

## *An American Barn Raising #1*

**Subject:** Social Studies: Agriculture

**Grade Level:** 5-8

**McRel Standards: US History**      Era 6: The development of the Industrial United States (1870-1900)

**Benchmark:** Understands how the rise of corporations, heavy industry, and mechanized farming transformed American society.

<b>Iowa Model Core Curriculum:</b>	<p>Literacy: Writing:      Uses writing as a tool for learning</p> <p>                                    Uses an effective writing process</p> <p>                                    Uses knowledge of purpose, audience format, and medium in developing written communication.</p> <p>                                    Listening:      Listens for information and understanding</p> <p>  Analyzes visual media for effect and information</p>
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**Anticipatory Set:**      Using a Four square graphic organizer, the students will fill in the first square to share what information they already know about a barn raising. Then students will share ideas in class and the teacher will chart the information on the board using the same four square summary graphic organizer that has been replicated on the board.

**Objective:**      Through the use of the video [Timber Frame Barn Raising 1929](#) the student will be able to describe the archival footage and share through writing the importance of the event for the community. They will develop an understanding of terminology used in timber framing. They will use descriptive writing to describe the sights and sounds of the barn raising. Students will also write a historical journal entry sharing information from the barn raising.

**Purpose:**      The students will be able to understand the mammoth undertaking that raising a barn was in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The students will also be able to understand the role that the community played in the raising of the barn.

**Teaching to the objective:**

1.      Students will use a four square summary sheet while watching the video, [Timber Frame Barn Raising 1929](#). Prior to watching the video, the students should fill out the first square with information that they think they might know about a barn raising. Students will be able to share their thoughts prior to watching the video and the teacher will make notes on the graphic organizer that has been reproduced on the board.

2. The teacher should explain that this is archival footage from an actual barn raising in 1929. Three cameras were used to film the barn raising. This was quite a feat during this time period. The teacher and students may make some comparisons about filming such an event today and this event in 1929. (Examples from 1929: Black and White, not talking, music used in background and slides with descriptions inserted etc.). At the conclusion of the video, three people give their recollections of this barn raising that they attended.
3. Students should record information in square number 2 dealing with the barn raising. They will have to use their eyes to interpret the information as there will be no narration during the first segment. In the third square they should write down any vocabulary that is new to them (bent, mow, plates, girt, purling posts, sky crew, mortise and tenon). In the fourth square, they can list any questions that they might have over the video.
4. After the students have watched the video, have them share in pairs what they observed (square number 2), new vocabulary they were unsure of (square number 3, and questions that they still have (square number 4). This information can then be shared by the entire class.
5. Ask the students about the importance of the three people sharing their memories of the barn raising. Which one did they find the most helpful in understanding the event? Why did they choose that person? Why are first person accounts so important in understanding an event?

**Assessment:** Students will write a journal entry about the barn raising that they viewed. They can describe the event from the perspective of the chief carpenter (the gentleman in charge of the entire event), a member of the sky crew, the farmer who had been preparing for the event, or the young girl who helped prepare the food with her mother. Students should use descriptive language to portray the event from the perspective they chose.

After the students have viewed the barn raising, share with them these pieces of literature about barns and barn raisings (these are included in the barn kit):

<u>Barn Raising</u>	Brown
<u>Raising Yoder's Barn</u>	Yolen
<u>Across Five Aprils (chapter 8)</u>	Hunt
<u>Barn Dance</u>	<u>Martin</u>
<u>Hurray for the Yoder Barn</u>	Kurchinski
<u>Barn</u>	Atwell
<u>Mr. Bristol's Barn: With Excerpts</u>	Abrahams
<u>From Mr. Blinn's Diary</u>	

**Extension Activities:**

1. Students can create a life-like diorama depicting the barn raising that they just viewed on the video.
2. Students can raise their own barn using craft sticks, glue, string, etc. (see attached activity).

## ***Barn Raising***

Neighbors came from miles around to help the Rutherford family raise the frame of their barn in just one day. With everyone working together they were able to raise 8 bents and the rafters to form the skeleton of the barn.

Gatherings like this were very common in rural America. These events were called barn raisings. Everyone in the area came to help. No one except for the main carpenter received any money for their work. Not only did the men come to help, their wives and other women of the community came bearing food to help feed the army of men that it would take to raise the barn. Everyone pitched in to help, because they knew that if they were ever to need help, the neighbors would come to help them, too.

At the end of the long day, the community would sit down to share a meal and celebrate the new structure by enjoying a “barn dance” to christen the new structure.

Now it is your turn to have a barn raising of your own. You are to organize in to small groups (5) people to work together to construct a small scale model of a barn.

### **Materials:**

Ruler  
Baseboard (such as sturdy cardboard)  
Building materials (craft sticks, cardboard, clay, construction paper)  
Scissors, paint, paint brushes, etc.  
Craft glue, string, etc.  
Paper and pencil

### **Directions:**

1. In your group designate one person to be the observer. Their role in the project is to take notes on how well the group works together and solves any construction problems that they might have. The observer is not to talk during the whole construction process and share their observations when the project is completed.
2. Work together to plan a design for your barn. Create an architectural design including the dimensions of your completed barn.
3. Make a list of all the materials that you will need.
4. Divide up the list of materials and have each person bring supplies to class.
5. Divide up the work plan so that each person is responsible for a finished part of the barn.

6. Each person will then construct their individual piece. Next the group will begin attaching them together and then complete the model barn on the baseboard.
7. You can decorate your barn and baseboard if you like and you have time.
8. Present your finished barn to the class. In your presentation to the class have each person tell about their role in the construction of the barn, the design you chose, and how you worked together to complete the barn.
9. The observer will then get to share their observations about how the group worked together.

**Class Discussion:** Would it have been possible for you to complete this project on your own? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working in a group? What are the advantages and disadvantages of working by your self?

--idea taken from "Teacher Created  
Materials" [Across Five Aprils](#)