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Dear After-School Practitioner:

The Chicago Historical Society proudly introduces its newest instructional resource, *My Chicago*, made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Inspire the kids you work with to discover Chicago and connect the city's past to their lives today. *My Chicago* comprises ten activities for children ages 6–12, using the symbols and design of the Chicago flag to explore the city's rich and diverse history.

My Chicago illustrates the themes of Chicago's past and present by drawing on the collections of the Chicago Historical Society, including a variety of photographs, documents, and images of artifacts. Components of the activity guide include:

- **Student worksheets** that can be combined to make a scrapbook of students' work and creativity. Students can share this keepsake of the *My Chicago* program with adults at home.
- **A timeline** that places events and topics in a larger context
- **Narratives** to distribute to students. Read aloud the narratives as students follow along as an introduction to the subject.
- **Vocabulary lists and questions** that keep students engaged and on track with the content
- **Activities**, a series of interactive lessons that explore the city of Chicago

Instructors are encouraged to adapt the activities to best meet the needs of the children with whom they work. These flexible topics and materials can be tailored for individual after-school environments. Any activity can be split over several days, or students can complete some portions at home.

These materials may be copied and kept as a resource packet.

Yours in education,

**The Staff of the History Programs Department
of the Chicago Historical Society**



Chicago Historical Society

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My Chicago: Overview of Activities

My Chicago activities are designed for children ages 6–12 who participate in after-school programs. These enrichment activities support and supplement academic skills. Use the chart below to assist your *My Chicago* planning.

| Activity Number and Title | Activity Description | Instructional Tips |
|---|--|---|
| 1 Chicago Flag | Students are introduced to the symbols on the Chicago flag and assemble scrapbooks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a miniature Chicago flag to class. |
| 2 Fort Dearborn <i>The first star on the Chicago flag</i> | Students learn about life at Fort Dearborn and “pack” a trunk for a long journey. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a map of Chicago to show students the former location of Fort Dearborn. |
| 3 The Great Chicago Fire: Chicago Is Burning! <i>The second star on the Chicago flag</i> | Students become artifact detectives when they analyze photographs of melted objects from the fire. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Split the drawing box in half for views of the object before and after the fire. Bring real objects to class that represent the objects in the photographs. |
| 4 Chicago’s World’s Fairs <i>The third and fourth stars on the Chicago flag</i> | Students imagine themselves as world’s fair visitors and write and illustrate a postcard describing the experience. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students to bring souvenirs, postcards, etc., from fun places they have visited with family and friends (bring in your own samples too). Encourage children to share their memories in a show-and-tell style or small groups. |
| 5 Chicago River <i>The two blue stripes on the Chicago flag</i> | Students compare and contrast photographs of the Chicago River. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring brochures from a variety of boat-tour companies to class. Use a map of Chicago to help students trace the path of the river including the main, south, and north branches. |
| 6 Chicago Landmarks <i>The three white stripes on the Chicago flag</i> | Students play a game about the famous sites and landmarks of Chicago. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring brochures and postcards to class that represent the landmarks and sites in the game. |
| 7 Neighborhood Story <i>The three white stripes on the Chicago flag</i> | Students use a storyboard template to create a cartoon about their own neighborhood. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a storyboard of your own neighborhood to share with students. |
| 8 Picture That: Shopping in the Neighborhood <i>The three white stripes on the Chicago flag</i> | Students investigate historic photographs of shopping on two famous Chicago streets. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice math and consumer skills. Assign prices to the goods on the student-generated list, give students a budget, and send them on an imaginary shopping trip. |
| 9 <i>My Chicago</i> Poetry <i>The three white stripes on the Chicago flag</i> | Students are introduced to the work of Sandra Cisneros and Carl Sandburg and write their own poetry about life in Chicago. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide further examples of writing by Cisneros, Sandburg, and other Chicago authors such as Gwendolyn Brooks. |
| 10 <i>My Chicago</i> Field Trip | Students visit the Chicago Historical Society to learn more about their city. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take a group photograph during your field trip for display in your after-school program space or make copies for students to glue on the last page of their <i>My Chicago</i> scrapbooks. Encourage students to sign one another’s scrapbooks. |



Chicago History Timeline

- 1673** Louis Jolliet and Jacques Marquette are the first known Europeans to explore the region eventually known as Chicago.
- c. 1779** Jean Baptiste Point DuSable builds a trading post and establishes a permanent settlement on the Chicago River (near the current location of the Tribune Tower).
- 1795** The Treaty of Greenville is signed. After defeat at the Battle of Fallen Timbers in Ohio, Indian tribes are forced to cede to the U.S. government a “piece of land six miles square at the mouth of the Chicago River.”
- 1803** The U.S. Army builds the first Fort Dearborn at what is now the south end of the Michigan Avenue bridge.
- 1812** Chicago reflects the tensions of the War of 1812. Fort Dearborn is destroyed and some of the settlers are captured or killed by American Indians. The fort is rebuilt in 1816 and abandoned in 1836.
- 1818** Illinois becomes the twenty-first state admitted to the Union. All the major settlements are in the state’s southern portion.
- 1830** Chicago’s population is about fifty. The first streets and lots are laid out.
- 1833** Chicago incorporates as a town; its borders are today’s Kinzie, Madison, State, and Desplaines Streets.
- Population is about 350. The first Chicago newspaper, the *Chicago Democrat*, a weekly paper, is published. Eliza Chappel opens the first publicly funded school.
- 1834** The first drawbridge, made of wood, is built over the river at Dearborn Street.
- 1835** The first regular fire department is organized; Gurdon Hubbard buys the first Chicago fire engine for \$894.38. The Chicago Lyceum, Chicago’s first library, opens. Chicago’s first bank opens.
- 1837** Chicago is incorporated as a city on March 4. The city is ten square miles, bordered by North Avenue, Lake Michigan, Twenty-second Street, and Wood Street (1800 West). Population reaches more than four thousand. William B. Ogden becomes the city’s first mayor.
- 1840** Chicago’s population is 4,470.
- 1843** The first city hospital opens.
- 1847** The *Chicago Tribune* prints its first newspaper.
- 1848** The *Pioneer* locomotive arrives by ship. The first railroad tracks—wooden beams topped by iron straps—are laid. Five miles of the Chicago Galena Union Railroad opens. The Illinois and Michigan Canal linking the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River opens.



