

## **Lesson 4: What We WANT to Know About Pioneer Life**

### **Learning Goals**

Students will complete the second column of the K-W-L chart (What we Want to Know...)

Students will identify key questions to guide the investigation of Iowa Pioneer Life.  
Students will classify questions by topic.

### **Iowa History Benchmarks:**

4. Pioneer Life on the Prairie
  - a. Most pioneer settlers came to Iowa from the eastern United States and Europe.
  - b. Iowa land was surveyed by the government and sold at auctions held by government land officers.
  - c. For most settlers, living on the prairie meant a change in farming and household practices.
  - d. Pioneer raised or made most of the items they needed for daily life.
  - e. Pioneer families developed a sense of social community and interdependence by sharing work and social events.

### **Materials:**

Lined writing paper for students

Envelopes for classifying questions raised by students

### **Activities:**

1. Distribute to each student a sheet of lined writing paper.
2. Have students fold their sheets in half twice. The folds lines will make four cells when sheets are unfolded.
3. In each of the four sections of the paper, have students write a question they would like to investigate regarding pioneer Iowa.
4. When students have had adequate time to write questions, have students cut their papers into four sections along the fold lines.
5. Have a volunteer share one question aloud. Have any students with similar questions share them. For example, a student might ask, "What did pioneer homes look like?" All other questions related to pioneer homes should then be shared by students.
6. When all questions related to homes have been shared, place the questions in an envelope and label accordingly. Continue this process until all questions have been shared and categorized.
7. Place the questions in the W column of the K-W-L chart displayed in the room.

Examples of pioneer life questions raised by students:

Category: Pioneer Clothing

- How did they wash clothes?
- Where did they get their clothes?
- Where did the pioneers get their water for washing clothes?

Category: Homes

- Had they invented electricity when pioneers lived?
- How did they heat their homes?
- How did they cut logs for making homes?
- Did they live in the woods?
- How did pioneers make houses?

Category: Schools/Education

- Did pioneer children go to school?
- What kind of games did they play at school?
- What kind of schoolbooks did they have?
- What kind of desks did they have?