

# How did the Erie Canal transform a town into a thriving city?



Lockport from an old print, 1836, in *History of Niagara County, N.Y.*, with illustrations descriptive of its scenery, private residences, public buildings, fine blocks and important manufactories and portraits of old pioneers and prominent residents, 1878 in *New York Heritage*: <https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/VVN001/id/840>

## Supporting Questions

1. Before the Erie Canal was built, how did people living in what is now Lockport travel and communicate?
2. How was the Canal an improvement over previous methods of transportation and communication?

### 3. How did improvements in transportation and communication affect local communities like Lockport?

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4th Grade Geography Inquiry

# How did the Erie Canal transform a town into a thriving city?

<p>New York State Social Studies Framework Key Ideas &amp; Practices</p>	<p>4.6c Improved technology such, as the steam engine and the telegraph made transportation and communication faster and easier. Later developments in transportation and communication technology had an effect on communities, the State, and the world.</p> <p>Students will investigate which early means of transportation were used in their local community and to which communities they were linked, noting why they were linked to those communities.</p> <p>Students will trace developments in transportation and communication technology from the 1800s to the present, noting the effects that these changes had on their communities, the State, and the world</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence</li> <li>● Comparison and Contextualization</li> <li>● Economics and Economic Systems</li> <li>● Geographic Reasoning</li> </ul>
<p>Staging the Question</p>	<p>Brainstorm possible ways the lives of people living in Lockport, NY were improved as a result of the Erie Canal</p>

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
<p>1. Before the Erie Canal was built, how did people living in what is now Lockport travel and communicate?</p>	<p>2. How was the Canal an improvement over previous methods of transportation and communication?</p>	<p>3. How did improvements in transportation and communication affect local communities like Lockport?</p>
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
<p>Explore different types of transportation and communication that were used before the canal and discuss what were the advantages and disadvantages of each one.</p>	<p>Students will examine price charts/ travel times/production capacity before and after the canal to compare movement of people and goods before and after the Erie Canal was built.</p>	<p>Have students brainstorm what might have been some advantages and disadvantages to communities like Lockport with new improvements in transportation and communication, resulting from the building of the Erie Canal.</p>
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources



Source A:



Title: Emigration to the Western Country, NYSL link: [http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/mssc/eriecanal/lossingimages/lossing\\_our-country-v2-opp%20p1180\\_emigration-western-country\\_oxen-pulling-wagons.pdf](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/mssc/eriecanal/lossingimages/lossing_our-country-v2-opp%20p1180_emigration-western-country_oxen-pulling-wagons.pdf)



Descriptions of overland and water travel through New York State from History of Niagara County monograph (page 92): <https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/VVN001/id/768>

Source B:



Letter from 11 year old Jane Taft to her sister Frances Taft Root in 1838

Source C:



Source A:

	Dirt Road (freight)	Canal (freight)
Method	Wagon 8 Horses	Line Boat 2 Mules
Amount of Time	15-45 Days	9 Days
Cost	\$100/Ton	\$6/Ton

Comparison of modes of travel

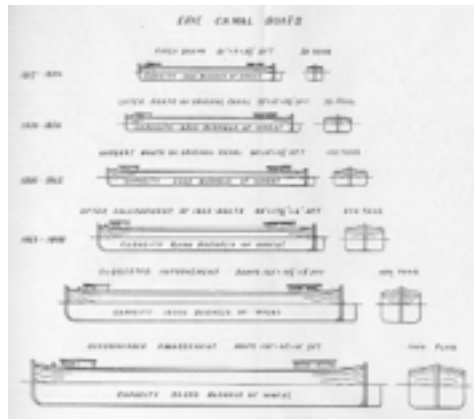
Source B



<https://mlpp.pressbooks.pub/americanenvironmentalhistory/chapter/chapter-6-transportation-revolution/>

Students compare travel times/experiences by oxcart, canal, train

Source C:



Comparison of canal boat cargo loads, <https://www.eriecanal.org/boats-2.html>

Source D

Comparison of modes of transportation - pdf <https://www.econedlink.org/resources/transportation-they-say-we->

Source A:



