Presentation Notes
History of American Education

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Do you know the history of American education?

Teacher note: This video is about 11 minutes long.

CBS Reports: Where America Stands
A brief overview about the history of education in America.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGlGDvXGZIE

Did any of the information in the video surprise you? If so, what?
What are the changes and current trends in education today?
Let’s learn how education got started.
From 1607 – 1775, the New World was separated into 13 colonies which made up three groups. Each group was very different and unique due to its social, geographic and economic make-up.
If you lived in the southern colonies, you most likely lived on a large piece of land that was used for agriculture. Some of the more wealthy land owners had African slaves and servants to work the plantations. Public education did not exist in the southern colonies. At this time, only wealthy families could afford private tutors or to send their children to boarding schools or private schools.
The middle colonies consisted of New York, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware and Pennsylvania. The middle colonies were much more diverse than the southern colonies due to their culturally rich group of Dutch, Swedish and German dwellers. The colonists were also members of a variety of different religious groups such as Dutch Reformist, Quaker, Lutheran, Baptist, Roman Catholic and Jewish. Their schools included the study of religion, and all students were encouraged to learn in their native languages.
The smallest of the groups of colonies was the New England Colonies. It consisted of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire. It was much different from the other two colony groups because of its cultural and religious beliefs. Colonists believed in purity, which meant they believed that humans were inherently evil. They also believed that education was the vessel for following God’s commandments—a necessary means for creating God-fearing children. They believed in corporal punishment.
Although each group of colonies was very different, the core elements that made up the schools were the same – they taught the 4 R’s: reading, writing, arithmetic and religion. Students were expected to sit quietly for long periods of time. They were not permitted to ask questions, invoke their own opinions or question authority. There weren’t many textbooks available, so many teachers and students did without. Teachers were vastly underpaid and undervalued – they were not seen as important members of society. Only men were teachers during the colonial times.

The Old Deluder Satan Act (1647) stated that each town containing at least 50 households must hire a teacher and have a school. This is a significant part of our American educational history because it is the first legislature that stated public education was important and necessary for our children and society to flourish. It was also the cornerstone for funding public education in the future.
The colonial period saw many great leaders, but none more influential than John Amos Comenius, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Johann Pestalozzi. Comenius was the first philosopher to question the effectiveness of memorizing and reciting facts. Instead, he focused on teaching children’s needs and interests. Locke believed children learned best by doing and from first-hand experiences. Rousseau also believed children needed to learn from first-hand experiences and exploration. Pestalozzi believed children learned best by being able to playfully experience the world around them.
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Early National Period
1776 – 1820
As mentioned earlier, the thirteen colonies were very religious, which is why the establishment of the U.S. Constitution was so vital. Separation of church and state was set into place to state that no one religion was more important than another. However, this lead to controversial discussions we still have today about the role of religion in schools.

The establishment of the U.S. Constitution also laid the groundwork for setting up a national educational system. Leaders began to advocate for national rules and guidelines for schools across the United States. Some people opposed this idea, stating it should be up to each individual state since they were also beginning to build governing systems. In the end, it was decided that each state would be responsible for its own education system.

Funding for public education came from the selling of land west of the thirteen colonies that was acquired from Britain during the Revolutionary War. This funding was a result of the Land Ordinance of 1785.
Influential Leaders

- **Thomas Jefferson**
  - University of Virginia
  - Designed the university around the library

- **Noah Webster**
  - “Father of American Scholarship and Education”
  - “The American Spelling Book”

- **Freidrich Wilhelm Froebel**
  - Founded kindergarten
  - Froebel Gifts

Thomas Jefferson believed in a public education, for men only, as it was during this time. He believed that the schools should only be available to the best students and only those who could afford to pay for it. Free public education was not available until after the American Civil War.

Noah Webster was known as the “Father of American Scholarship and Education.” He developed a spelling book, called “The American Spelling Book.” It was known as the “blue-backed speller” because of its blue binding. It was used throughout many schools in America during this era.

