

iCONN Learning Activity

Inventors and Their Inventions

Level: Elementary

Task: Upper elementary students are studying inventors and their inventions. Each student selects an inventor/invention from a list provided by the teacher. The student then prepares a newspaper article announcing the invention at the time in history it was developed. It should include information on the inventor as well as the invention.

Research Question: What factors in an inventor's life contribute to the development of the invention? What is the impact of the invention?

Content Area(s): Technology Education

State Content Standard(s):

Technology Education:

Standard 4. Students will recognize technology as the result of a creative art and will be able to apply disciplined problem solving strategies to enhance invention and innovation.

- Discuss how technological systems have been used to solve human problems
- Differentiate between invention and innovation

iCONN Database(s): *Discovering Collection, Kids InfoBits, Additional Research Resources*

Search Strategy:

1. Go to www.iconn.org
2. If the list of databases is not already showing, click on "Select iCONN resources"
3. Click on *Discovering Collection*
4. Enter the *name of your inventor* in the *Basic Search* box: (For example, Eli Whitney)
5. Click on *SEARCH*
6. Click on the title of an article in the results list to read the article
7. Click on any *active (highlighted) tab* for other resources, if any (For example, *Primary Documents* or *Multimedia*)
8. Find an article that you'd like to keep for future reference, use the print or email buttons to print it out or to email yourself the article's text
9. Look to the left for links to additional subjects (e.g., related subjects like "cotton gins" for Eli Whitney)

Alternate Search Strategy:

1. Go to www.iconn.org
2. If the list of databases is not already showing, click on "Select iCONN resources"
3. Click on *Discovering Collection*
4. Click on *Advanced* from the search path bar.

5. In the first drop box choose to search in *Entire Document* (versus default of Title/headline) from the pull down menu
6. Enter *Eli Whitney* in the search box next to the pull down menu you just filled in
7. In the second row, make sure to choose *AND* from the first drop box. (the Boolean term *AND* ensures that the search looks only for articles with both of your search criteria)
8. In the second drop box, select *Entire Document* from the pull down menu
9. Enter *cotton gin* in the search box on the second line since that is the invention of interest to you
10. Click *SEARCH* (or hit ENTER)
11. Click on a title to read the article (Note: the type of article is given to the right of the article)
12. Go into highlighted tabs, if any (e.g., *Primary Documents, Multimedia*)

Adaptations for Differentiated Learning:

Search Strategy:

1. Go to www.iconn.org
2. If the list of databases is not already showing, click on “Select iCONN resources”
3. Since Eli Whitney lived in Connecticut, click on *Encyclopedia of Connecticut History*
4. Enter *Eli Whitney* in the *Search* box
5. Click *SEARCH* (or hit ENTER)
6. Click on a title in the search results list to read the article

-- OR --

1. Go to www.iconn.org
2. If the list of databases is not already showing, click on “Select iCONN resources”
3. Open *Kids InfoBits*
4. Enter the name of your inventor in the search box
5. Click *SEARCH*
6. View search results

Alternate Search Strategy:

1. From *Kids InfoBits* home page
2. Click on *Inventions and Technology*
3. Click on *Scientists and Inventors*
4. Search the list for your inventor and click on his/her name (For example, Whitney, Eli)
5. *Reference* articles are returned first
6. Click on the highlighted title to read an article (the type of resource is given to the right of the article)
7. If other tabs are highlighted, it means other types of information are available about your inventor (E.g., *Magazines, Newspapers, Images*)

Updated by Gale Cengage, July 2008