**A picture containing table, standing, sitting, woman

Description automatically generated**A close up of a logo

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**Balloon Roundup**

This activity is designed to accompany the Virtual Summer Camp lesson, *Irons in the Fire*, which can be found under the education tab at our website: [www.newmexicohistoricsites.org](http://www.newmexicohistoricsites.org)

or on our New Mexico Historic Sites YouTube channel.

**Anticipatory Set:**

* Ask, “how many of you have visited Lincoln, New Mexico?”
* If any students answer “yes,” ask “what was the thing that you remember the most from your visit?”
* Ask “who is the most famous person who was involved in the Lincoln County War?” (Answer: Billy the Kid)

**SWBATD** knowledge of the importance of branding cattle to prove ownership in territorial New Mexico by recalling the cause of the Lincoln County War.

**Discussion:**

**Cattle Rustling Starts a War**

1. There were two factions fighting each other during the Lincoln County War. Does anyone know what the word “faction” means? (Answer: A faction is a small, organized, opposing group within a larger group.)
2. The root cause of the Lincoln County War was competition between these two groups of people to get contracts from the federal government to provide meat, produce, and other dry goods to Fort Stanton.
3. Explain that like most wars, the Lincoln County War was a battle between two opposing groups of people. These two opposing groups are called **factions**.
4. One faction, known as the Murphy-Dolan faction, had made a lot of money selling beef to the Fort. Who knows how much a stolen cow costs? Right! Nothing! So Murphy and his partners would hire thieves, or cattle rustlers, to steal other peoples’ cows and then they would sell them to the government at full price! That’s a pretty good profit isn’t it?
5. As we’ve been learning, ranchers were desperate to protect their cows from cattle rustlers, and the way that they did that was by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(Answer: branding)

**Learning Activity:**

**Balloon Roundup**

**Materials Needed~**

* 1 balloon per student (or more, if you have a small class)
* Sharpie marker (1 per student, preferably black) or acrylic paint
* 1 large trash bag

**Balloon Roundup**

(If students have already completed the *Iron Man* lesson and *Design Your Own Brand* activity (posted separately on our education webpage), they can use their custom-made pipe-cleaner brand to brand their “cattle.” To achieve the true branding experience, allow the students to dip their pipe cleaner brand into acrylic paint and then “brand” their balloon. This choice is obviously dependent on whether or not you have time to allow the paint to dry. If not, students can simply use a Sharpie to freehand draw their personal brand on their balloon (cow).)

Tell the students that you are the livestock truck and go around the room collecting everyone’s branded cattle in a large trash bag. As you collect, you can explain that too many cows in the truck can cause distress and result in possible death of the animal. If there are too few cows in the truck, the cows can move too much and might slip and injure themselves during transport.

Select a location to serve as a corral (a cordoned off section of the classroom, an unused portable, cafeteria, or gym) and deliver the branded balloons to the corral. Select a student to be “the herding dog” and let that student go into the corral to stir up the balloons. Then allow small groups of students to enter the corral and try to find their branded “cow”. Be sure to remind the students that cows were valuable and so they don’t want to pop the balloons. That would be a financial loss to the ranch.

**Closure:**

In the video, *Irons in the Fire*, we learned that today’s sports teams, political groups, companies, and advertisers use product branding to create identity and loyalty amongst their customers, the same way that a cowboy took pride and identity from his ranch’s brand. Look around the room at your classmates’ backpacks, lunchboxes, clothing and shoes and see if you can find examples of product logos, or sports team logos. Did you ever think of those logos as a form of modern day branding? Big companies like Nike, Starbucks, Harley Davidson, LEGO and Google all spend huge amounts of money on advertising to market their “brand.” And if they’re really successful at gaining loyalty from their customers, sometimes a customer will actually brand themselves! Can you believe that some people actually get Nike swooshes or Harley Davidson logos tattooed on their bodies?

* Depending on the complexity of your brand, you may only stamp once, or you may have separate letters or symbols that will be stamped individually to create your completed brand. For instance, my brand includes my three initials, “T”, “L” and “O”. First, I shaped one strip of foil into a circle to make my “O”. After I stamped the “O” into my cookies, I stamped the “T-L” ligature into the center of the “O”.

Brand Your Cookies!

**faction – a small, organized dissenting group within a larger one**

**rustler – a person who rounds up and steals cattle, horses or sheep**

**branding – the act of marking something with a branding iron**

**product branding – the promotion of a particular or company by means of advertising distinctive wording or design**

Vocabulary