



Commerce on the Railroad

Post-Visit Lesson

Grades: 7th grade - High School

Class Time Needed: 45 minutes

Big Idea Students will understand how goods are transported across states, countries, and continents.

Maryland Curriculum Standards

Social Studies Framework

- 7th grade: Analyze how technological changes have affected the consumption and production in the contemporary world.
- Essential Question (8th grade): Did American Western Expansion challenge and promote national unity?
- Essential Question (High School): Was American imperialistic growth consistent with democratic ideals?

Materials Needed

- Student devices with Internet access
- Plain copy paper
- Writing/coloring utensils
- Magazine pages or printed images of objects (optional)
- Scissors and glue/tape (optional)



Teacher Resources

- “How Freight Trains Connect the World” video link <https://youtu.be/9polmReDFeY>
 - Suggested objects for students to research: bananas, oranges, avocados, a pair of sneakers, custom water bottles, a car, a laptop, cell phone, IKEA furniture, dog treats, shampoo, a watch, backpacks, Apple airpods, hand sanitizer, toilet paper, text books, grapes, Oreos, gaming console
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Lesson Procedure

Introduction:

Show “How Freight Trains Connect the World” video (link in Teacher Resources section).

Discuss how the objects we use every day get to us.

Direct Instruction (Student Activity):

Either individually, in pairs, or in groups, students will choose one object from the list provided (or they can suggest their own object) and research the life cycle of the object. If the object they choose is a generic object, they may choose a brand name version to make it easier to research.

For the life cycle of an object, students must discover where each object is made, where/how it is distributed, where it is sold and how it gets to its destination.

Once students have researched the life cycle, they must record it on a piece of paper to be turned in to the teacher.

Conclusion:

Discussion questions to debrief after completed projects:

- Were you surprised by where your object came from?
- How does your object get transported to different places?
- Does your object travel by plane, train, boat or truck?
- How long does it take for your object to get to you once it is made?

