Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom

Time Line of the Land

Objective

Students will construct time lines, using historical facts about the development of agriculture.

Background

The first agricultural tool was a digging stick. It was used to grub up roots and to dig holes for seeds. Someone had the idea of attaching a crossbar to the stick so the stick could be driven deeper into the soil. That was the first shovel, or spade. A stick with a branch at one end that could be pulled through the ground was the first hoe. Later people started making blades of stone or shell and attaching them to their hoes to give them greater cutting power. Native Americans used deer antlers as rakes or hoes. Most tools were made from obsidian or flint, two kinds of stone that are easy to carve. A stick used to knock the heads of grain loose from the stalks became a sickle when stone teeth were set along one edge.

After people started raising animals for food, they realized they could also use the animals to help them with their work. The next step was to fasten a heavy hoe behind an animal and get the animal to pull it through the ground. This was the first plow. The change from stone tools to metal tools took place slowly. The discovery of metal gave farmers sharper, stronger blades for hoes, plow points, and sickles. Most cultures first used bronze, then iron.

Agriculture in the New World didn't develop in the same way it did in Europe and Asia. There were no metal tools in the Americas until European settlers brought them in the 16th Century. The idea of using animals to help with the work was also new to natives to the New World. When the Europeans began settling in the New World, they taught natives some new agricultural practices and learned some new ones from them, as well.

An amazing variety of agricultural inventions over the past 300 years has made it possible for the American farmer to feed more and more people. When our country first became a nation, farmers were still relying on animals and their own physical strength to provide the energy needed to grow their food. Today machines are involved in nearly every aspect of farming. Farmers today have entered the digital age and depend on computers, smart phones and other devices to tell them things like how much to plant and when is the best time to sell. In Oklahoma a computer network called Mesonet helps farmers predict the weather so they will know the best time to plant and harvest their crops.

Social Studies

1. Read and discuss background and vocabulary.
2. Hand out Student Worksheet A.
   —Discuss the dates and facts with students.
   —Divide the class into research teams.
   —Students will select topics from the list for research.

Oklahoma Academic Standards

GRADE 3
Social Studies
Content—2.1,2,3; 4.1,9

GRADE 4
Social Studies
Content—1.3,4,5

GRADE 5
Social Studies
Content—5.1

—Teams will report their findings to the class.

3. Pass out the student time line sheets.
   —Students will tape or glue the sections together sequentially in a strip.
   —Read together the facts printed on the lower half of the time line, and discuss the significance of the facts.
   —Students will choose 11 events from Student Worksheet A and write the dates in the correct place on the time line.
4. Create a large class time line for display.
5. Students will select beginning and end dates and create time lines of their own lives.
   —Enlarge the time line sections.
   —Divide the class into groups.
   —Assign one section to each group.
   —Students will illustrate events and place the illustrations in the correct place on the time line.
6. Make a class birthday time line.
   —List months instead of years and plot the birthday of every student in the class.

Vocabulary

flint—a very hard, fine-grained quartz that sparks when struck with steel

hoe—a tool with a flat blade attached approximately at right angles to a long handle, used for weeding, cultivating and gardening

obsidian—a volcanic glass, usually black or banded, displaying curved, shiny surfaces when fractured

plow—a farm implement consisting of a heavy blade at the end of a beam, usually hitched to a draft team or motor vehicle and used for breaking up soil and cutting furrows in preparation for sowing seeds

shovel—a tool with a handle and somewhat flattened scoop for picking up dirt and other material

sickle—an implement having a semicircular blade attached to a short handle, used for cutting grain or tall grass

spade—a digging implement adapted for being pushed into the ground with the foot

Extra Reading

Gunderson, Jessica, and Jerry Acerno, *Eli Whitney and the Cotton Gin,* Capstone, 2007.

Nielsen, L. Michelle, *Biography of Corn (How Did That Get Here?)*, Craptree, 2007.

Woods, Michael, and Mary B. Woods, *Ancient Agriculture: From Foraging to Farming,* Runestone, 2000.

