



The FIRST Field Trip to Tonto National Monument

Essential Question/ Objective

Students will be able to state the differences between primary and secondary sources; students will be able to give examples of each type of source. After reading a primary source, students will be able to retell the story of the first field trip to Tonto National Monument.

Park Theme

Tonto National Monument's well-preserved Salado cliff dwellings and diverse artifacts, located within the Upper Sonoran Desert, provide opportunities to experience a thriving culture deeply rooted in its natural setting, provoking contemplation of our connections to nature.

Arizona Common Core Standards

Third Grade

SS03-S1C1-PO3: Use primary source materials and secondary source materials to study people from the past
SS03- S1C1- PO4: Retell stories to describe past events, people, and places

Fourth Grade

SS04-S1C1-PO4: Describe the differences between primary and secondary sources

Fifth Grade

SS05-S1C1-PO3: Describe the differences between primary and secondary sources

Materials

1 copy per student: "Early Visitors to Tonto Cliff Dwellings" passage and "The FIRST Field Trip to Tonto National Monument" worksheet

Background Information on Ms. Angeline Mitchell

Author: Christa Sadler, Park Guide

Throughout history women have been traveling, writing, and exploring, paving the way for future generations of women to make a difference in the world. In the late 1800's, a woman named Angeline Mitchell did just that. Born in 1854, Angie lived a fortunate life, having the opportunity to become a woman of high education, attending two universities, now known as Kansas State University and the University of Kansas. While she was never able to graduate due to some financial strife in her family at the time, Angie was still able to pursue a career of becoming a teacher like her mother before her. Eventually her family relocated to Prescott, Arizona where she was able to teach at several different schools.

Her reputable teaching skills were talked about all across the region, and in 1880, Angie accepted a job as a school teacher in Tonto Basin. After a rough wagon ride nearly killing the entire party, Angie arrived in Tonto Basin where she relied on the accompaniment of friends of her relatives to settle into her new home. Here Angie

faced a life much different than what she had experienced before in Prescott. Her home and schoolhouse were made of local trees and plants in the pole house fashion, with pillows and mattresses made of hay. While she mentions some discomfort at these new changes in her everyday life at first, Angie eventually grew fond of life in Tonto Basin. This new life in the true “wild west” provided Angie with many adventures that she would write about in her daily journal entries, including skunks sneaking into her home and waking her at night, having a pet gila monster in her classroom, and getting lost while hiking in the surrounding mountains.

Angie even took her students on a field trip to nearby cliff dwellings to learn about the lives of past native peoples. Throughout her life, Angie expressed a passion and love for Native American dwellings in Arizona in both her writings and scrapbooks found full of archaeology related newspaper clippings. She describes in her journal the magnificent structures she and her students explored, narrating the various materials and building styles of the structures, as well as artifacts they found along the way.

Ahead of her time, Angie understood that the dwellings she visited were once home to people who were like her, but who had very different ways of life than what she was accustomed to. She wrote:

It seemed strange to be chatting and laughing so gaily in a house built unknown centuries ago by people unlike us in appearance but who had known joy and grief, pleasure and pain same as our race of today knows them, and who laughed, cried, sung, danced, married & died, mourned or rejoiced their lives away in this once populous town, or castle, or whatever one would call it! It made an uncanny feeling come over us as we rested till moon rise and talked of this long dead people and told the little we knew concerning them. By & by the moon rose & softened the marks of time on the scarred, weather stained cliff dwellings till it was beautiful.

Angie’s description of the cliff dwellings she visited is the first written record of the Salado ruins now known as Tonto National Monument. Her well-crafted words, detailed recollections, and love for the mystery of prehistoric dwellings and archaeology has opened modern eyes to how these ruins were once viewed over a century ago when pioneers were first exploring the region.

Today at Tonto National Monument, Angie and her writings serve as a valuable resource for educating the public about early pioneer history in the Tonto Basin area and inspiring women of all ages to follow their passion and adventure.

Procedures

Explain or review the definition of a primary source and different examples of primary sources.

