



Records in Your Community Lesson

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STANDARDS:

Historical Thinking Standards:

- Standard 2: Historical Comprehension
- Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation
- Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities
- Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making

LESSON:

Original records can shed new light onto historical events in your community. They can also help students understand how and why certain events happened. Students will use critical thinking skills to understand how past events have shaped their community.

Original records can be found both online and offline. Places to seek records include Ancestry.com, local libraries, historical societies, genealogical societies, state libraries, state archives, the Library of Congress and the National Archives.

Topics to study in your community:

- Famous citizens
- First Settlers
- Crimes and murders
- Natural and manmade disasters – fires, floods, explosions
- Buildings – courthouse, factories, stores, schools, houses
- Transportation – railroads, canals, rivers, automobiles, airplanes
- Immigrants
- Industry/Occupations
- Military – draft, mobilization, veterans, battles
- Farm life – crops, farm implements, daily life
- Origin of community festivals and other events

Original Records that might aid research include:

- Census records
- Vital records – births, marriages, deaths
- Land records
- Immigration records
- Court records
- Cemetery records

- Maps
- Wills and probate records
- School records
- Tax records
- Voter lists
- Historical newspapers
- Military records
- City directories
- Photographs