

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – Plainfield Map Comparison

Grade - 8

Length of class period – 45 min.

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering, what problem are they solving, or what decision are they making?)

- In what ways has the town of Plainfield changed from 1951 to the present?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

- Students will come to understand that their town is in a constant state of change via specific data obtained from multiple local maps.

- Students will analyze, interpret and draw conclusions from a 1951 aerial photograph map of Plainfield, CT. Students will compare and contrast that map with current images obtained from GoogleEarth.

- Students will identify their own homes and neighborhoods on both maps, noting the differences in population density, settlement patterns, access routes and business construction.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson? – (please attach)

1. 1951 aerial photograph of Plainfield (obtained via UConn MAGIC <http://magic.lib.uconn.edu>)
2. GoogleEarth (free download at <http://Google.com>)

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

1. In the computer lab, students will receive a hard copy of the black and white 1951 aerial photograph map of Plainfield.
2. Students will be directed to <http://Google.com> and access GoogleEarth.
3. Students will be given 10-15 min. to explore and compare the 2 maps, discussing their observations informally with their peers.
4. Each student will be given a question sheet, asking them to address several ways they note changes to the town which have occurred between the two maps. (see Map Comparison below)

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

1. Students will discuss their observations (as noted on their worksheets) in class the next day.
2. On their next chapter test, students will receive an open-ended question, requiring them to describe the changes they noticed and the reasons why these changes may have occurred.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

Content Standard 1 – Historical Thinking

- formulate historical questions based on primary sources
- interpret data in historical maps, photos, etc.

Content Standard 9 – Places and Regions

- describe human and natural characteristics of places and how they shape our identity
- locate natural and cultural features in their own communities to answer geographic questions

Content Standard 11 – Human Systems

- explain how patterns of trade change technology, transportation and communication and affect economic activities and human migration
- analyze the formation, characteristics and functions of urban, suburban and rural settlements

Plainfield Aerial Map Comparison 1951-Present

1. Locate your house/property on both maps. (ALL 1951 locations should be labeled on the map)
2. Locate any railroad tracks on both maps.
3. Locate Moosup pond on both maps.
4. Locate Plainfield High School on both maps.
5. Locate the Old Plainfield Cemetery on both maps.
6. Locate 2 more cemeteries on both maps.
6. Locate Rts 12, 14 and 14A (Plainfield Pike) on both maps.
7. Locate 3 mills on both maps.
8. Locate the Quinnebaug and Moosup Rivers
~~~~~ On GoogleEarth only~~~~~
9. Locate Rt 395
10. Locate Plainfield Dog Track
11. Locate McDonald's
12. Locate Plainfield Central School  
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13. Locate (and label on 1951 map) the sites of 7 more locations (Schools, stores, churches, ballfields, etc.)

Essay

Having studied both maps, what are the most striking changes Plainfield has experienced? Why have these changes occurred?

- Include your thoughts on settlements patterns, new business construction, railroads, road construction, size of houselots, deforestation versus new growth forests, agricultural uses, mill activity, etc.
- Predict how these factors will contribute to Plainfield's future development.