

## Teacher Resource Set

<b>Title/Content Area</b>	Peck House
<b>Developed by</b>	Cathy Fuller, Social Studies Teacher, Guardian Angels School, Denver, CO (Archdiocese of Denver)
<b>Grade Level</b>	9–12
<b>Essential Question</b>	<p>What makes a site worthy of historic preservation?</p> <p>Why are certain sites considered historically significant while others are not?</p> <p>What economic decisions did the Peck Family make that helped them achieve financial viability?</p>
<b>Contextual Paragraph</b>	<p>James Peck (age 59) and his son, Frank (age 19) arrived in Denver leaving their home in Chicago. In 1862, they settled in Empire and built a home that became a stagecoach stop for travelers going over Berthoud Pass into Middle Park. It also served as lodging for prospectors and investors during the Colorado gold rush.</p> <p>The structure which was a small 2-story, 4-room frame house was finished in 1863. It became a modern showplace as Peck recreated the water systems of Chicago constructing a pipeline made of hollowed out aspen logs. The water was transported from a natural spring into the cellar of the house and hand-pumped into the kitchen.</p> <p>By 1872 the Peck Hotel was accepting paying guests who came for the night or to have a good meal in the Peck's famous restaurant. A new addition in 1880 resulted in a billiard room, bar, reading room and an office area. It also provided to new guest rooms. In 1881, the Pecks installed the first telephone in Empire City. They also installed electric lights and a gasoline generator.</p> <p>The hotel went into decline around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century until it was repurchased in 1956 and named the Hotel Spendide. By 1972, it was repurchased yet again and renamed the Peck House. Its owners the St. Clairs updated the interior and exterior and added a spa. Upon the St. Clair's retirement in 2014 the Peck House closed in 2014. At that time, the Peck House was the oldest existing hotel in Colorado.</p> <p>The Peck House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on March 25, 1993.</p>

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<p><b>Front Porch, Peck House, Empire, CO, c. 1905–20</b></p>	<p><b>Peck House, Empire, CO, c. 1955–60</b></p>	<p><b>Advertisement for the Georgetown, Empire and Middle Park Wagon Road c. 1880</b></p>	<p><b>Porch of the Hotel Splendide, Empire, CO, 1960</b></p>	<p><b>Peck Family, Empire, CO, c. 1890–1905</b></p>	<p><b>Nomination for the National Register of Historic Places</b></p> <p><b>March 25, 1993</b></p>
<p>The elaborate structural ornamentation is shown.</p>	<p>The dilapidated Peck House stands in Empire. This was between its heyday of the late 1800s and early 1900s and its restoration in the mid-1960s.</p>	<p>Advertised the shortest and easiest route to new mines in the region and good hotels and accommodations.</p>	<p>The hotel was established in 1860 as the Peck House but was called the Hotel Spendide between about 1958 and 1972.</p>	<p>Members of the Peck family pose on the porch of the Peck House: F.L. Peck, Mrs. C.P. Peck, Mrs. F.L. Peck, Frank Peck Jr., Howard Beck, and Steve Mitchell.</p>	<p>The form contains 21 pages of information including photographs and maps about the Peck House. It includes the history of the house, its owners and the region in the context of what was happening in Colorado at the time.</p>
<p>During this era, the building continued to serve as a hotel. The Peck family retained ownership but leased it to a hotelier from Fort Collins when family illness prevented the Pecks from continuing its operation.</p>	<p>During these years the local kids of Empire used the hotel as their private playground and clubhouse as it continued to decline in condition.</p>	<p>In the 1870s, gold experienced a resurgence and the town once again boomed. Business increased at Hotel Peck both for hotel rooms and fine dining meals.</p>	<p>In the late 1950s, the new owners modernized the structure and renamed it. Modern plumbing was added, and a central heating system. The interior was repainted, wallpapered, and rehabilitated, and the first floor was thoroughly rehabilitated.</p>	<p>Several generations of the Peck family ran the Peck hotel over its many decades in service. A complete chain of ownership can be found in the nomination form on page 6.</p>	<p>At the time of its nomination, the Peck House was the oldest hotel in Colorado still used for that purpose. It is representative of the community development from 1862 – 1880 and after. The 19<sup>th</sup> century Victorian style frame structure is similar to other buildings found in the western mining frontier.</p>

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<b>Ice Cream Parlor, Hotel Splendide, Empire, CO, 1967</b>	<b>Empire, CO, c. 1880–90</b>	<b>Lion Creek between the Peck House and Stable, 1992</b>	<b>Northern view of the original 1862 house</b>	<b>Veranda rails, Peck House, Empire, CO</b>	<b>The Stable</b>
Originally called the Peck House, the Hotel Splendide housed an ice cream parlor in the mid-20th century.	View looking down on Empire showing central business district and the Peck House.	Geographically, the Peck House is located in a mountain valley at the foot of Berthoud Pass in Empire, CO	There have been 3 additions to the original 1862 house. These additions took place in 1863, 1880 and 1900.	The 1880 addition of a veranda along the south and east sides provided a view down over Empire and across the mountains and Union Pass.	The stable was built in 1900 with an addition in 1901. It is located across Lion Creek from the house.
The hotel experienced renew life under new ownership as Hotel Splendide. Many aesthetic and practical updates were made to the structure including a significant addition.	This era of the hotel was its most glorious. It was considered a landmark in the area and the state.	The rocky, sloping hillside is bisected by Lion Creek. There are two structures on the site – the house/hotel and the stable.	Although there have been additions to the structures, the site remains largely unchanged with a steep, rocky, sparsely vegetated slope rising behind the hotel.	The veranda rail is Queen Anne Victorian. Examples of this popular style can also be seen in nearby Georgetown and Central City.	The stable was built in 1900 with an addition in 1901. It is an end-gabled structure built with vertical board siding and a wood shingle roof.

