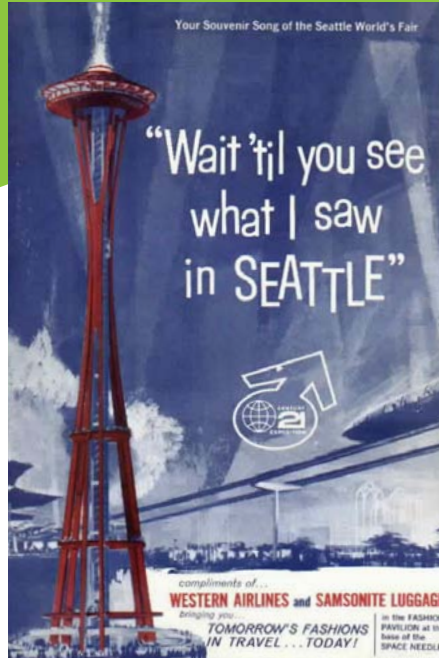


# Journeys to the Center



Who came to the 1962 Seattle World's Fair from other regions?

How did they travel and share their experiences?

## UNIT-AT-A-GLANCE

**Primary Objective:** Analyze primary sources including postcards, letters, interviews with fair participants, and maps to trace and document journeys to and from the fair. Evaluate how long-distance travel has changed over time and how it remains the same.

### Student Activities:

- View and respond to oral history interviews with Jane Morton, John Gordon Hill, and Enrique Cerna.
- Examine historical postcards and plot out the destination addresses on a U.S. map in order to see a cross-section of visitors to the fair.
- After reviewing oral histories, postcards, and fair highlights (from Unit 1), write fictional correspondence from a visit to the World's Fair. Compare and contrast how correspondence is different today.
- Synthesize information from multiple sources to complete the *Travel Across Time* activity, comparing what has changed about travel and what remains the same.

**Materials Included:** Worksheet to be printed or projected, sample correspondence from 1962 and 2011, oral history videos (links), maps, postcard templates

**Materials/Equipment Needed:** Copies of worksheets, projector to play videos, copies of postcard template

### Time Management:

**Lesson 1:** Read and discuss 2011 blog post with 1962 letter, view oral histories, and respond to questions in discussion or written format.

**Lesson 2:** Examine postcards, compile a list of destination addresses, and plot on a map.

**Lesson 3:** Review blog post, letter, and post card texts. Discussion: What did people correspond about? How did they communicate over long distances? How we might communicate differently today? What communication tools are available now that were not used in 1962? Write fictional accounts of an imagined visit to the Seattle World's Fair.

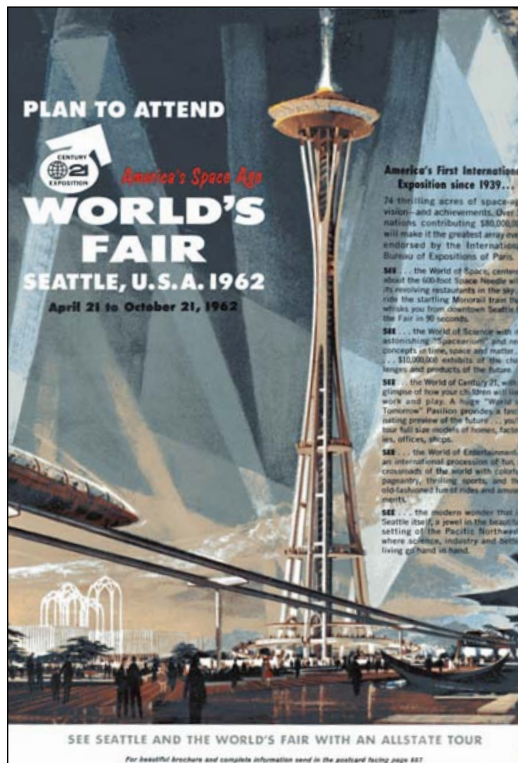
**Lesson 4:** Individually or in small groups, students synthesize understanding of travel and correspondence in different historical eras. They apply this understanding to the concept of social norms.

**Grade/Subject Recommended:** Modifiable elements for grades 3–11

# Content and Performance Objectives

## Content Objectives: Students will...

- identify Seattle and other locations in the United States.
- use primary sources to identify characteristics of fairgoers.
- trace historic travel from one region to another.
- examine transportation norms in the early 1960s.
- compare means of long-distance communication from the mid-20th century and today.
- study primary sources including personal travel correspondence from 1962.