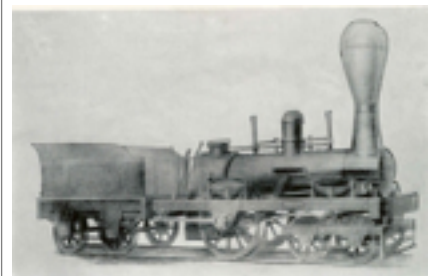
"To and from Albany and Buffalo, by the Erie Canal", 1846. <https://www.eriecanal.org/images/misc/fares1846.jpg>

Source B:



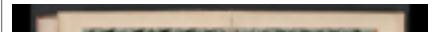
Advertisement from "American Traveller," Boston, May 30, 1828. <https://www.eriecanal.org/boats/AmericanTraveller-1828.jpg>

Source C:



Strap Railroad Locomotive - [need link](#)

Source D:



<p><b>Summative Performance Task</b></p>	<p><b>ARGUMENT</b> “The Erie Canal had an enormous influence on the history of Lockport. It also has an influence on the resurgence of Lockport today.” Students will use this as a claim and complete a claim evidence chart to prove that the statement is true.</p> <p><b>EXTENSION</b> Students will listen to various Erie Canal narratives. They will design a marker to honor one of the people from the narratives. They can make sample marker using art supplies or the computer. Examples of markers are included in the addendum.</p>
<p><b>Taking Informed Action</b></p>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND</b> Students will discuss how people in a community can take informed action and how people can and should be able to make changes within their community.</p> <p><b>ASSESS</b> Students will view the completed markers. They will vote on which marker is the best.</p> <p><b>ACT</b> Students will send letters to area representatives with news of their marker contest and information that they learned within the class.</p>
<p><b>Additional Resources</b></p>	<p><b>TODAY IN HISTORY:</b> <a href="https://primarysourcenesus.org/2012/10/today-in-history-erie-canal/">https://primarysourcenesus.org/2012/10/today-in-history-erie-canal/</a></p>



### Inquiry Description

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Students will look at a variety of sources in order to answer questions about the Erie Canal. They will learn how the canal was an improvement over previous methods of transportation and how the canal affected the growth of Lockport. This will be a chance for students to become involved in local history and current events.

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### Content Background

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This IDM will focus on introducing new technology (canal) and how it made transportation and communication faster and easier. Students will investigate how the canal was used in their local community. They will note why they were linked to Lockport and how the Canal changed the area. Students will trace developments in transportation technology from the 1800s to the present, noting the effects that these changes had on their communities. Teachers will build background by having students complete a homework packet on the Erie Canal. The packet is included in the IDM addendum

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### Students will

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At the end of the IDM lesson, students will create an itinerary for a visit to historical sites in Lockport. They will visit various websites that deal with canal tourism and create a poster that details the day. This is in addition to various formative assessments that students will complete throughout the multi-day lesson.

### Content, Practices, and Literacies

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A robust curriculum inquiry marries the key content students need to learn and the social studies practices they need to learn and master. The formative performance tasks in this inquiry build students' content knowledge of local history as they apply social studies practices to learn how Lockport was affected by the Erie Canal. The first formative performance task focuses students' attention on identifying the jobs and businesses created by the Erie Canal. The second formative performance task introduces prior methods of transportation to have students compare past and present modes of transportation. The third formative performance task highlights the ways people in Lockport today interact with the legacy of the Erie Canal. In order to do so, students add the practice of Economics and Economic Systems to the accumulating practices of Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence, and Comparison and Contextualization.

Evident across the three formative performance tasks is an increasing complexity of thinking. The first task works at the identification level in that students are identifying the jobs and businesses created the Canal. The second task also has a comparison element in that students are asked to compare and contrast different forms of transportation. In the third task,

students move to the interpretation of evidence by making and supporting claims about how the canal affects Lockport today.

The New York State P–12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy offer social studies teachers numerous opportunities to integrate literacy goals and skills into their social studies instruction. The Common Core supports the inquiry process through reading rich informational texts, writing evidence-based arguments, speaking and listening in public venues, and using academic vocabulary to complement the pedagogical directions advocated in the New York State K–12 Social Studies Framework. At the end of this inquiry is an explication of how teachers might integrate literacy skills throughout the content, instruction, and resource decisions they make.

