

Danger: No Smoking!*

Essential Understanding: The Butte mines attracted workers and their families from many different countries. Primary sources and historical artifacts can help us understand the past.

Activity Description: Students will examine a photograph of a sign that stood at the head of a Butte mine. They will translate the text, which is written in many different languages, identify countries in which that language was spoken, and speculate about what the instructions had to be written in so many different languages.

Objectives: At the conclusion of the lesson, students will have

- Used primary source evidence to draw conclusions
- Conducted a short research project to build knowledge through investigation
- Located on a map some of Butte immigrants' countries of origins and calculated the distance between those countries and Montana
- Learned that Butte's rich copper mines attracted immigrants from many countries

Grade Level: 4th-7th

Standards

- CCRA.W.4 Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.
- MCSS.3—Students apply geographic knowledge and skills ...
- MCSS.4—Students demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time, continuity, and change on historical and future perspectives and relationships.

Time: 1-2 50-minute class periods

Materials

- Photo of "Danger: No Smoking" (below, courtesy World Museum of Mining, Butte)
- Computers with internet access (for each group)
- Large world map
- String
- Tape

- Index cards

Pre-Lesson Preparation

Make copies of the photograph of the “Danger: No Smoking” sign (one for each student group)

Procedure

1. Pass out copies of the “Danger: No Smoking” photo to pairs of students (no more than 15 pairs). As a class, ask them to look at the image. What do they think it is? What’s unusual about it? What can they infer about this image from looking at it? What questions does it raise?
2. Explain that this sign was found in Butte, Montana, but that they can’t read many of the words on the sign because they are in a foreign language. Tell them that they are going to become detectives and discover what this sign says.
3. Assign each pair a different black square. Tell them that they are going to use the internet to translate the words in their square. (Note: Do not assign the second from bottom left square, which is written in Bulgarian, because it will be too hard for most students to identify. Assign the first top left square to students who need an extra challenge. These students will need to use a Cyrillic keyboard to type out the words before putting them into Google search.
<http://www.convertcyrillic.com/>)
4. Direct students to Google Search and have them type in the words from their square. One of the top sites will be a translation of their text. After they figure out the translation and the language in which their sentence was written, have them conduct further research to find out in what country or countries people speak that language.
5. Have students locate the country where their language is spoken on the map. If the language is spoken in several countries, have them locate either the largest country in which that language is spoken or the one that is closest to Montana.
6. Have students reflect in writing or in a pair discussion: Why would their language be on a sign in Butte? What was the purpose of this sign?
7. Help students find the approximate location of Butte on the same map.
8. Have them measure the distance between their country and Butte with a string and cut the string to the appropriate length.
9. Have them figure out how far the distance is using the string and the map scale.
10. On an index card, ask them to record the following information:
 - Country name

- The language the original text was in
- Distance between that country and Montana

11. Ask each group to attach its index card to its string and its string to the map.

12. Have students share with the group their translation, their language, where that language is spoken, and how far that country is from Montana.

13. Tell students that the sign was in Butte at a mine head. Engage in a wrap-up discussion, in which the following points should be made:

- Butte was a very ethnically diverse city.
- People came from all over to get jobs in the mines, and many did not speak English.
- English-speaking immigrants from Ireland and Cornwall, England, also worked in the mines. (Show Ireland and Cornwall on the map.)
- Miners worked with explosive material so fire in the mines was a real and ever-present threat. (In 1917, for example, 168 miners died in the Speculator Mine fire.)

Speculate on what it was like to live and work in such a diverse place. What would it be like not to share a common language with your classmates? How would you communicate?

14. Finally, discuss the use of evidence. How did this ONE artifact help them understand Butte history? What questions did it answer and what questions did it raise for further investigation?

*This lesson plan was created for the Montana Historical Society's "Coming to Montana: Immigrants from around the World" Footlocker. You can learn more about this footlocker on the Montana Historical Society's Footlocker page (<http://mhs.mt.gov/education/Footlocker>). Click on "Coming to Montana" to download a PDF of the footlocker user guide to find other lessons about immigration.

DANGER

NO SMOKING, MATCHES OR OPEN LIGHTS

Воспрещается КУРИТЬ,
ЗАЖИГАТЬ СПИЧКИ И ДЕРЖАТЬ ОГОНЬ ОТКРЫТЫМЪ

VIETATO FUMARE - PORTARE
FIAMMIFERI O LAMPADE APERTE

KADITI PREPOVEDANO
NE RABITE ŽIGICE ALI ODPRTE SVETILNICE

Nie wolno palic
Zapalek i innych swiatel

TILOS A DOHÁNYZÁS
GYUFA VAGY NYILT LANG HASZNÁLATA

ΑΠΑΓΟΡΕΥΕΤΑΙ ΤΟ ΚΑΠΝΙΣΜΑ
ΣΠΙΡΤΑ Η ΑΝΑΜΜΕΝΑ ΦΩΤΑ

INGEN TOBAKSRYGNING
TAENDSTIKKER ELLER AABNE LYS

**Ingen Rökning, Tändstickor
eller Oskyddadt Ljus.**

PUŠENJE ZABRANJENO
NE UPOTREBLJUJTE ŽIGICE
ILI OTVORENE SVETILJKE

KOURENÍ ZAKÁZANO
NEPŘIBLIŽUJTE SE SÍRKAMA NEB S OHNĚM

Esta Prohibido Fumar
Y LLEVAR FOSFOROS Y LUCES ABRIDAS

**Rauchen, Streich - Hoelzer oder
offene Lichter verboten**

ПУШЕЊЕ ЈЕ ЗАБРАЊЕНО.
Несмијеш се служити шибицом или
ма каковом отвореном ватром.

**EI TUPAKOIMISTA, EI
TULITIKKUJA EIKÄ AVONAISTA
WALKIA SOLLITA**

NEVALE RUKYT
ar laikyt pas save briezuky ar kitokiy
atvirų ugnių

**ON NE VOUS PERMET PAS ICI DE FUMER
NI DE PORTER D'ALLUMETTES ET DE
LUMIERES OUVERTES**