

Balto: A History of Humans, Huskies, and Health In Alaska

60 Minute History and Health Lesson Virtual Field Trip (VFT) Grades K-12, adult learners

DESCRIPTION

Join our historians to learn the story of Balto, the famous husky who was partially responsible for saving the town of Nome, Alaska from a diphtheria outbreak in the 1920's. Hear about the adventures of the sled dogs and their mushers on the famous Serum Run, and learn about Balto's connection to Ohio, and to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

OBJECTIVES

- Use a map to locate Alaska and to measure the distance between key stops on the Serum Run.
- Compare and contrast conditions and lifestyles of people living in Alaska in the 1920's with people living in Cleveland during the same time period.
- Explain and identify the importance of Balto to Cleveland and to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History.

OHIO'S LEARNING STANDARDS

Kindergarten: Geography: Spatial Thinking and Skills

Grade 1: History: Historical Thinking and Skills

Grade 2: History: Historical Thinking and Skills

Grade 3: Government: Civic Participation and Skills

Grade 4: Economics: Production and Consumption

Grade 5: Geography: Spatial Thinking and Skills

Grade 6: Government: Civic Participation and Skills

Grade 7: History: Historical Thinking and Skills

Grade 8: Geography: Spatial Thinking and Skills

Kindergarten - Grade 12: National Health Education Standards

- Students will comprehend concepts related to health promotion and disease prevention to enhance health
- Students will analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology and other factors on human health

How You Can Help Us Make This Virtual Field Trip A Success

- If your students are joining us from your classroom computer, please arrange your room and projection screen so everyone can see us clearly.
- Please test your visual and audio connections prior to the day of the program. If you would like us to facilitate a test connection with you, we are happy to do so.
- If you and your students are joining us from your homes, we will have an educator monitoring the Chat feature for questions. We request that you or another staff person serve as a Co-Host to help monitor students for any inappropriate Chat or camera behavior.
- If you will have a hybrid class (some at school, some joining from home), our educator will monitor the Chat and camera behavior, and we reserve the right to temporarily move any disruptive students to our Waiting Room so we or school staff can correct the undesired behavior.
- If you prefer, we can turn off all cameras and interact solely via the Chat feature.

VOCABULARY

antitoxin – a medicine containing antibodies produced by either an animal or human that has been exposed to a bacteria and the toxins (poisons) they produce. When used on a sick person, the antibodies bind to the toxins produced by these germs and stop them from harming the victim.

diphtheria - an extremely contagious bacterial disease affecting the throat and lungs. Toxin, or poison, caused by the bacteria can lead to a thick coating in the nose, throat, or airway. This coating is usually fuzzy gray or black and can cause breathing problems and difficulty in swallowing.

serum – fluid made from the blood of an animal inoculated for a specific disease.

telegraph – a long-distance communication system that relied on a signal of short and long pulses (dots and dashes) transmitted over an electrical wire from one place to another. In the standard Morse code used, each letter of the alphabet had its own code signal. For example, the standard call for help was SOS: ***---***. Morse code was also used in signaling with flags, lights, etc.

vaccine – medicine containing either weakened or dead bacteria or viruses. When given to a well person, it allows their immune system to protect them from the specific disease.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Find stories of other amazing animal rescues and famous dog adventures.
- Investigate some of the other diseases that caused widespread problems in the past, such as smallpox, cholera, and malaria. Are they still problems today? Where? How are they prevented or treated? Are there any that have been eliminated worldwide?
- Look up alternative modes of transportation used before modern mechanical means, such as automobiles and planes. Were they restricted to certain environments or geographic locations?
- Find out about rescue dogs, seeing-eye dogs and service dogs. How they are trained and used to help people?
- View the Universal Pictures animated film about Balto and list the differences between what happens in the cartoon and the true story.

ONLINE RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Click the link below to find additional online resources for teachers and students. These websites are recommended by our Museum Educators and provide additional content information and some fun, interactive activities to share with your class.

CMNH Educators regularly review these links for quality. Web addresses often change so please notify us if any links have issues.

<https://www.cmnh.org/in-the-news/science-news-science-blog/march-2020/balto-faq>
Balto FAQ and the story of the VFT program