

1.1 Social & Economic Impacts of the Grand River

Overview

This unit examines the social and economic role that the Grand River has played in the Grand Rapids, Michigan community. It begins with the Paleo-Indians and extends to current day. Students will look at primary source readings, artifacts, and summaries of the different time periods. They will examine the role of the River in society and the impacts of humans on the River. Specifically, students will examine how the change in population and uses of the River impacts river quality.



Wenk Associates

Edit-able versions of resources in this unit are available at: www.bit.ly/riverrewilding

Essential Questions

- How do human actions impact the Grand River?
- What role does population size play in the impact of human actions on the Grand River?
- How has society's view of the Grand River changed over time?
- What might we do to mitigate the impacts of human activity?

Grade Level: 6-12 Grade

Suggested Sequence

The history of the Grand River is divided into six eras, from Pre-settlement to Today. Each era has three resources associated.

1. A primary source reading related to the Grand River
2. Artifacts about the Grand River from that era
3. Summary of what happened to the Grand River during that era

Depending on the needs of your classroom, these eras could be covered as a whole class activity over a series of days, or small groups could become experts on their era and then share with their classmates their findings. This is easily facilitated by creating a large timeline on a wall using butcher paper and having students add details and share out about their era.

Time could be two days to five days, depending on method of instruction:

- Whole class studies all time periods: 5 days
- Breaking into time period experts: 2 days
 - Day 1: Research your period
 - Day 2: Report out on the large class timeline and share information

Materials

- 1.2a Social and Economic Impact Student Worksheet - printed on Ledger/Tabloid size (11 x 17 inches) paper:
- Primary Source Readings for each era
- Artifacts for each era
- Summary of each era
- Large Class Timeline

Unit Sources

Biological Surveys of Selected Lower Grand River Streams Ionia, Kent, Muskegon, and Ottawa Counties, Michigan. Michigan August-September 2014. Department of Environmental Quality Water Resources Division. https://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/wrd-monitoring-report-2014-lower-grand-watershed_606955_7.pdf

Hanshue, S. K., and A. H. Harrington. 2017. Grand River Assessment. Michigan Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Report 20, Lansing.

Lower Grand River Management Plan 2011 - <https://www.gvsu.edu/wri/isc/lower-grand-river-watershed-management-plan-312.htm>

The following books are in the Public Domain and can be found in full text online at <https://www.hathitrust.org/> by searching for the title of the resource.

Belknap, C. Eugene. (1922). *The yesterdays of Grand Rapids*. Grand Rapids: The Dean-Hicks company.

Dickinson Brothers, G. Rapids. (1911). *Grand Rapids: beautiful, industrial, commercial*. Grand Rapids, Mich: [Grand Rapids Board of Trade.

Illustrated historical atlas of the county of Kent, Michigan. [1876] H. Belden & Co., Charles Shober & Co. Chicago: H. Belden & Co.,

S.H. Knox & Company. (190). *Grand Rapids, the furniture city*. Toronto, [Ont.]: W.G. MacFarlane.

Souvenir of flood: Grand Rapids, Mich. March, 1904. Reed-Tandler Engraving Co. (Grand Rapids, Mich.). [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Reed-Tandler Engraving Co., 1904?]. <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071342870&seq=1>

Tuttle, Charles R. (1874) *History of Grand Rapids: with Biographical Sketches*. Grand Rapids: Tuttle & Cooney.