take to complete the following tasks without electricity.

1. Take a bath: _____

2. Listen to some music: _____

3. Get a cavity in your tooth repaired (filled): _____

4. Communicate with a friend across town: _____

5. Style your hair: _____

6. Cook a hamburger: _____

7. Make some iced tea: _____

8. Stay cool in summer: _____

9. See a famous actor or political leader: _____

10. Get to the 10th floor of a building: _____



SESSION TWO: HANDOUT #3

(All Grades)

PLANNING A PARTY WITHOUT ELECTRICITY

Party Theme:

(Examples: birthday, holiday, cook-out, dance, sports event)

Hours to be held: _____

Season: _____

Location: _____

Invitations: _____

How will you provide light and heating/cooling for your party? Describe.

Party decorations and tableware:

How will you make or obtain these items?
Can they be used again?

Refreshments:

Where will you obtain the ingredients for these refreshments? How many student-hours will it take to prepare them? How will you store them until the party begins?

Entertainment:

Can you use a battery-powered radio? Why or why not? _____