Name_____

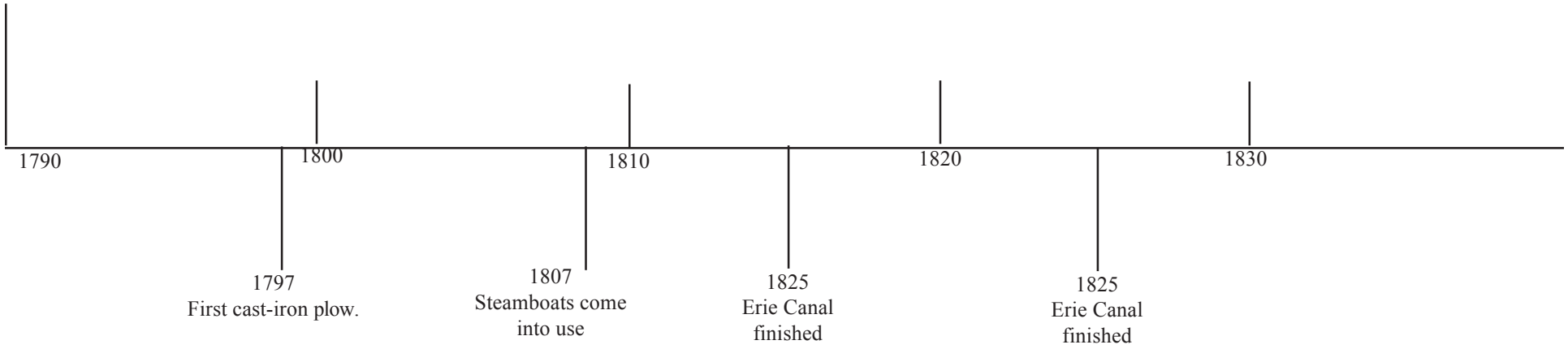
Time Line of the Land A

Choose 11 dates from the list below, and use them to complete the time line.

1793	Invention of the cotton gin.
1796	National Board of Agriculture established by George Washington.
1802	First agriculture fair in Arlington, Virginia.
1803	Louisiana Purchase
1805	Cotton replaces tobacco as main crop in the South.
1819	US canning industry started.
1837	John Deere manufactures steel plow.
1850	Farming of the prairies begins.
1854	Development of the modern windmill.
1861	Kerosene lamps become popular.
1867	Cattle boom. Range wars break out between ranchers and farmers.
1874	Barbed wire helps tame the West.
1890	Census shows frontier settlement over.
1900	George Washington Carver discovers many uses for peanuts and soybeans.
1920	Agriculture prices collapse.
1932	Dust Bowl conditions develop.
1945	Frozen foods become popular.
1954	More tractors than work horses on the farm.
1960	More shipments of strawberries and fresh flowers made by cargo plane.
1972	Russian wheat sales bring higher farm prices.
1986	Anti-smoking campaigns cut tobacco production.
1986	Worst drought ever to hit Midwest farmers.
1993	Flooding along the Mississippi River destroys Midwestern crops.
1997	First weed and insect-resistant biotech crops—soybeans and cotton—are available
2000	Final rule published establishing national standards for organic food production
2001	John Deere fit its tractors and other machines with global-positioning-system sensors
2008	A new law required food retailers to label country of origin for meat, produce, and certain nuts
2012	Drought led USDA to declare largest natural disaster in America in 1000+ counties in 26 states
2018	USDA announced eradication of pink bollworm, a primary pest of cotton, after a 100 year battle

Oklahoma Ag in the Classroom is a program of the Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Time Line of the Land B



