



# Pioneer Day Guide

How to Plan a Pioneer Day at Your School

OKLAHOMA HISTORY CENTER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



Written and printed by the Education Department  
Oklahoma History Center  
800 Nazih Zuhdi Dr  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105  
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There are many steps involved in producing a Pioneer Day at your school. The following are just suggestions, please use which steps and documents you would like and adapt them as works best for your class!

1. Make sure your students know the content **before the day of** your pioneer program. It is essential that they have a strong foundation in the basics of pioneer times in order to understand and enjoy the programming.
2. Meet with other grade level teachers, administrators, special class teachers, special education teachers, etc. In order to plan. See what each are willing to work with students on, and also who they may know that could help!
3. Set the date around the lesson. It is always best to have a pioneer day when studying settlement/Westward expansion to make it relevant and memorable for the students!
4. Conduct an overall plan. (Make it fun for everyone involved!)
  - a. Are the students doing research and creating the pioneer experience? If so, set aside class time to teach them about the time period and to make their projects.
  - b. Are you bringing in outside guests or having others present to the class? If the students are rotating in stations, make sure that the spaces are open for the date that you need them. Also, make sure you have necessary audio/visual equipment needs taken care of.
5. After you have the date set, contact local museums, historical societies, parents, and school volunteers to save the date!
6. Make a list of who is doing what and at what times. Organization is key in planning any event!
7. Send a note home to parents informing them what is going on in class and what may be asked of them to work on at home.
8. Make sure the students are exposed to pioneer times in the classroom, and enlist your special class teachers to help! (music, art, P.E.) You can also book a trunk from the OHC to assist in classroom learning!
9. Follow up with your presenters. Always check and double check to make sure dates and times for guest presentations are correct in order to prevent any issues.

### **The Week Before...**

10. Follow up with other grade level teachers, administrators, special class teachers, special education teachers, local museums, historical societies, parents, and school volunteers who have offered to help.
11. Immerse your students in pioneer times. Ask all subject teachers to use pioneer themes somehow in their classrooms!
12. Make sure the students have what they need for pioneer day. If they need clothing, see what you can do to help them. Even ask student who have participated in pioneer day before to donate some of their costumes!
13. Make hats, props, or whatever else is needed to ensure a great pioneer experience!

### **The Day Before...**

14. Remind your students of pioneer day, and make sure they know what they are supposed to do (if student-led), what they need to wear, and who they may see. Build the excitement for learning!

### **The Day of...**

15. Have fun! (This is easier said than done, but no matter how you do pioneer day, your students will learn and love it!)

## Sample Letter to Parents A

Dear Parents,

As part of our study on Westward Expansion and Pioneer times, the **grade level or classroom teacher's name's** students will be having a pioneer day on **date**. The students are creating a pioneer town which will include **#** centers depicting different features of pioneer life.

For this day, your child will need to be in pioneer costume. This may include items you have at home! Here is a list of suggestions:

### Boys

Long sleeved button-up shirt  
Jeans  
Vest  
Boots

### Girls

Long dress or skirt  
Boots  
Apron  
Bonnet

We look forward to learning about pioneer life during our pioneer day, and we hope you visit us to share the experience that day!

Thank you for the support,

**Teacher Name**

## Sample Letter to Parents B

Dear Parents,

As part of our study on Westward Expansion and Pioneer times, the **grade level or classroom teacher's name's** students will be having a pioneer day on **date**. The students are going to have some special guests depicting different features of pioneer life **including a list of partners if you wish**.

For this day, your child will need to be in pioneer costume. This may include items you have at home! Here is a list of suggestions:

### **Boys**

Long sleeved button-up shirt  
Jeans  
Vest  
Boots

### **Girls**

Long dress or skirt  
Boots  
Apron  
Bonnet

We look forward to learning about pioneer life during our pioneer day, and we hope you visit us to share the experience that day!

Thank you for the support,

**Teacher Name**

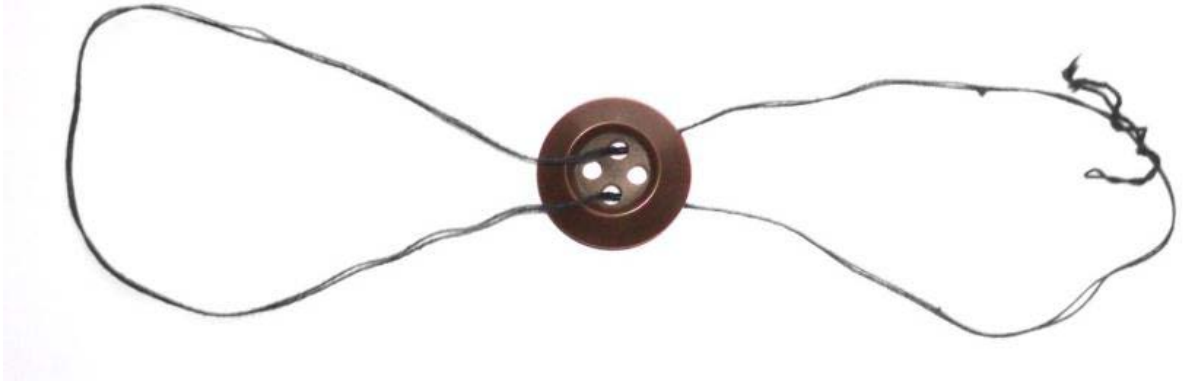
## Make a Whirligig

### Supplies needed

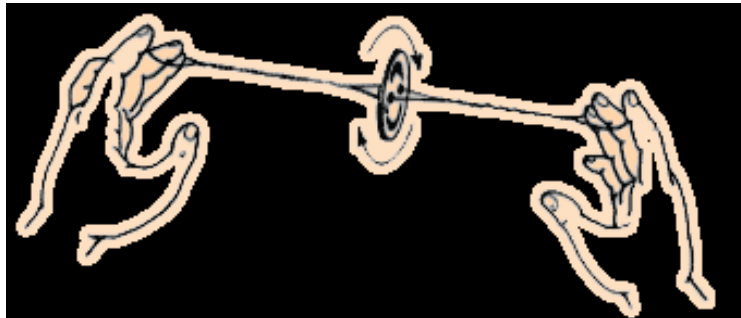
- 1 large 2- or 4-holed button, or a piece of cardboard/cardstock (cut a large circle)
- 2.5 feet of string, yarn, or thin ribbon
- Scissors

