



Unit: Daily Life

Lesson 4.7: Coney Island

Aim: To compare a recreational activity from the mid-19th century with its equivalent 100 years later.

Objective: Students study and compare a 19th-century etching of beachgoers at Coney Island with a more contemporary photo of the beach at Coney Island.

Materials:

1. Coney Island etching, 1869
<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/civilwar/cwdoc091.html>
2. Coney Island photo, 1863
<http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org/civilwar/cwdoc052.html>
3. Coney Island photo, 1952
4. Optional: Find a current photo of people on a beach in popular magazines

Procedure:

1. Ask students: What do you think of when you hear ‘Coney Island’?
2. Write associations on the blackboard or chart paper.
3. Ask students: What is your favorite thing to do there?
4. Again, record answers.
5. Divide students into small groups and distribute the etching.
6. Ask them to fill out the “I see/I think” chart about it.
7. Then distribute the 1950s or current photo of beach activity.
8. Groups create a Venn diagram or same/different chart about the two recreational scenes.
9. Full class discussion: After comparing these two pictures, what can you say about how our lives are different from those who lived 150 years before us?

10. List differences on blackboard. Students might want to research some of the topics mentioned (e.g., dress, propriety, amusement parks).