## Supporting Question 1

<b>Supporting Question</b>	1. What did the Erie Canal provide to people in the Lockport community?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	-Create an advertisement/job posting for career opportunities on the Erie Canal. -Create an advertisement for a business along the canal route (Saloon, restaurant, blacksmith, laundry...)
<b>Featured Sources</b>	Images of technology used to dig canal in Lockport Images of people working on canal construction Images of people working in businesses using the canal
<b>Conceptual Understanding</b>	Define and frame questions about the United States that can be answered by gathering, interpreting, and using evidence. Identify, select, and evaluate evidence about events from diverse sources (including written documents, works of art, photographs, charts and graphs, artifacts, oral traditions, and other primary and secondary sources). 1. Explain how scarcity necessitates decision making; compare the costs and benefits of economic decisions
<b>Content Specifications</b>	Students will be able explain how the Erie Canal created jobs and businesses within the Lockport area.
<b>Social Studies Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Gathering, Interpreting and Using Evidence</li> <li>E. Economics and Economic Systems</li> </ul>

## Supporting Question

As students begin to think about and investigate this supporting question and the featured sources, they will explore local history and understand the importance of the Erie Canal. The images from Lockport will offer insight into the importance of the Canal to local history.

## Formative Performance Task

The formative performance task is to create an advertisement for jobs or businesses. Students will be able to use a Microsoft program such as Publisher to create the advertisement. They will present the ads to the class and students will be able to see how many jobs and businesses were created as a result of the Erie Canal.



## Supporting Question 2

<b>Supporting Question</b>	1. 2. How was the Canal an improvement over previous methods of transportation? How were later means of transportation an improvement over the Canal?
<b>Formative Performance Task</b>	Students will examine price charts before and after the canal. They will create two Venn Diagrams comparing the Erie Canal with past and present modes of transportations.
<b>Featured Sources</b>	Pictures of early transportation Data showing travel times pre/post canal Comparing prices and amounts of goods to be transported by land/canal
<b>Conceptual Understanding</b>	Describe, compare, and evaluate multiple historical developments within the United States in various chronological and geographical contexts.
<b>Content Specifications</b>	Students will be able to compare and contrast various methods of transportation.
<b>Social Studies Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Comparison and Contextualization</b></li></ul>

## Supporting Question 3

Supporting Question	3. How does the legacy of the Erie Canal affect Lockport today?
Formative Performance Task	Students will create an itinerary for a visit to historical sites in Lockport. They will visit various websites that deal with canal tourism and create a poster that details the day.
Featured Sources	<p>Sources:</p> <p>Websites dealing with local canal tourism.</p> <p>Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor: <a href="http://www.npshistory.com/publications/erie/newspaper/2015.pdf">http://www.npshistory.com/publications/erie/newspaper/2015.pdf</a></p> <p>Interactive Cycle the Canal Map: <a href="https://www.ptny.org/cycle-the-erie-canal/trail-map">https://www.ptny.org/cycle-the-erie-canal/trail-map</a></p> <p>NYS Canals (Lockport) <a href="http://www.canals.ny.gov/">http://www.canals.ny.gov/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.lockportlocks.com/cruiseexp.php">http://www.lockportlocks.com/cruiseexp.php</a></p> <p><a href="https://discoverlockport.com/see-do/erie-canal-attractions/">https://discoverlockport.com/see-do/erie-canal-attractions/</a></p> <p><a href="https://eriecanalway.org/find-resources/case-studies/lockport-locks">https://eriecanalway.org/find-resources/case-studies/lockport-locks</a></p>
Conceptual Understanding	Describe, compare, and evaluate multiple historical developments within the United States in various chronological and geographical contexts.
Content Specifications	Develop the connections of an interdependent community by engaging in the political process as it relates to a local context.
Social Studies Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Civic Participation</li> </ul>

## Taking Informed Action

<b>Compelling Question</b>	Does where you live matter?
<b>Taking Informed Action</b>	<p><b>UNDERSTAND</b> Brainstorm a list of the geographic opportunities and constraints in area neighborhoods and communities.</p> <p><b>ASSESS</b> Discuss how individuals and communities can turn constraints into opportunities.</p> <p><b>ACT</b> Arrange for a local official to visit the class to review the class conclusions and discuss possible community actions.</p>

