OVERVIEW

Students will use photographs and primary sources to understand the difference between irrigated and dryland farming. A map exercise will help them understand the importance of water to Colorado agriculture and the growth of cities.

STANDARDS

- History Standard 4.3: Students understand the historical development and know the characteristics of various economic systems.
- Geography Standard 2.2: Students know how and why people define regions.
- Reading and Writing Standard 3: Students write and speak using conventional grammar, usage, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

OBJECTIVES

After completing this activity, students will be able to:
- Differentiate between irrigated and dryland farming.
- Describe the relationship between access to irrigation and the kind of crops grown in Colorado.
- Describe the relationship between availability of water and size of towns and cities in Colorado.
- Use a map to record information about farming.
- Generalize about the importance of water to the settlement of Colorado.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

- Where in Colorado did farmers use irrigation?
- Where was dryland farming practiced?
- What crops depended on irrigation? What crops were grown in dry areas?
- How important was water to the development of farms and towns in Colorado?

PROCEDURE

1. CD-ROM/Internet use: Whole-class teacher-directed instruction.

2. Show the students photographs related to irrigated farming:
   - Click on Farm Work and Tools;
   - Click on Irrigated Farming to access these photographs.

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This activity was created with funding from the Colorado State Historical Fund.
Ask what these photographs tell us about farming in Colorado?

3. Show the students photographs related to dryland farming:
   - Click on Farm Work and Tools; click on Harvesting Wheat.
   - Ask what these photographs tell us about farming in Colorado?

4. Make copies and handout the following primary sources:
   - Rules for Irrigated Farming
   - Learning to Farm in a Dry Climate
   - The Drought in Yuma County in the 1880s
   - The Drought in Baca County in 1891
   - Drought in Eastern Colorado in 1892
   - Ask what these sources tell us about farming in Colorado?

5. Use a blank map of Colorado that shows physical features, including waterways.
   - Locate or draw in the rivers and larger streams
   - Shade the adjoining areas where farmers probably practiced irrigated farming.
   - Cross-hatch or otherwise distinguish areas where farmers probably used dryland farming techniques.

6. Make a list of crops grown in Colorado.
   - Develop a set of symbols to represent each crop.
   - Draw the symbols on the map in the regions where those crops were grown.
   - Discuss the relation between crops and the kind of farming techniques (irrigated, dryland) used.
   - Which area had the greatest variety of crops?

7. Make a two-column list of major towns and/or cities located
   - Along major streams/rivers where farmers irrigated.
   - In dry-farming areas.
   - Which list includes most of the largest towns and cities?

8. The students must write a paragraph about the importance of water to the farmers and townspeople of Colorado using evidence drawn from the above activities.