

Boca Raton's Land Boom and Land Bust

CONTENT / THEME: Florida History / Land Boom and Land Bust

GRADE: Fourth

TIME: 1 class period

TEXTBOOK CONNECTION:

Houghton Mifflin Social Studies: Florida Studies: (2005) Grade 4, Chapter 8, Core Lesson 3, pages 242-245. and Chapter 9, pages 260-261.

Harcourt Brace Social Studies: Florida Edition (2002) Grade 4, Unit 4, Chapter 8, pages 308-311.

After reading about Florida's *Land Boom* and *Land Bust*, ask the students, "How do you think Florida's land boom and land bust affected Boca Raton?" Explore the answer with this lesson.

BENCHMARK CONNECTIONS:

- SS.A.1.2.1 understands how individuals, ideas, decisions, and events can influence history.
- SS.A.1.2.2 uses a variety of methods and resources to understand history (such as interpreting diaries, letters, newspapers; and reading maps and graphs) and knows the difference between primary and secondary sources.
- SS.A.6.2.2 understands the influence of geography on the history of Florida.
- SS.A.6.2.3 knows the significant individuals, events, and social, political, and economic characteristics of different periods in Florida.
- SS.B.1.2.1 The student uses maps, globes, charts, graphs, and other geographic tools including map keys and symbols to gather and interpret data and to draw conclusions about physical patterns.

FCAT SKILLS PRACTICED:

- analysis/inferences
- author's purpose
- cause/effect

OBJECTIVES: The students will...

- examine contributions made to Boca Raton by its most influential land developer of the 1920s.
- analyze Boca Raton land development ads published during the 1920s Florida land boom.
- list two of Boca Raton's historic structures built in the 1920s.
- explain what led to Boca Raton's economic depression.

MATERIALS:

- Reading Passage: *Boca Raton's Land Boom and Land Bust* (Lexile Measure: 610L)
- Student Activity sheet
- Mizner Development Ad: *I Am Boca Raton, Fla.*
- Harry Vought & Co., Inc Ad: *Beautiful Homes at Boca Raton*
- Optional: Overhead projector

BACKGROUND INFORMATION & TEACHER PREPARATION:

- Read the following topics from A Teacher's Guide to Boca Raton's History :
 - Administration Buildings (*Places, 1*)
 - Mizner Development Corporation (*Turning Points, 2*)
 - Cloister Inn (*Places, 3*)
 - Addison Mizner (*People, 7*)
- Read pages 4-5, 16, 21, and 42, from A Stroll Through Early Boca Raton from A - Z.
- Read the photo captions on pages 38-39, 40-49 from Images of America: Boca Raton .
- Review the reading passage: *Boca Raton's Land Boom and Land Bust* and make copies for students if desired.
- Review the two Boca Raton advertisements.
- Review Student Activity sheet and make copies for students.
- Make copies of the two ads for students and/or make an overhead transparency.
- Incorporate the following vocabulary words into the weekly vocabulary list:
 - **architect** - a person who designs the shape of a building and decides the materials to be used to build it.
 - **depression** - a period when businesses fail, prices drop and jobs are very hard to find.
 - **land boom** - a time in which people buy and sell land quickly.
 - **land bust** - a time in which people stop buying land.
 - **land development** - land that is used to build houses and businesses.

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

- Introduce the lesson by asking, "How do you think Florida's land boom and land bust affected Boca Raton?"
- Read the passage: *Boca Raton's Land Boom and Land Bust*
- Distribute *I Am Boca Raton, Fla.* or use a transparency of it on the overhead projector. Referring to the ad, ask the following questions:
 1. Is this ad a primary or secondary resource? (*primary*)
 2. Who is the author of this ad? (*Mizner Development Corporation*)
 3. What is the Mizner Development Corporation? (*Developers of Boca Raton*)
 4. What is the main idea of this ad? (*Boca Raton is the greatest resort in the world*)

5. Why is Florida abbreviated “Fla.”? (*former post office abbreviation*)
 6. How do we abbreviate Florida now? (*FL*)
 7. Is there a Mizner Development Corporation office in Boca Raton yet? (*no*)
 8. Who will make Boca Raton a glorious resort? (*Addison Mizner*)
- Distribute *Beautiful Homes at Boca Raton* or use a transparency of it on the overhead projector. Referring to the ad, ask the following questions:
1. Is this ad a primary or secondary resource? (*primary*)
 2. Who is the author of this ad? (*Harry Vought & Co., Inc.*)
 3. What kind of business is the Harry Vought & Co., Inc? (*builders*)
 4. What do they build? (*houses*)
 5. How much do these houses cost? (*\$7,000*)
 6. Where was this ad published? (*The Palm Beach Post*)
 7. The Harry Vought & Co., Inc. worked for which land developer? (*Mizner*)
 8. Where does an interested buyer go to see a sample of the houses? (*the Administration Buildings in Boca Raton*)
- Distribute Student Activity sheet and guide students to completion.

REVIEW & APPLICATION OF LESSON:

- Compile a list of the built and unbuilt Boca Raton structures of Addison Mizner. Go to www.bocahistory.org/exhibits/miznersdream for *Mizner’s Dream* on-line exhibit.
- Log on to www.bocahistory.org/bocaratonshistory/now&then to compare Addison Mizner’s Administration Buildings in 1925 and today.
- Challenge the students to discover how much one of these houses advertised in *Beautiful Homes at Boca Raton* cost today. The houses advertised in this ad are homes located in today’s Spanish Village. Discuss what resources would lead them to the answer. Make sure the quoted price reflects one of the original Spanish Village homes that has survived in the neighborhood. Compare that price with a house in today’s Old Floresta. (Floresta was also a Mizner Development Corporation project.)

ASSESSMENT:

- Evaluate the students’ responses to the Boca Raton land development ads.
- Evaluate the students’ Student Activity answers.
- Student Activity answers:
1. **D** vacation
 2. **B** to inform people of Boca Raton’s land boom and land bust.
 3. **A.** Administration Buildings
B. Cloister Inn

4. Example of Top Response:

Many events led to Boca Raton's depression. First, Boca Raton had a land bust. People had stopped buying land and houses. Another event was the railroad workers had stopped loading building supplies onto the trains. Boca Raton could not get building supplies using the railroad. No one could build houses or stores without the building supplies. Next, Boca Raton had a hurricane hit them hard in 1926. It left a lot of damage. All these events led to Boca Raton's depression.

VISUAL ARTS EXTENSION: *(See Visual Arts Extensions section for materials and directions.)*

➤ **Create an Architectural Street Scene**

Students will work collaboratively to create a large cityscape.