

Jenelle's Time Machine: A "Then & Now" Adventure!

Materials Needed

- A cardboard box big enough for Jenelle to sit in (her "Time Machine")
- Markers, crayons, or stickers to decorate the Time Machine
- Paper or cardstock
- Scissors (for teacher's use)
- A small basket or bag labeled "Long Ago"
- A small basket or bag labeled "Today"
- Picture cards of "Then vs. Now" items (see suggestions below) or simple, safe household objects.
- Drawing paper and crayons/markers for the final activity

Picture Card Suggestions (or find real objects!):

- Candle **vs.** Electric Lamp
- Rotary Phone **vs.** Smartphone
- Wash bucket/washboard **vs.** Washing Machine
- Horse and Carriage **vs.** Car
- Feather Quill Pen **vs.** Marker or Pen
- Broom **vs.** Vacuum Cleaner
- Icebox **vs.** Refrigerator

Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, Jenelle will be able to:

- **Identify** at least three products from "long ago" and their modern counterparts.
- **Sort** pictures or objects into "long ago" and "today" categories.
- **Explain** in simple terms why a modern product is different from an old one (e.g., "The car is faster than the horse.").
- **Imagine and create** a new product, demonstrating an understanding of how things change and improve over time.

Key Concepts (Social Studies/History)

- **Change Over Time:** Understanding that the world and the objects in it were different in the past.
- **Technology & Innovation:** Recognizing that people create new things to make life easier or better.

Lesson Activities (Step-by-Step)

1. Warm-Up: The Time Traveler's Welcome (5 minutes)

Goal: To spark curiosity and set a fun theme.

"Jenelle, today we are going on a special adventure! This box isn't just a box... it's a Time Machine! Let's decorate it with some buttons and dials. When we get inside and I count down from five, we are going to travel back in time to 'long ago!'"

Have Jenelle climb into her decorated box. Make some fun whooshing sounds and count down. When you "arrive," explain that in the "long ago" world, things were a little different.

2. Activity 1: The "Then & Now" Sorting Game (10 minutes)

Goal: To introduce the concept of past vs. present items in a hands-on way.

Place all the picture cards (or objects) in a mixed pile on the floor. Set out the two baskets: "Long Ago" and "Today."

"Our Time Machine has brought back some strange objects! Let's figure out which ones belong in the 'long ago' world and which ones belong in our world 'today'."

Pick up one card at a time. For example, hold up the candle. "Hmm, a candle. Do we use this to see in the dark today, or did people use it long ago?" Guide her to place it in the "Long Ago" basket. Now hold up the lamp. "What about this? Is this from long ago or today?"

Continue sorting together, discussing each pair. Ask simple questions like, "Which one uses electricity?" or "Which one do you think would be harder to use?"

3. Activity 2: Modern Day Detective Scavenger Hunt (10 minutes)

Goal: To apply the learning by connecting it to her real-world environment.

"Okay, Time Traveler Jenelle, let's hop back in the machine and return to TODAY! 5-4-3-2-1... We're back! Your next mission is to be a Modern Day Detective. I'm going to show you a picture from 'long ago,' and you have to find its modern partner right here in our house!"

- Show her the picture of the **washboard**. Can she lead you to the **washing machine**?
- Show her the picture of the **icebox**. Can she find the **refrigerator**?
- Show her the picture of the **broom**. Can she find the **vacuum cleaner**?

Celebrate each find! This active game makes the concept concrete and exciting.

4. Creative Corner: Invent the Future! (10 minutes)

Goal: To encourage creative thinking and synthesize the lesson's main idea.

"Jenelle, you are an amazing Time Traveler and Detective! You've seen how things change from long ago to today. Now, let's travel to the FUTURE! What do you think one of our things will look like many, many years from now? Let's invent something!"

Ask her to pick one modern object, like a car, a phone, or a vacuum. On a piece of paper, ask her to draw what the "future" version would look like. A flying car? A robot that cleans your room by itself? A phone that shows holograms? Encourage her to be creative and describe her invention to you as she draws.

5. Wrap-Up & Show-and-Tell (5 minutes)

Goal: To reinforce the learning and end on a positive note.

Have Jenelle present her "Future Invention." Ask her questions like, "What does it do? How does it make life easier?"

Praise her for her incredible journey through time. Ask, "What was your favorite thing you learned about the 'long ago' world today?" This helps her reflect on the lesson.

Assessing Jenelle's Understanding

There is no formal test. You can check for understanding by observing:

- **During the sorting game:** Is she able to correctly categorize most of the items with minimal guidance?
- **During the scavenger hunt:** Does she successfully connect the "long ago" picture to the modern object in your home?
- **During the creative activity:** Can she explain how her "future" invention is an improvement on a modern one? Her ability to imagine change shows she understands the core concept.

Differentiation for Jenelle

- **For Extra Support:** If the sorting is tricky, reduce the number of pairs to just two or three very distinct ones (e.g., candle vs. lamp, horse vs. car). Use real objects instead of pictures to make it more concrete.
- **For an Extra Challenge:** Ask more "why" questions. "Why do you think people invented the washing machine?" (Because washing by hand was hard work!). During the invention activity, encourage her to add labels to her drawing or create a 3D model with building blocks.