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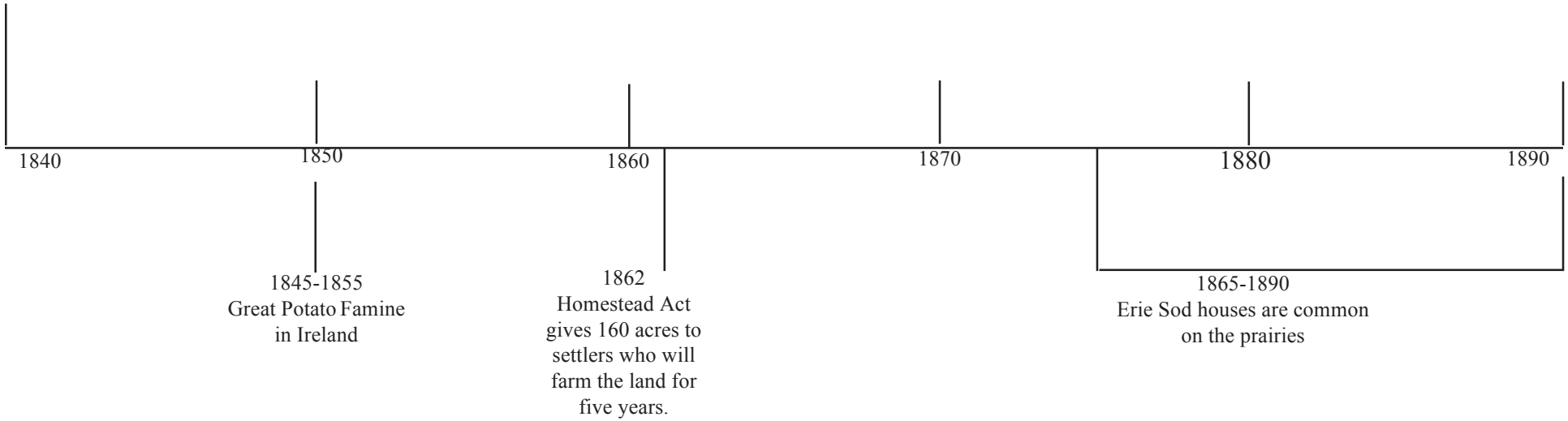
Time Line of the Land C



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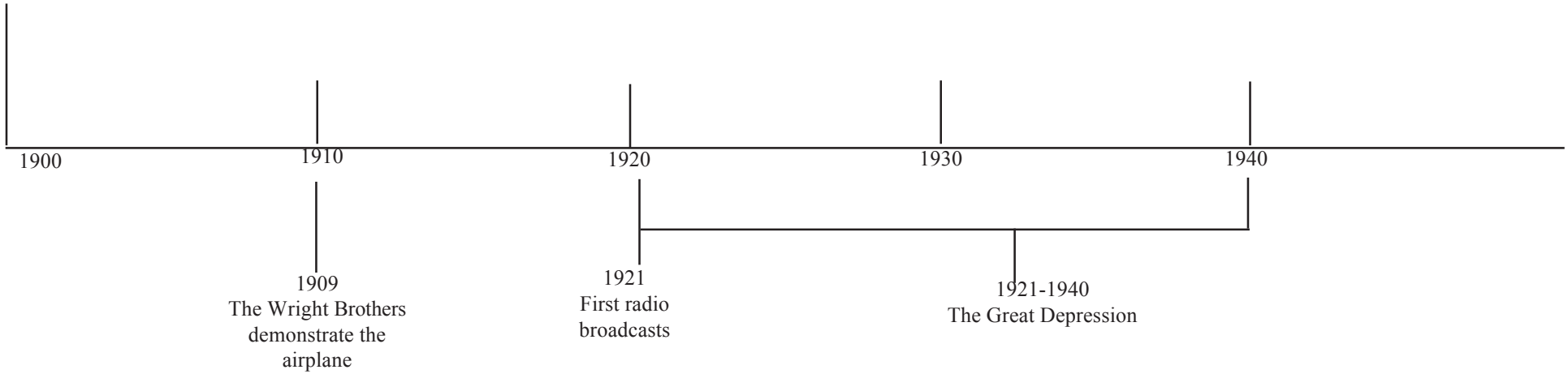
Time Line of the Land D