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<b>Foundations Annotations</b>
<b>Curriculum Connections</b>
<p>History</p> <p>Economics</p>

**Curriculum Standards**

**CO State Economics Standard 1:** Productive resources – natural, human, capital – are scarce; therefore, choices are made about how individuals, businesses, governments, and societies allocate these resources. (High School)

- b. Explain how economic choices by individuals, businesses, governments, and societies incur opportunity costs.
- c. Understand that effective decision-making requires comparing the additional (marginal) costs of alternatives with the additional (marginal) benefits.

**CO State Economics Standard 2:** Economic policies affect markets. (High School)

- e. Analyze how positive and negative incentives influence the economic choices made by individuals, households, businesses, governments, and societies.

**CO State History Standard 1:** Use the historical method of inquiry to ask questions, evaluate primary and secondary sources, critically analyze and interpret data, and develop interpretations defended by evidence. (High School)

- b. Gather and analyze historical information, including contradictory data, from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including sources located on the Internet, to support or reject hypotheses.
- c. Construct and defend a written historical argument using relevant primary and secondary sources as evidence.

**CO State History Standard 3:** The significance of ideas as powerful forces throughout history. (High School)

- b. Investigate the historical development of and impact of major scientific and technological innovations.

**Content and Thinking Objectives**

Students will be able to:

- appraise the historical significance of a Colorado historic site.
- evaluate the opportunity cost of individuals/businesses.
- summarize the reasons why a historic site should be preserved.

**Inquiry Questions, Activities and Strategies****Inquiry Activities**

Using the primary source set, ask students to put the images in order chronologically, noting that the house fell into disrepair and then was rehabilitated. Conduct a group discussion on the importance of historic preservation.

After reading the article from the *Colorado Encyclopedia*, ask students to list the “cutting edge” technological advances that made the Peck House ahead of its time.

Conduct a cost/benefit analysis of turning the Peck House from a private residence into a full-blown hotel.

Ask students to discuss the opportunity cost of decisions the Peck family made to keep their business viable.

Using the National Register of Historic Places website <https://npgallery.nps.gov/NRHP/AssetDetail?assetID=b7bfb8c2-1226-4ea0-9c6f-e5cce844a5b2> ask students to research and develop a presentation using the Peck House as an example of the need to promote an historic site’s preservation.

**Assessment Strategies**

Depending upon how one uses the resources and which standards are chosen, assessment can take many forms. For example:

**CO State History Standard 1 (b-c)** (High School) Ask students to choose a different historic site to research and make a presentation, brochure or web page promoting that site’s historic significance to promote preservation of that site.

**CO State History Standard 3 (b)** (High School) Ask students to choose one of the technological innovations used in the Peck House that was considered ahead of its time, then research how that technology would need to be updated to meet today’s technological advances.

**Other Resources****Web Resources**

National Register of Historic Places Homepage: <https://www.nps.gov/nr/>

Peck House Homepage: <http://www.historic-hotels.com/colorado/peck-house>

Video views of the Peck House (exterior and interior) and Empire, CO: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V71BO\\_YVokk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V71BO_YVokk)

**Secondary Sources**

James K. Folsom, "The Peck House: Early Refuge for Colorado Travellers." *American West* (Jan.-Feb. 1985), 65.

Louise C. Harrison, [\*Empire and the Berthoud Pass\*](#) (Denver: Big Mountain Press, 1964).

Jack Kutz, *Mysteries and Miracles of Colorado: Guidebook to the Genuinely Bizarre* (Corrales, NM: Rhombus Publishing, 1989).

**Preservation Connection**

The Peck House is historically significant for its association with the settlement and commercial history of Empire, CO and as the first hotel in Empire. This structure, comprised of the original house and several additions, represents the community development that occurred between 1862 through 1880, and afterwards. The building stands on its original site and is the oldest hotel in Colorado, still serving in this capacity until 2014. The Peck House setting, size, and Victorian-style detailing have made it a prominent structure in the region for the last century. The Peck House is also architecturally significant as it is a very good example of a late 19th century frame structure as they were built in the West. A vast amount of the original material is still intact, including decorative exterior woodwork and interior wood finish work.

The Peck House in Empire, Colorado is representative of the era of westward exploration and settlement when people were forced to be industrious and innovative as they settled new areas. The panic of 1857 left many Americans east of the Mississippi River in precarious financial standing. Reports of gold strikes in the Rocky Mountains convinced many that moving west was the best solution. The first gold in the area of Empire was discovered in August 1860. Union District was formed on August 9, 1860, becoming known as Empire City in 1861. James Peck, a Chicago businessman, moved to Colorado around 1861 and settled in Empire in 1862. His four-room house completed in 1862 was the first frame house in town, and he and his wife entertained many travelers who had nowhere else to stay. An addition added to the house in late 1862 allowed the Pecks, after a few years, to meet some of their financial needs by charging visitors and functioning as a hotel.

The Pecks' commercial interests included mining, retail sales, and the hotel. The Peck House was owned by the Peck family until 1945, being closed intermittently as circumstances dictated. Even with numerous owners over the next 42 years, the hotel has been restored and has remained in operation the majority of the time.

The Peck House also represents the innovative spirit of the 19th century settlers which gave the house its unique features. The Peck House is the grandest structure in Empire and an outstanding representation of the settlement and boom era in Colorado. (From National Register nomination form.)

What makes this site worthy of historic preservation?

Why are some sites considered historically significant while others are not?

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