## Performance Objectives: Students will...

- analyze primary sources including postcards, letters, and interviews with fair participants.
- use maps to trace and document journeys to and from the fair
- compare and contrast means of long-distance travel.
- compare and contrast means of long-distance communication.
- write travel correspondence using historic and contemporary media.
- evaluate how long-distance travel has changed over time and how it remains the same.



# Overview



The 1962 Seattle World's Fair transformed the city and its residents, but it also had an impact on many who visited from far away. Follow the footsteps of visitors who travelled from other regions and examine how travel and long-distance communication have changed.

Studying the experiences of those who traveled to the Century 21 Exposition gives a very intimate view of what a special occasion a world's fair was. The 1962 World's Fair was the first of its kind to occur in the U.S. since 1939. Many of the things we now expect to see in every major city—science centers, museums, and international cuisine—could then only be found in the exhibits of a major venue like that of Seattle's 1962 World's Fair.

Furthermore, many Americans found in the fair a great reason to finally go explore the Northwest. With many baby boomers still at home and the tumultuous years of the 1960s still ahead for the most part—not to mention the growth of the middle class following World War II—it was the era of the great family vacation. Visitors to the Seattle World's fair often used the trip as an opportunity to caravan to other western U.S. attractions such as Victoria B.C., Yellowstone National Park, and Disneyland.

Examining stories, travels, and correspondence of fairgoers in 1962 gives today's students a very grounded image of historical voices and the type of journeys that they might have taken with their families. It also challenges students to ask some questions about who was able to travel, how they moved around the country, and how they shared the experience with others.

This unit invites students to explore how the means we use to travel and the media we use to communicate over long distances has changed, but underscores how the excitement of an adventure and the longing for loved ones to share in those adventures are universal.

# Lesson 1:

## Where were you in '62?

### Materials:

Worksheet to be printed or projected

Correspondence from 1962 and 2011 (included below)

Oral history videos (linked below)

In this activity, students will contrast long distance communication styles of 1962 and today. They will also view and respond to oral history videos of three people who visited the fair as children.

In a group or individually, students read the following correspondence from July 1962 and July 2011 and respond to the following questions in discussion form, short answers, or by creating columns to compare and contrast the two passages.

- What is similar and different about the two trips? Consider forms of transportation, length of travel, technology, destination, and point of departure.
- After comparing and contrasting the trips, consider the letters themselves. How are they similar or different? How did the writers send them? What did they talk about? What did they look forward to or miss? In what ways does our mobile communication differ between 1962 and today?

**Blog post** July 28, 2011, 4:28 p.m.

Today I travelled to the Seattle Center. What an amazing experience! My flight left Los Angeles at 8 a.m. and touched down at the Seattle-Tacoma Airport by 11 a.m. – just enough time to watch a movie on my iPad. I rented a car with GPS, so it was just a quick 20-minute trip up I-5 and then I was splashing in the fountain, taking in a concert at the Mural Amphitheater, and viewing exhibits at the Pacific Science Center and the Experience Music Project. Did you see my Facebook post with a picture from the top of the Space Needle?!? It's great to see that the Needle and all the grounds from the old World's Fair still bring new life to the city. What a day! I wish you could have come with me – it's always more fun to explore these things together (you know who you are ;) ). Going to grab some Seattle seafood and then tomorrow it's back to L.A. See ya! (PS – Mom, I texted you my arrival time to the airport, hope you see it or read this!)

July 28, 1962

Dear Maria,

Vacation has been amazing! Although it's been only four short days, we just arrived in Seattle! What a beautiful drive from Los Angeles. So many changes in the countryside, from the dry, hot San Joaquin Valley of California to the mountains in Northern California and Southern Oregon and then the farmland of the Willamette Valley and finally the brilliant green trees from Portland all the way to Seattle. We passed through small towns and big cities, mostly travelling on Route 99. Imagine how fast the trip will be when they finish constructing the I-5 Freeway! We had to let the engine cool in the Siskiyou Mountains near Mt. Shasta. You should have seen how nervous Dad was! At least it wasn't as hot as when we were driving between Bakersfield and Marysville—we bought an ice block to cool the car down! But once we arrived in the Northwest, we were wishing we could have brought the warm weather with us! It's much cooler and I can't believe how many rivers and lakes we've passed!

We stay busy in the car by playing word games and making up stories, plus we have AM radio, so we listen to music, but Bobby hates rock n' roll so we can't agree on a station. Anyway, when you visit the fair next week, you won't have to worry about that since you'll travel by train. Well, I miss you and wish you were by my side, taking in all the new sights and sounds. Two great days at the fair and then another four back to L.A. I better get some rest. Tomorrow is the big day when I ride to the top of the Space Needle. We saw it shining in the night as we arrived at our motel. World's Fair, here I come!