### Directions

- 1) If using a large button, skip to the step 3. If you are using cardboard or cardstock, cut out a 4 inch circle. (The circle can be decorated using crayons or colored pencils.)
- 2) Punch 2 small holes in the circle, about  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch from the center.
- 3) Thread the string into the holes and tie the ends together.
- 4) Pull the string until the button/circle is in the middle.



- 5) Twirl the string together until it is tight, then pull both ends to unwind and wind the string!



## How to make a paper bonnet

### Materials

- 12" x 18" piece of white paper
- White ribbon
- Stapler
- Scissors

### Instructions

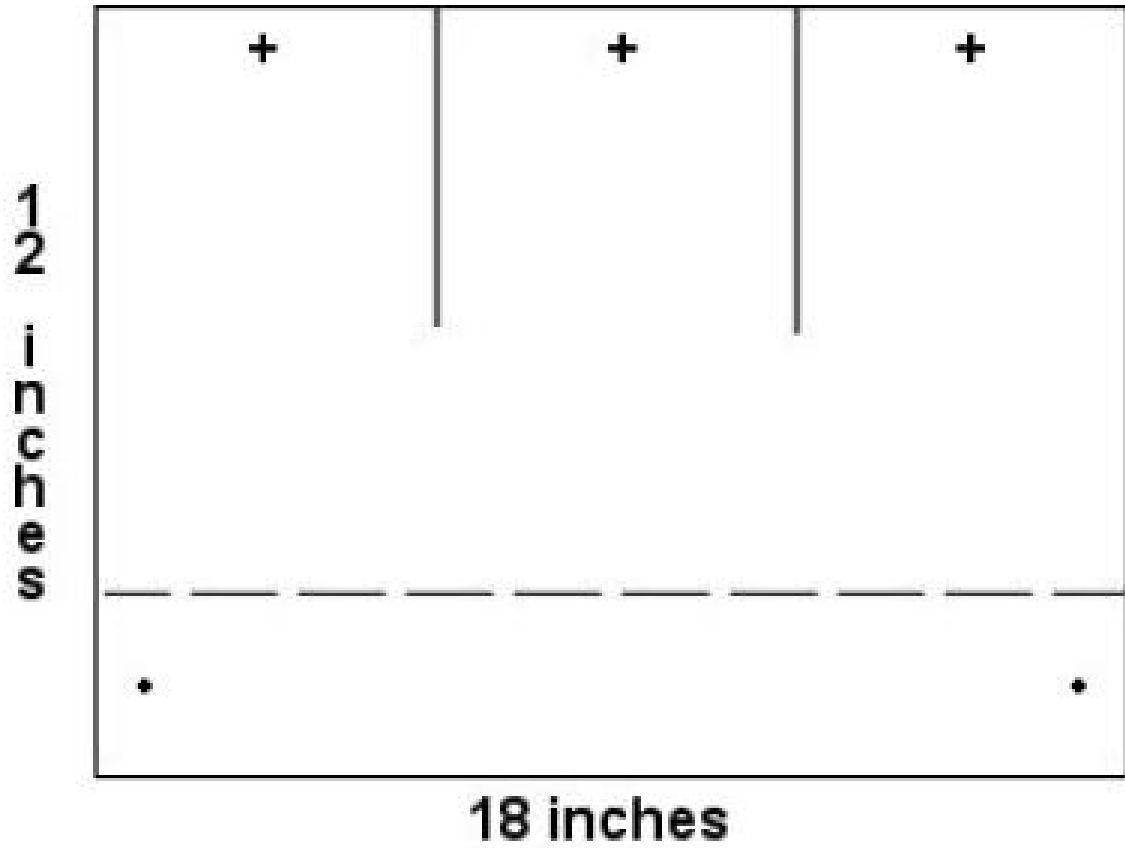
Fold the piece of paper in half the long way, then unfold it so you can see the crease. Now fold up one side of the paper so the edge is even with the crease (folded up along the dotted line on the image). Cut two slits on the other side of the crease, evenly spaced as shown in the image. They should extend almost all the way to the center crease.

Now poke a hole on each end of the folded half of the paper portrayed by the dots on the image.

Cut two pieces of ribbon about 15-inches long, and tie one end of each ribbon to the hole you poked. The folded section will be the front/brim area of the hat and you can tie the ribbons under the chin or leave them hanging at the side of the head.

Notice the "+" sign on the 3 flaps created by the slits you cut in the other half of the paper. Bring the two outside flaps together under the middle flap -- imagine lining up all the +'s in the image. Staple these three together to form your finished bonnet!





Template and instructions from  
<http://familycrafts.about.com/od/pilgrimcrafts/a/PaperPilgrimBonnet.htm>

## Day After Activity

1. Have your students write a paragraph or essay about the new things they learned at your Pioneer Day.
2. Have your students do a small research project, (essay, art project, display), about something they learned on Pioneer Day or about the time period.
3. Make a simple survey about what the liked, learned, and disliked about Pioneer Day. (This will be a great resource when planning for next year!)

