

Change Happens

Social Studies

Students will use a comic-strip format to show change and development of various tools and systems in our society.

What You Need

- Reference materials on general history and specific inventions, tools, technology, and methods
- Poster board
- Art materials

What to Do

1. Write the following terms on the chalkboard:

transportation
manufacturing
movement of goods
agriculture
communication
education
health care
entertainment

Explain to students that society is held together by these activities that we normally take for granted. Each one of these, however, has changed over time, sometimes gradually, sometimes dramatically, as methods, machines, and technology have improved.

2. Tell students that they are going to illustrate mini-histories of development and change in one of these areas. To do so, they will use a comic-strip format (that is, a series of illustrated panels). For example, a strip on transportation might begin with a panel showing a horse-drawn carriage and evolve into travel by jet plane. Accompanying text can provide additional information, such as a rough comparison of speed of travel, dates of inventions, etc.
3. Display students' finished strips as a gallery of change. Allow time for students to browse and study each other's work. Invite other classes, families, and community members to view the strips.

Teaching Options

- Some students might concentrate on one specific product or service within a broader area. For example, a student might show how milk production has changed over time. In medicine, students might show the developments in anesthesia.
- You may be able to invite a practitioner in one of these areas to class to share the history of the profession, skill, or technology.
- The library may have, or be able to obtain, copies of early catalogues from mail-order houses, such as the 1909 Sears catalogue. Have students compare their contents to the contents of modern-day catalogues.