A primary source is a record made by people who saw or took part in an event (in the past)

Primary Source examples: journal or diary entry, newspaper article, photograph, birth certificate, artifacts, etc.

Introduce Angeline Mitchell and how the class will be reading a passage from her diary about the first field trip to some local ruins. Pass out copies of “Early Visitors to Tonto Cliff Dwellings” and “The FIRST Field Trip to Tonto National Monument” worksheet; have the students read the passage and complete the worksheet.

Explain or review the differences between primary sources and secondary sources. The passage is a primary source (journal or diary entry) while the summary written by the students is a secondary source.

A secondary source is a record of an event written by someone not there at the time.

Secondary Source examples: encyclopedias, text books,

Concluding Discussion Question

If you (the student) visit Tonto National Monument and write about your experience, would that be a primary source? Why or why not?



Early Visitors to Tonto Cliff Dwellings

This passage is from “A Frontier Teacher in Tonto Basin: The 1880 Diary of Angeline Mitchell.”
Edited by Stanley C. Brown (Chapter 18, p. 115- 124)

Dec 12th [Sunday] We ate breakfast long before day and went well on our way at sunrise. I rode ‘Salim’, a horse of Mr. Armer’s. Melinda rode Brownie, the one I got from Hook, as he is not quite as gentle as Salim and Melinda is a first class rider while I’m not of late years. We went 5 ½ miles or so to the foot of Ute Mountain in which the ‘caves’ are located. We fastened our horses to brush and climbed the mountain, which was by no means an easy task as it is covered with debris from the ruined walls. One slides back a good deal like the ‘frog in the well’ who jumped ‘two feet forward & then fell back three.’ But we finally reached the dwellings. It was far superior to that I had anticipated & worth the trouble.

The dwelling is built of small rocks laid in cement and is cemented inside and out and sets well back beneath an overhanging rock. The rock is, I should think, about 200 feet high and curves something like this. We found traces of a 33 rooms and some 18 of them are in fair preservation. It has been seven or eight stories high, or perhaps more, I should think from the poles still clinging high up to the rock. There was originally on opening in the outer wall but the dwellers in the house climbed up a ladder of some sort and went in at the second story, as the Zunis and kindred tribes do yet! One room is walled up solidly without any door opening into it. Of course one can enter is now from above for the ceiling is partly fallen in. Another had a door originally but for some reason the people living there decided to close that room also and so smoothly and well was the work done that not a trace of any doorway having ever been there can be seen from outside the room. But inside of it one can easily see the rocks filling in the doorway, laid up in cement but not cemented over on the inside. When the ceiling of this room was intact, after the door was walled up, it must have been nearly air tight and one wonders why it was done. It is located in a rather central situation in the second story. One can conjecture several reasons. It may have been to hide treasure, to hide a crime, to punish or for several other reasons.

In one room in the first story a Mr. Danforth (I think is the name) two years ago this winter found the skeleton of an infant in the wall about 5 ft from the floor, or possibly a little less. I saw the place today. The child was wrapped in many folds of a silky looking cotton cloth, like some we found in the same room. Tom says (and he was here when the child was found) the material had a kind of drawn pattern in small diamonds and stars, and had shredded bark in its mouths and ears like a mummy, and sandals of yucca fiber on its feet made like a pair we dug from another part of the ruin only very much smaller. Then there were some turquoise and red pipe-clay beads, clay toys, a doll and dog, and bone ornaments with it. Also a number of other trifles. The place in which it lay was hallowed out of the wall and cemented inside smoothly. Then the tiny corpse was laid in and a few rocks laid up in cement hid it forever from its parents, and then outside was smoothly cemented till it could not be distinguished from the rest of the wall.

Another room has on its eastern wall a hieroglyphic representing probably the sun and some other lines that might be anything. In several places are prints of fingers or of the hand complete and perfect as the days ages ago when the hands were pressed into the plastic clay. There is not much to be seen in the building that I’ve not time to speak of. One ought to stay a week to explore it if they hope to satisfy their curiosity.