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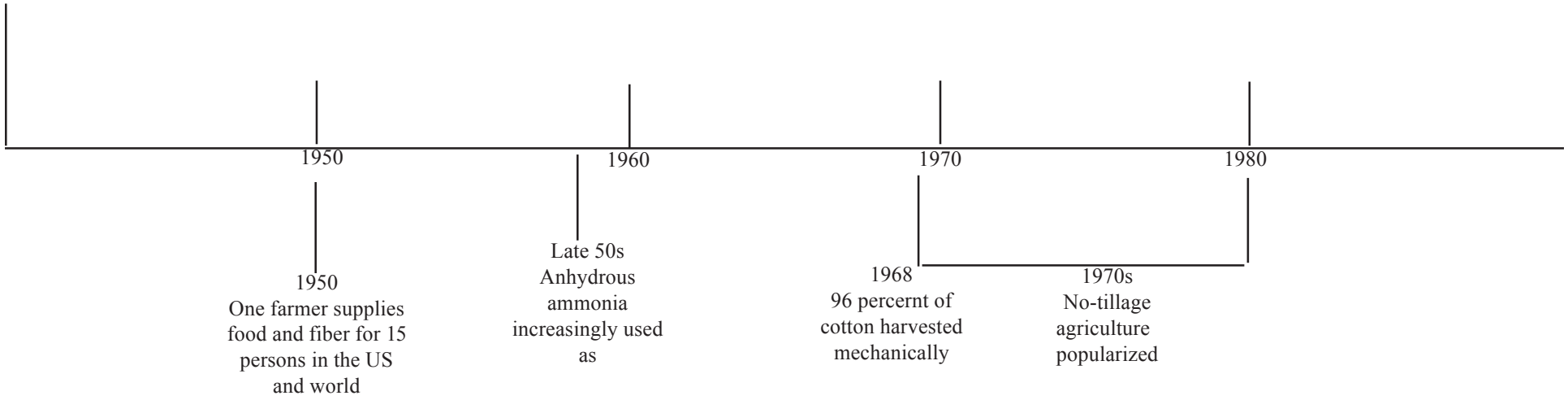
Time Line of the Land E



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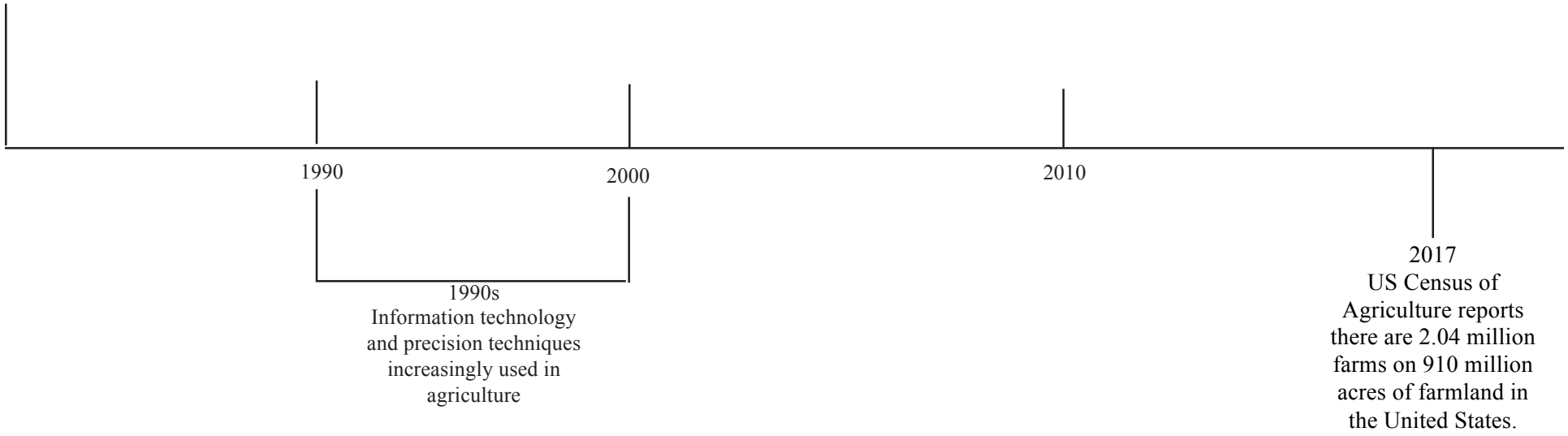
Time Line of the Land F



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