

**Printable Teaching Guide**  
**A Day in the Life – A Young Pioneer Settler**

**Objectives**

**Students will:**

- Learn about a young pioneer settler's life in the mid-1800s.
- Discuss the day-to-day responsibilities of pioneer children.
- Write and illustrate a journal entry about living on the frontier.

**Brief Description of Internet Site**

The *Pioneers* website offers information about life as a pioneer.

**Build Background**

- Explain to students that westward-traveling pioneers often settled in Missouri. Most times they settled in towns near rivers. Life for these pioneers was hard. The whole family helped out on the farm with crops and farm animals. Ask: *What responsibilities did pioneer children have?* (Girls helped their mothers cook, clean and make clothing. Boys hunted with their fathers and helped build barns and houses.)
- Tell students that many frontier children did not live near schools, so sometimes their parents taught them at home. Ask: *What other reasons are there that a pioneer child would not go to school?* (Often children had to stay home simply to help with all the chores on the farm. Teachers sometimes traveled from home to home to teach.)
- Tell students that pioneer houses were made of logs cut at each end to fit into each other. Ask: *What tools did pioneers use to make their homes?* (A tool called an auger drilled a hole in the logs where a peg fit in to hold them together. Cracks and holes were filled with mud and chunks of wood.)
- Tell students that most of the pioneer's clothes were homemade. Ask: *What kinds of materials were used to make pioneers' clothes?* (Clothes were made from wool, cotton and other materials. The clothes were hard to make, but were sturdy and strong.)

**Teach**

**What to do:**

- Connect to:  
[http://www.museum.siu.edu/university\\_museum/museum\\_classroom\\_grant/Museum\\_Explorers/school\\_pages/hinckley/pioneer.htm](http://www.museum.siu.edu/university_museum/museum_classroom_grant/Museum_Explorers/school_pages/hinckley/pioneer.htm)
- Select One Room School. Read about schools on the frontier and look at the pictures. Ask: *What were some of the rules pioneer children had to follow at school?* (1. Never make noises or disturb others. 2. Do not leave your seat without permission. 3. Wash your hands and face and bare feet.)
- Select Housing. Read about pioneer houses and look at the pictures. Ask: *What were the windows of pioneer houses covered with?* (Windows were covered with animal skins or greased paper.)
- Select Children's Clothing. Read about pioneer children's clothing and look at the pictures. Ask: *Until what age did pioneer boys wear dresses?* (Boys wore dresses until they were six or seven years old.)

## **Close**

- Have students discuss what they learned about a young pioneer settler's life.
- Have students imagine that they are pioneers. Have them write and illustrate a journal entry about living on the frontier.