



History Along NEBRASKA'S BYWAYS

Prairie Schooners

Activity Summary



Your students will build replicas of prairie schooners to better understand how the pioneers traveled across Nebraska.

Discussion Topics

- What the pioneers packed in their prairie schooners
- What your students would pack in their prairie schooners
- What the pioneers saw as they traveled through Nebraska
- Why the pioneers traveled along the Oregon, California, and Mormon Trails

List of Supplies

- Shoe boxes (1 per student)
- Brown craft paper (optional)
- Pipe cleaners (5–10 per student)
- Sheets of white paper (1–2 per student)
- Paper towel tubes (1 per student)
- Glue
- Tape (optional)
- Scissors
- Marker

Activity Directions

1. Remove shoe box lid and set aside.
2. Cover shoe box with brown craft paper (optional).
3. Bend 5 pipe cleaners into a U shape to form the framework for the cover. If your shoe box is large, you may need to twist 2 pipe cleaners together to make each U shape.
4. Attach the 5 U shapes to the inside of your shoe box with glue or tape, spacing them evenly along the length of the box. Be sure not to attach them too close to the top of the box.
5. Cut 4 circles out of the box lid to use as wheels. Circle size will depend on the size of your lid. You may want to find a round object to trace.
6. Draw spokes on the wheels.
7. Cut the paper towel tube into 4 pieces.
8. Glue a piece of paper towel tube to the back side of each wheel, making sure the tube touches an edge of the wheel. Allow the glue to dry completely.
9. Make a prairie schooner cover by placing white paper over the pipe cleaners. (You may have to cut the paper and/or use multiple pieces of paper to cover the pipe cleaners completely.)
10. Tuck the edges of the white paper inside the top edge of the box.
11. Glue the wheel tubes to the wagon and allow to dry completely.

