

# Then and Now

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## **Standards of Learning**

Science: 3.10, 4.5, 5.7

English: 3.6, 4.5, 5.7

## **Objective**

The student will

- create an illustrated timeline to demonstrate the changing characteristics of the Western range.

## **Materials**

- Amazing Grazing, by Cris Peterson
- construction paper
- markers

## **Background Knowledge**

Amazing Grazing begins with an overview of the environmental changes that the Western plains have seen, from 1620 to present. Initially, overgrazing and then drought made the land unproductive. But now, ranchers have learned ways to keep the cattle healthy and grassland abundant. This lesson will require students to sequence events by placing them on a timeline, while also reinforcing the effect that humans can have on the environment.

## **Procedure**

1. Read Amazing Grazing to the class. Pause after the introduction to discuss the ways in which the American West has changed. Ask students what the reasons for these changes are.
2. Students will be creating a timeline depicting the changes that have occurred on the Western plains. Pass out construction paper and markers. Students may want to tape 2 pieces of construction paper together length-wise for more room.
3. Instruct students to draw a horizontal line across the middle of the paper. This will be their timeline.
4. Tell students to place 5 dots on their timeline and to write the dates: 1620, 1900, 1800, 1930, and 2007. Model on the board how to space out the dates appropriately.
5. For each date students are to draw a picture on their timeline depicting what the Western plains looked like. They should include captions for their pictures as well.
6. Invite students to share their timelines with the class.
7. End with a discussion of the ways in which ranchers are currently improving the land.

## **Extension**

Review important dates in history by adding them to the timelines.

