



THE GREAT SEATTLE FIRE, TEACHER RESOURCES

Additional Activities and Questions for Discussion

The following activities and questions for discussion are designed to help you expand on the lesson plans provided, and to integrate content across disciplines in order to connect MOHAI resources to other units and broader learning goals.

Discussion Questions:

1. What were people's reactions to this emergency? How do people react to emergencies today?
2. How is fire safety different today than it was in the 1880's in terms of prevention and firefighting technology, training, laws, expectations of city government, construction, water availability, etc.?
3. Could the Great Seattle Fire happen again? Why or Why not?
4. How has the Great Seattle Fire helped to turn Seattle into the industrial city it is today?
5. What lessons have we learned from this historic event?

Activities:

1. If students have not yet studied the 1880's in Washington State, supplement the slideshow introduction with a brainstorm session comparing & contrasting life in the 1880's with life today, or during another time period you have been studying.
2. Have students highlight any place-names in their documents such as homes, streets, or businesses. Then have them find these locations on a map.
3. Based on the primary sources provided, Draw a picture of a scene from the Seattle Fire and write a one paragraph label for your picture describing what is happening.
4. Imagine that you were working in Seattle when the fire started. Using the letters provided as examples, hand write your own letter describing what it might have been like to live through this major event in Seattle history;
OR
Imagine that you are a writer for the Seattle PI. Using the articles provided as examples, write a newspaper article describing the day.
5. Using the list of articles on fires in Washington State (available at http://www.sos.wa.gov/history/newspapers_subjects.aspx?s=8), compare the Seattle fire of 1889 to another major fire that occurred in a different Washington city.
6. What's the Big Idea CBA Project: Create a paper or presentation describing how firefighting or fire safety related technology has changed people's lives.
7. Causes of Conflict CBA project: Create a paper or presentation describing a conflict related to the Great Seattle Fire.