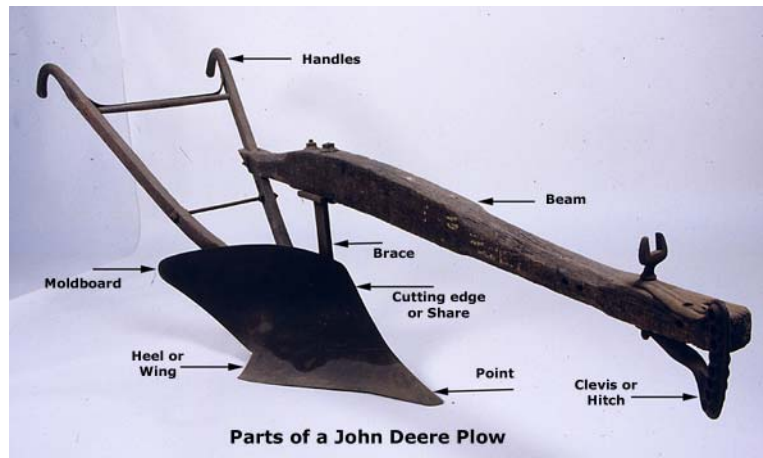


Researching Farming: Tools and Machinery

Objectives:

Students will:

- Understand the revolution that has taken place in the mechanization of farming since the mid-1850s and that farmers and the characteristics of their farms have changed with the technology
- Research and report on the technological development of a farm tool or machine between 1900 and 2000



19th-Century John Deere Plow

Materials:

Internet and print resources on farming

- Sadorus Farming section on change:
http://webdev.museum.state.il.us/ismdepts/art/sadorus/Sadorus_Farm.html
- Farm Machinery Section of the *History of Illinois Agriculture*:

Paper, pen and/or word processing software

Teacher guidelines for research and writing

Opening:

The main idea of this lesson is to continue finding out about farm technology and techniques that are explored in the Machinery and Tools section of the History of Illinois Agriculture /web Exhibit and our unit on Illinois history.

In addition to the artifacts in the Museum's collections and those pictured in the historic photographs, there are hundreds if not thousands of farm tools that were used in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Illinois.

Information on tools and machines is available on museum, agriculture, and antiques Web sites and in print resources. **If students have photographs of their farm subjects' tools and machines, they can begin to research them.** They can also, as always, use human resources, too — people in their family or community who may be knowledgeable or familiar with the tools.

Procedure:

Each student will choose a tool or machine to research. He/she will try to find out the following things:

- What each tool/machine is used for and what the parts are called
- Whether it and ones like it were home-made or manufactured commercially
- When the tool was used
- How the farmer handled and used the tool
- The cost of the tool
- The materials the tool was made of
- The development of and improvements to the tool through time
- Whether the tool or its “descendant” is still used today.

Students will write up their findings in an organized (chronological sequence) and type in on the computer and save the file to disk for their Web research project.

Closing:

In a class discussion, ask the class to share some of the interesting tools or machines and facts about them that they found.

Ask them what general conclusion they reached about technological changes in farming. What good did they changes provide? What were some negative consequences?

Assessment Suggestions:

Students should choose and focus on the history of one type of tool or machine only.

They should keep a list of all the resources they find on the subject.

Their report should show the changes that have occurred in the tool and what advantages those changes brought. (If a tool went obsolete, they should explain why they think it did – what replaced it.)