Freidrich Wilhelm Froebel was the founder of kindergarten, and he laid the foundation for modern early education. He said that children needed to be nurtured and protected from outside influences. He also created a line of educational toys known as the Froebel Gifts.
THE COMMON SCHOOL MOVEMENT
1820 - 1860
The common school movement years are also referred to as the “Age of the Common Man” for two reasons. First, the election of President Andrew Jackson, a war hero, and second, westward expansion by poorer Americans, led Americans to believe the blue collar working man had unheard of opportunities. The United States began to flourish with growth, pollution and crime.
Public schools still charged tuition, making it incredibly difficult for the working family to send its children to school to receive a good, quality education. However, in 1820, the common school movement made a shift demanding free public education that would service all children, no matter their social, economic or cultural status. Parents began to view education as a better way of life for their children—a way for them to prosper. Elementary was the first of public schools to become free to all students. Secondary free public education did not become available until much later.

During the common school movement, educators likely taught only the fundamentals of education with very few teaching materials. Educators had heavy workloads because of this. Rural schools were even more difficult for educators to teach effectively in because students did not want to be in school and would often misbehave.
Horace Mann was a lawyer turned educator who believed that the best thing for our country was to improve the quality of education for our children. He helped to build schools, increase teacher salaries and pass the first attendance law.
History of Education in America

This video will take you from the beginning of America's free schools and how the education system evolved to socialism where we are at today. This is actually a three-part video. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhclWco8fA8
What variety of occupations is available to you at different education levels?

Ask the students this question.
Job Forecasting
Most of the occupational web sites provide a wealth of job outlooks and forecasts. It is important to involve you, the students, in finding information and applying it to determine your options for the future. Analyzing this data also shows you the importance and types of skills that the changing job market will require, especially for teachers, who will have the responsibility of preparing everyone to move the nation forward. Even presidents had to be taught at one time.

Teacher note: Visit the Bureau of Labor Statistics to learn more about job forecasting in education. Click on as many different educational occupations as you wish. Discuss the summary of each chosen occupation. Point out the job outlook for each one.

Bureau of Labor Statistics
Education, Training and Library Occupations
Are you interested in pursuing any of these ten fast-growing careers?
Can you think of more beneficial reasons to use technology in the classroom?

Top 10 Reasons to Use Technology in Education
This video provides information about why technology engages students in learning and will continue to be a trend for education.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mzi2RIt8_nk
Questions
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References and Resources

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Books:
Early Childhood Education Today, Twelfth Edition by George S. Morrison
This book is a great resource on early childhood education. It covers the foundation of education, programs and resources for children and families, educational needs of infants through the primary grades and the special needs of children and families.

Introduction To Teaching: Becoming A Professional, (Fifth ed.), by Don Kauchak & Paul Eggen
For any student going into the teaching profession, this is an excellent choice. It is an easy read for students on all levels. It covers the changing teaching profession, the foundations of education and how to become an effective teacher.

Teaching the Future: Teach! by Carlos Diaz, Carol Pelleter and Eugene Provenzo, Jr.
Students are asked to reflect on their own culture and how it has helped them to develop their ideas of teaching in this book. The authors ask students to reflect on their own belief system as they prepare to become future educators.
References and Resources

Websites:
Achieve Texas
The website with information about all career clusters. It includes many resources.
http://www.achievetexas.org/Education.htm

American Educational History: A Hypertext Timeline
This is a comprehensive list of historical events intertwined with educational changes. It is a very useful resource.
http://www.cloudnet.com/~edrbsass/educationhistorytimeline.html

Bureau of Labor Statistics
Education, Training and Library Occupations

Historical Timeline of Public Education in the U.S.
Race Forward started an initiative in 1981 to build racial awareness through research, media and practice. Their website gives a detailed account of racial equality beginning in the 1700s.
https://www.raceforward.org/research/reports/historical-timeline-public-education-us

Occupational Handbook
This is a very comprehensive collection of the most up-to-date occupational information. There is also a link for a teacher's guide to using it.
http://www.bls.gov/ohi/
References and Resources

DDH Teacher’s Guide for the Occupational Outlook Handbook at:
http://www.bls.gov/oh/About/Teachers-Guide.htm

The History of Education in America
Over the past 250 years, our educational system has changed several times. This site provides an excellent timeline of events throughout the years, including pictures, of our educational system in America.
http://www.chesapeake.edu/Library/EDU_101/eduhist.asp

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