Your sister,

Clara

After reading and discussing the letters, view the oral history interviews with Jane Morton, John Gordon Hill, and Enrique Cerna and discuss or write responses to the following questions:

How did Jane and Enrique arrive at the fair? How did they travel and how long did it take?

John lived in Seattle. Who came to visit him? Where did they travel from?

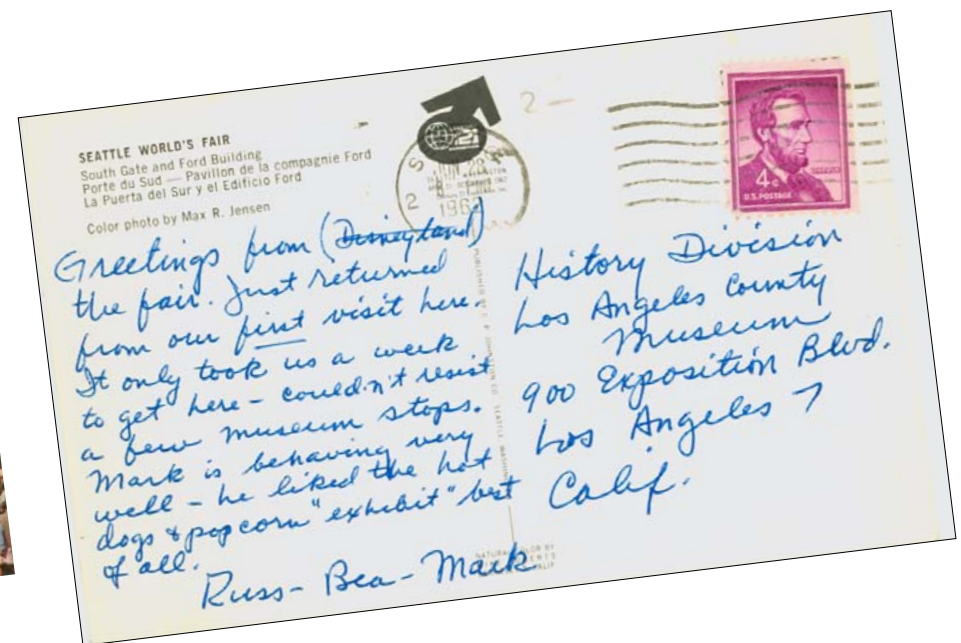
Enrique did not live too far away, but how was being in Seattle different from his experience in the Yakima Valley?

Even though John lived in Seattle, each trip to the fair was like a journey to imagination. Describe how he saw the fair through 10-year-old eyes.

Choose one of the three interviewees and explain what impact the fair had on her/him.

### Extension:

Consult resources for conducting oral histories, like [StoryCorps](#). Use these resources to have students conduct historical interviews in their own communities. Washington learning communities may want to focus on the 1962 World's Fair; learners in other regions can identify hallmark events from the past 50 years in their region and focus interviews accordingly. Of particular focus in either scenario would be for students to contrast childhood at that time as compared to today. What's similar? What's different? How did children/youth relate to major historical events of their time? What are major historical events of today and how do we relate to them now?



## Lesson 2: Greetings from the Fair

### Materials:

#### Activity II Worksheets to be printed or projected

#### U.S. Maps (blank)

This activity provides another great opportunity to use primary sources. Students will use postcards that were sent from fairgoers to friends and family around the country. Students will document where the cards were sent from, where they arrived, and contrast how we communicate “on the road” today. Using maps students will also document different journeys that were made to the fair.

