

Elementary Classroom Primary Source Set

Aurora Maps and Suburban growth

Grade Level:
Elementary, 3

Essential Question:

1. How has Aurora's growth changed over time?

Supporting Questions:

1. How has the automobile shaped Aurora's growth?
2. Why is important that the city of Aurora has their own water supply?

Sources:



Image of Sam Hoffman
P1990.265, city of Aurora, Aurora History Museum
Collections



Image of house in Hoffman Heights during
construction.
P2003.17439, city of Aurora, Aurora History Museum
Photography Collection

The maps can be found [here](#)

Background Knowledge/Contextual Paragraph for Teachers

Population Growth in Aurora

Aurora, originally named Fletcher, was founded as a small residential community outside of Denver meant to be a quiet escape from the growing city to the west. Aurora remained a small city throughout the early part of the 20th century. It was not until the years following World War II that Aurora rapidly expanded to become one of Colorado's largest cities. Whether it's the high-density city blocks of northwest Aurora, the post-World War II housing of Hoffman Heights, or the spacious lots in Heritage Eagle Bend, the neighborhood functions as a fundamental unit of Aurora's culture and history.

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From 1940 to 1950, Aurora's population grew from 3,437 to 11,421, almost tripling in size. Aurora remained relatively small through the early part of the 20th century. After World War II, rapid expansion in infrastructure, housing, and businesses transformed Aurora to a bustling city. Today hundreds of thousands of people spread out over more than 150 square miles call Aurora home. By 1960, Aurora's population reached 43,548, and became Colorado's 4th largest city. This dramatic increase in population caused business and industry to boom, while the local infrastructure, including schools, housing and water resources, struggled to keep up with the demand.

In 1955, Del Mar Park and swimming pool were built as subdivisions replaces farms. Sam Hoffman was one of the real estate developers who built affordable, ranch-style homes for the new families moving to Aurora.

Building Background Knowledge for the Student:

Video on [Mid-Century growth](#)

Strategy Instruction:

Sourcing asks students to consider who wrote a document as well as the circumstances of its creation. When sourcing a document, students should ask:

- Who wrote this (or took the photo)?
- What is the author's perspective?
- Why is it written?
- When was it written?
- Where was it written?
- Is this source reliable? Why? Why not?

Contextualization asks students to locate a document in time and place and to understand how these factors shape its content.

- When and where was the document created?
- What was different then?
- What was the same?
- How might the circumstances in which the document was created affect its content?

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Strategy Instruction Differentiation:

Sentence stems for map timeline:

1. The first map is the _____ and it was created in _____.
2. The next map we have is _____. The city of Aurora has changed _____.
3. The 1967 Plat map shows that Aurora now includes more land

_____.
4. On the colorful 2014 map, the two biggest colors are _____ and _____
_____. This means that Aurora gained the most area in _____
and _____. (years)

The suggested activities can be completed in pairs or small groups.

Discussion:

Why do people make maps?

Why do people make certain choices about what to put on maps? For example, which roads are labeled, are there hospitals and police stations? How do mapmakers show us what they think is important?

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Assessment:

Tom's Standard Station, 6th and Havana 1976



Source: Aurora History Museum Archives P2000 16544

Question 1) Why are cars important in a city like Aurora? Use examples from your own life to help answer the question.

Question 2) The number of people living in Aurora started to grow quickly around the 1950's and nearly doubled from 74,974 in 1970 to 158,558 by 1980. What does this photo have to do with population growth?

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Assessment: Rubric

Level	Description
Proficient	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The student's answer shows they understand the importance of cars to transport people between living areas and business areas. They may possibly bring their own experience or prior knowledge that people live in distinct neighborhoods but have to leave them to access services such as schools, food and shopping.2) Recognizes the date on the photographs corresponds to the boom in population in the 1970's and associates that growth with cars and people being able to move around
Emergent	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The student's answer suggests they understand the importance of cars in Aurora, but they give weak evidence to support their conclusions or the personal link they share is not completely interpreted.2) The student recognizes the relationship between cars and Aurora's growth, but doesn't use the photos as evidence, or fails to see the link between the date and the population growth.
Basic	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The student cannot or incompletely identifies a link between cars and Aurora.2) The student does not recognize the dates and does not make a connection between personal vehicles and population growth

Colorado Academic Standards-Social Studies:

- CO Standard 1- History
 - 3.1.1.b- Students can use a variety of primary sources such as artifacts, pictures, and documents to help determine factual information about historical events.
 - 3.1.2.b- Students can give examples of people, events, and developments that brought important changes to a community or region
- CO Standard 2- Geography
 - 3.2.1.a- Students can read and interpret information from geographic tools and formulate geographic questions
 - 3.2.1.d- Students can identify geography based problems and examine the ways that people have tried to solve them.

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Colorado Academic Standards- Reading, Writing, and Communicating:

- CO Standard
 - 3.2.2.c.i.- Use information gained from illustrations (for example: maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.

Sample Activities:

There are several activities to do with the maps from the Aurora History Museum, these activities can be done as individual lessons, broken up into stations or you may only need to use one or two of the sources. For all of the lessons, it is important to help students orient the maps in the same way to keep their frame of reference the same when viewing the sources. The easiest way to do this is using the cardinal directions and always have north pointing toward the top of their workspace. If your students are working in small groups, it may be beneficial to continue to display a large map for the class with a compass rose displayed for students

1. **Draw a mental map of the school or the students' neighborhoods.** Talk about the physical characteristics of their neighborhoods, what is natural and what is man-made? Have students use positional language when talking about their maps, words such as near, far, between and next to help students orient their maps in space. This also provides support for language learners by providing positional terms with their native language translations if appropriate.

Project a large modern map of Aurora. This can be done using a smartboard or computer connected projector. The google map of Aurora will be sufficient and it allows the teacher to search and mark landmarks for students. Mark the school's location. Have students think of other landmarks that are used by a large group of students such as parks, grocery stores or shopping centers. You can have students use their mental maps to try to locate the different landmarks on the maps or mark them for your students on the map.

2. **Create a timeline of Aurora growth using the maps:** Make copies of each of the maps for whatever sized group will be doing the activity. Make sure the dates on the maps are clearly visible and have students put them in order based on the date.
3. **Seeing change over time in Aurora's growth:** Print the most recent map on the largest paper available and transparencies of the earlier year maps. Have students work backward through the timeline, overlaying the older transparency on the newer map and coloring in the area to see how the borders and area has changed. At the end there should be a stack of maps with different colored layers showing the growth rings for the city.
 - a. An optional math extension would be to have students also use graph paper on a transparency where they could outline each map's area and then calculate

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the change in area over time. Because some of the borders of Aurora are irregular, they will have to reorganize the area into a shape they can calculate more easily.

- b. The western border of Aurora is Yosemite, so on all of the maps, the northwest corner is Yosemite and 26th. Delmar Circle is at Peoria and 6th, which is the Southeast corner of the Fletcher map and shows up on all other maps so it is a good way to orient the overlays.

- 4. **Comparing natural and human characteristics:** Using the large topographical map, have students color in different physical features. The main natural features are streams and creeks (which humans had dammed to create human features of reservoirs) and hills. Some of the human features that are very visible on this map are reservoirs, military bases, highways, the airport and neighborhoods.
 - a. This activity can also be done without the topographical map, just substituting the most recent map from the sources, or using technology and google maps.
 - b. The topographical map shows more of the natural features in the slight elevation changes of the landscape. If you would like to go more in depth with topographical skills, there is an easy lesson here (<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/mapping/6413>) that gives a good introduction to learning contour lines, and the activity can easily be done as a class or with students completing their own contour maps.