

Family Origins Activity

Family Origins: Some of the students in your class may have family who have participated in the early history of Springfield; many do not. Some will have arrived only recently and some may be leaving the Springfield area soon. All your students and their families are here now and are contributing to the part of history that is being made today. Identifying the history of one's own family helps to make the history of Springfield relevant to each student.

Families are complicated organisms. There will be students in your class from single-parent families, adoptive families, foster families, step-families and non-traditional families. Be sure your working definition of such terms as family and ancestors is as broad as possible to accommodate all these differences. If you sense a reluctance on the part of an individual student or family to participate in the family-origin activity, you may need to have an alternative activity planned for them or alter this activity to fit their needs. An alternate activity may be to assign a student one of the founders of Springfield to research their family heritage.

Native Americans were some of the first settlers in the Ozarks, next came European explorers followed closely by east coast anglicans who emigrated to the Ozarks. Where did our ancestors emigrate from and why?

This activity will allow students to research their own family heritage. Knowing where our ancestors called home can give us a great insight into our culture, beliefs and connections.

This activity includes a note to parents/guardians describing the activity and ways they can support their student with the research.

Provide the letter and Family Origin sheets to students. Provide maps of the United States and World for students to mark their family origins. Create a class map for the same purpose. Have students determine the area where most of our families emigrate from.

Note to Parents/Guardians

We are beginning new lessons that include the study of the early settlement of Springfield. I hope to make these lessons more meaningful to the students by involving them in a study of the history of their families. This involves trying to find out where the family lived before they immigrated to the United States and how and when they came to the Ozarks area.

You can assist with this project by helping your child fill in the Family Origin Chart that is attached to this note. The “hometown” blank in each box refers to the place in which the family member spent most of his/her “growing up” years. In some cases, two or more places may be listed.

I appreciate any help you can give your child with this project. It is hoped that each student will gain a greater understanding of the settlement of Springfield and develop an interest in their personal family histories.

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact me. I realize that completing the family history chart may be difficult for some families. Do not worry if information cannot be gathered to fill each box. If you have information going back even further than the chart, feel free to add another sheet with those facts.

If you would prefer your child not to participate in this activity, please let me know and I will assign an alternate activity.

Thank you,