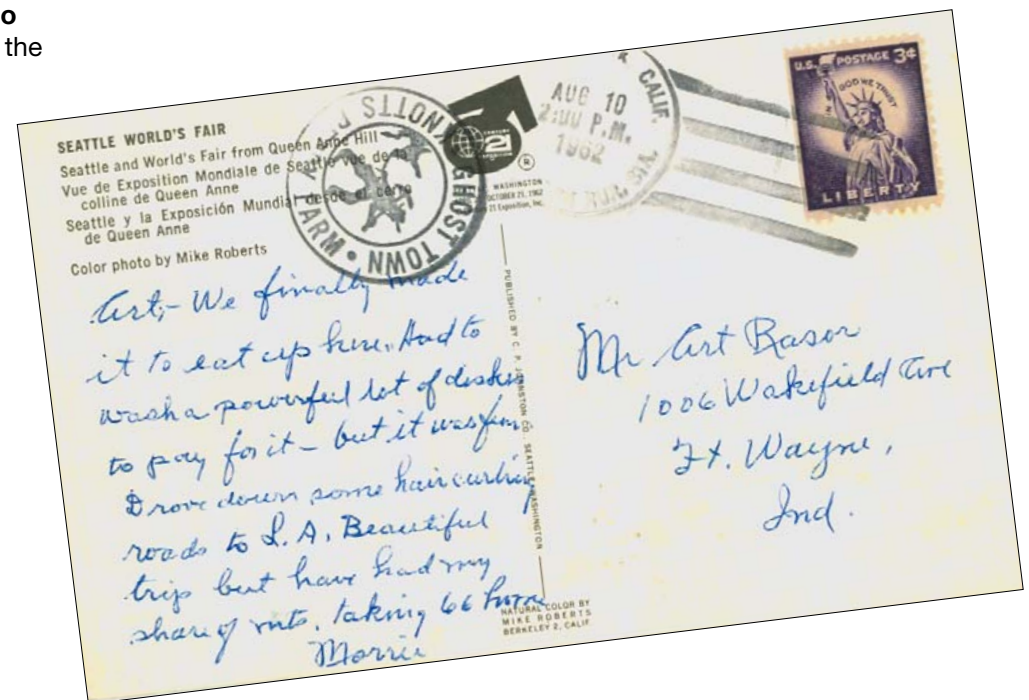
Using the Correspondence Collection, print and distribute postcards to students, or show the postcard images using a projector. Create a log for students to investigate the following questions. (A template is available in the appendix)

- **Who is the recipient of the correspondence and where do they live?** (It’s not always clear to see who the sender is, but the destination address should be obvious).
- **Where and when was the correspondence postmarked?**
- **What locations are mentioned?**
- **Which fair activities are mentioned?**
- **Was the traveler headed to other destinations along the West Coast?** (Many fairgoers took the opportunity to see other parts of the Northwest)
- **Are there clues to whether the person traveled by car, train or plane?**

In small groups or individually, students can look for trends among the fairgoers. Are there any common points of departure? What are the most typical modes of transportation? Are there any common themes in reactions to the fair?

Using the blank U.S. maps, have students mark the destinations for each postcard to visually represent the journeys.

- Several postcards relate multiple destinations; try to map out those journeys.
- Younger students can draw direct lines from Seattle to the various destinations. Advanced students can use Google Maps and/or Wikipedia to trace historical routes such as US-99.



## Lesson 3: Wish You Were Here!

### Materials:

Paper for notes

Postcard templates

In this activity students contrast mobile communication in the first person as they assimilate events from the World's Fair and write their own correspondence.

### Preparation:

Each student will take on a character that may have visited the 1962 World's Fair. Some possibilities might include:

- a tourist from another part of the U.S. (be specific)
- a student on a band tour
- a temporary worker who's come to operate the monorail
- a visiting dignitary or politician
- a scientist or architect studying exhibits
- a Space Race enthusiast
- a small child
- a retiree
- a touring performer (jazz musician, rock band, water ski show)
- a cultural ambassador of the Japanese pavilion
- a dancer at the Spanish Village

On a separate paper, students create a backstory for their character in narrative or list form. Be specific. Where is the character from? How old is s/he? What brought them to the fair? How did they travel? Who did they travel with? What did they see or do at the fair and around the Northwest? Where are they headed next? Who are they writing to and why?

To complete this work, students will draw from what they have learned about the fair in other units or in articles at [HistoryLink.org](http://HistoryLink.org). They can also review the Correspondence Collection and the letters at the beginning of this unit.

Assuming that character, each student will:

1. Write correspondence as if they were visiting the fair in 1962. What form of communication would they have used? Letter? Postcard? Telegram? Students can use pictures from this curriculum to design their own postcard. They should handwrite their correspondence.
2. Write correspondence as if the fair was happening today. Students will need to choose a form of correspondence that they might use in the present. Facebook, Twitter, text, blog posts, etc. More than likely, these will be typed forms of communication. Again, using pictures from the curriculum, they can create mock photo "posts."



## Lesson 4: Wish You Were Here!

### Materials:

Student work from Activity III

Activity IV Worksheet (to be printed or projected)

In this culminating activity, students will examine the question of social norms. How are they different from one era to another? What core elements stay the same?

Begin with students sharing their work from the previous activity. In groups or pairs, students can analyze long distance communication and travel. They can organize their thoughts into columns of similarities and differences.

In short-answer format, students will synthesize information about travel and long distance communication for 1962, 2012—and in the spirit of the Seattle World's Fair—make some estimates of what travel and communication will look and sound like 50 years from now in 2062.

# but can it fly?

### Extensions:

- Invite students to illustrate/design their visions of travel and correspondence in 2062.
- Have students use Powerpoint or [www.prezi.com](http://www.prezi.com) to create multimedia presentations of how travel or communication norms have changed over time.

