

The History of Lake Tahoe

Author: Marcia Motter and Jamie Thomsen

Topic/Era: Steam Ship Tahoe/ Nevada History

Lesson Title: The History of Lake Tahoe

Subject: United States History

Grade Level: 7th

Length of Lesson:

1- 50 minute class period

Background:

Prior to the Steam Ship Tahoe in 1896, steamships served as supporting vessels to the logging industry in Tahoe and first appeared in about 1864. The peak period for steamers was between the 1880's and 1900. During this time about 10 steamships operated on the lake. Between 1890 and 1895 there were seven steamers working on the lake during the summers.

Duane L. Bliss, the lumber magnate of the Tahoe Basin, realized logging was fading and he would need to diversify his business interests. He formed the Lake Tahoe Transportation Company in 1894 and commissioned the Steam Ship Tahoe from the Union Iron Works in San Francisco. The Steam Ship Tahoe was launched on June 24, 1896, this was the beginning of Tourism and Gaming in the Tahoe Basin. The S.S. Tahoe operated as a passenger ship offering lake tours and transportation to other ports of call on the lake. The Steamer Tahoe also transported freight, supplies, and U.S. mail.

Because of new technology however, the S.S. Tahoe was to decay at their moorings in Tahoe City and the historical icon was laid to rest in Glenbrook Bay. The S.S. Tahoe was pivotal in the economic success that the Tahoe Basin enjoys today.

This lesson will serve as the 1st lesson in a unit or can be used as a stand alone lesson.

Objectives:

Students will be able to sort information about the history of Lake Tahoe into chronological order.

Students will be able to create a timeline of Lake Tahoe's history.

Standards:

Develop a clear sense of historical time, past, present, and future in order to identify the sequence in which event occurred.

H3.4.4 Explain how advances in technologies have impacted Nevada.

G8.4.2 Describe how technologies altered the physical environment in Nevada, and the effects of those changes on its people.

Materials List:

Pencil

A sheet of lined paper

Chronology of Lake Tahoe Card Sort Page

Scissors

16 sets of card sorts in envelopes (make copies from the *Chronology of Lake Tahoe* card sort page and cut the sort cards)

In Class Activities:

1. Write the word, **Lake Tahoe**, on the board. Have the class get out a piece of lined paper. Have each student write down what they know about Lake Tahoe and its history. Give the class about 5 minutes to write. Have each student find a partner and discuss their ideas with him or her. Call on a few students to share their ideas with the class.
2. Have the class stay with their existing partners or have them find a new partner to work with. Tell the class that they are going to be creating a timeline of Lake Tahoe's history.
3. Once the students are sitting in pairs, pass out an envelope with the card sort to each group. Have the students place all of the cards upside down in a pile on the desk. The first student will pick up a card off of the top of the pile and read it out loud to their partner. S/he will place it on the desk. The next student will pick up a card off of the top of the pile and read it out loud and place it in chronological order. Each student will repeat until all of the cards are in chronological order on the desk.
6. When all of the cards have been sorted in chronological order, each student will copy the timeline of information onto a sheet of notebook paper.
7. Students will turn in their timelines at the end of class.

Exit Pass:

Have students answer the following question: Why do you think S.S. Tahoe was sunk a half mile off of the Glenbrook pier?

Evaluation/Assessment:

Students will turn in the timelines that they created from their card sort.

Chronology of Lake Tahoe Card Sort

February 14, 1844, John C. Fremont discovered a mountain lake, that will later be named Lake Tahoe.	John Johnson explored the southern end of the lake in 1848.	Martin Smith, the first settler, arrived in 1851.	The oldest Tahoe businesses, hotels and restaurants were established starting in 1852.
In the 1860s, an extensive logging empire was created on the East Shore.	In 1864, steamships first appeared on Tahoe for transportation help with the logging industry.	In 1873, Duane L. Bliss and others formed the Carson and Tahoe Lumber and Fluming Company.	In 1875, the Lake Tahoe Railroad was built by D. L. Bliss between Glenbrook and Spooner Summit.

<p>June 24, 1896, the S.S. Tahoe was launched to carry passengers from Tahoe City to Glenbrook and other points around the lake.</p>	<p>By 1900, the Lake Tahoe Railway and Transportation Company was created.</p>	<p>In 1901, D. L. Bliss completed the Tahoe Tavern in Tahoe City.</p>	<p>In 1907, the Glenbrook Inn opened and received its first guests.</p>
<p>In 1934, the S.S. Tahoe was taken out of service and berthed at a pier in Tahoe City.</p>	<p>August 29, 1940, the S.S. Tahoe was sunk a half mile off of the Glenbrook pier.</p>	<p>July 18, 1945, Lake Tahoe is formally named.</p>	<p>Summer 2002, New Millennium Dive Expeditions completed a series of dives on the wreck of the S.S. Tahoe.</p>