A second cliff house is separated from the first by a gulch...It is the most perfect I have ever seen, with traces of 22 rooms. 16 are in fair order, 3 of them and a hall are as perfect as the day they were finished. The hall is a narrow space between two rooms and has a short flight of steps leading to a tiny landing on the upper floor. The stairs are quite wide but very low, not more than 3 ¼ to 4 ¼ inches I should think in height, from one step to the next, and so worn by the myriad feet that ascended and descended them as to be hollow troughs in the center.

We were rambling around one of the upper story rooms exclaiming on the extremely fine state of preservation it was in, when Clara saw something in the dark corner she wanted to look at and started toward it. The floor was covered with various sorts of trash several inches deep and she 'waded' towards the corner. Suddenly there was a scream and the place where Clara had stood was vacant but certainly not silent for heartrending cries came from below. For a minute we stood nearly petrified with fright and then I flew out of the room and down the stairs to a room opening from the landing on the east side. Poking my candle in, I beheld Clara, hysterical from her scare, sitting in an immense heap of chollas that filled the room half way to the ceiling & were evidently stored there by rats, tho for what purpose I'm sure I can't guess. Truly this was appalling! But when Clara saw that she could reach the door by crawling thro' that agonizing pile of thorns she bravely stopped crying and started. The only aid any one could give her was to hold the candle so she could see and that I did. If we had had a rope we might have lowered it down the aperture she fell through and pull her up. It would have been less painful. But there was not rope, so she crawled out and if we had not been frightened at the consequences of so many cholla thorns in the poor child's tender flesh we would certainly have laughed for a more ridiculous object was never seen.

The chollas were all over her clothes, her limbs and her hair and piled up 8 and 10 deep till she was a walking stack of them. Well, we took her and pulled off all the big ones till we reached inner layer, which was attached principally to her skin. And then trouble for us and agony for her began in earnest. Of course the cruel, hooked barbs broke from the cholla rather than let go the flesh and after we finally got the last whole cholla off she still had scores of those thorns all over her, excepting her face. Then we girls half led, half carried her to an empty room, one where there was not much debris, though dust of course. Spread my big waterproof down on the floor, stripped her and two of us, Alice & I, picked and cut and pulled out all the cholla we could while Melinda got all the thorns possible out of her clothes. We had part of a bottle of milk left from lunch as we rubbed her with that. It eased the pain a little. She dressed and we took her to a cozy corner outside under some mesquite, rolled her up snugly in our cloaks and she sobbed herself to sleep. Melinda, who had made several trips to the cave, so to whom it was an old story, offered to stay with her while Alice and I continued exploring. So we returned to the ruins and after spending another half hour getting the cholla out of our hands, we began (exploring) where we left off. Tom & Frank & Bud had examined the upper room and the place Clara fell thro' was an opening for a trap door. Probably there used to be a ladder extending to the lower floor. Our cholla incident had taken a long two hours, so we hurried our inspection. We found many finger prints here too, and a room that evidently had been a kitchen. The floor is formed partly by a big rock (which also forms part of the side) and in this rock were ½ a dozen mutates hallowed out of it and varying in size, depth & shade. This rock wall and the ceiling above were black with smoke and there was a quantity of ashes etc. in it.

Name: _____

The FIRST Field Trip to Tonto National Monument

Part 1 In your own words, write a one or two paragraph summary of the “Early Visitors to Tonto Cliff Dwellings” passage. Make sure you use complete sentences. Use the back of this page if you need more room.

Part 2 Answer the following questions by circling the correct answers:

Instructions

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| 1. Did the author of the passage see or take part in the first field trip to Tonto National Monument? | YES | NO |
| 2. Is the passage a primary source? | YES | NO |
| 3. Did you, the author of the summary, see or take part in the first field trip to Tonto National Monument? | YES | NO |
| 4. Is your summary a primary source? | YES | NO |
| 5. Is your summary a secondary source? | YES | NO |