- 1850** Chicago's population is 29,963. Fifty percent of the residents are immigrants. Gas streetlights are installed.
- 1855** The city begins raising the levels of streets as much as twelve feet to improve drainage.
- 1856** Chicago is a prominent railroad center with ten major lines. The first wooden pavement is laid in Chicago.
- 1860** Chicago's population is 112,172.
- 1864** Lincoln Park is founded.
- 1865** The Union Stock Yards are established to consolidate all of Chicago's slaughterhouses into one area.
- 1867** Phillip Armour opens a meatpacking plant in Chicago. A sanitary water system is set up.
- 1869** The city's second waterworks, the Water Tower, is finished.
- 1870** Chicago's population is 298,977. Chicago is the nation's leading meat-packer and largest marketplace for grain and lumber.
- 1871** The Great Chicago Fire, October 8–10, destroys an area nearly five miles long and one mile wide. About three hundred people die and almost one hundred thousand people are left homeless. A newspaper report promotes the idea that Catherine O'Leary and her cow were responsible for starting the fire, but no evidence is found to support that accusation.
- 1880** Chicago's population is 503,185. George Pullman builds his car shop for making railroad sleeping cars and the town of Pullman.
- 1885** The nine-story Home Insurance Building, designed by William Baron Jenney, is erected. Its skeletal construction of iron and steel beams leads the way to future skyscrapers.
- 1886** The Haymarket Affair takes place during a protest for an eight-hour working day.
- 1887** Richard Sears opens a company in Chicago that sells watches and jewelry.
- 1889** Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr open Hull-House, a settlement house, to help the poor in the neighborhood. Annexations increase the city's size from 36 to 108 square miles.
- 1890** Chicago's population is 1,099,850.
- 1892** Electric streetcars (trolleys) and a steam-powered, elevated railway system (the L) begin widespread service. The L system is converted to electric power in 1897. Horse cars and cable cars are not used after 1906. The University of Chicago is opened. Telephone lines connect Chicago to New York.
- 1893** The *World's Columbian Exposition* is held in Jackson Park, on Chicago's South Side.
- 1894** A workers' strike at the Pullman car plant leads to a railroad strike in twenty-seven states by American Railway Union workers.
- 1897** The Chicago downtown business area, encircled by new elevated train lines, is first referred to as the "Loop."
- 1899** The number of automobiles in the city increases from three to more than three hundred.
- 1900** Chicago's population is 1,698,575. The Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal, linking the South Branch of the Chicago River with the Illinois and Mississippi rivers, opens. The flow of the Chicago River is reversed.



- 1909** Daniel Burnham completes his *Plan of Chicago*, which serves as a blueprint for improvements in the metropolitan area.
- 1910** Chicago's population is 2,185,283.
- 1916** Municipal Pier, later called Navy Pier, is completed for passenger and freight vessels.
- 1919** A violent race riot leaves fifteen whites and twenty-three African Americans dead.
- 1920** Chicago's population is 2,701,705.
- 1927** Chicago's first municipal airport (later called Midway Airport) opens.
- 1929** Gangsters murder seven of Al Capone's enemies in the St. Valentine's Day Massacre. The Merchandise Mart, the world's largest building, is built.
- 1930** Chicago's population is 3,376,438.
- 1932** Due to the nationwide depression, more than 750,000 Chicagoans (nearly one-fourth of the city's population) are out of work. Only 51 of the city's 228 banks remain open.
- 1933** Chicago's second world's fair, *A Century of Progress International Exposition*, opens. The fair, celebrating the centennial of Chicago's incorporation as a town, runs successfully for two summers.
- 1940** Chicago's population is 3,396,808.
- 1942** The world's first controlled atomic reaction is achieved at the University of Chicago.
- 1943** Chicago's first passenger subway, beneath State Street, is completed.
- 1950** Chicago's population reaches an all-time high of 3,620,962. The population of the entire six-county metropolitan area is 5,177,868.
- 1953** Chicago is the steel capital of the world.
- 1955** Richard J. Daley is elected mayor. O'Hare Airport opens and eventually becomes the world's busiest airport.
- 1960** Chicago's population is 3,550,404.
- 1968** Riots and fires occur in parts of Chicago's West Side following news of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Disorder erupts during the Democratic National Convention.
- 1970** Chicago's population is 3,369,357.
- 1971** The Union Stock Yards close.
- 1974** The world's tallest building, the 110-story Sears Tower, is erected.
- 1975** Mayor Richard J. Daley dies while serving a record sixth term.
- 1979** Jane M. Byrne is elected Chicago's first woman mayor.
- 1980** Chicago's population is 3,005,072.
- 1983** Harold Washington is elected Chicago's first African American mayor.

What important events have happened in Chicago since Harold Washington's election? Research Chicago's recent past to add information to the timeline!