



EXPLORE OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM. LEARN INSIDE OUR STATE.

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### **Trading Along the Santa Fe Trail Bent's Old Fort**

**Educational Activity:** Explore this reconstructed 1840s adobe fur trading post on the mountain branch of the Santa Fe Trail and investigate where traders, trappers, travelers, and the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes came together for trade.

**Background Information:** Watch the National Park Service video about Bent's Old Fort.  
<https://www.nps.gov/beol/index.htm>

**Activity:** If you have time, request a Junior Ranger Booklet and complete the activities or follow the Family Self Guided Tour.  
<https://www.nps.gov/beol/learn/kidsyouth/upload/Self-Guided-Activity-Book-2.pdf>.

If you are short on time, find a living historian (a person dressed in 1840's clothes) recreating the sights, sounds and activities of the past with guided tours and demonstrations. Introduce your group to the living historian.

#### **Questions to Ask:**

1. *What kind of work do you do?*
2. *How did you come to do the work you are doing?*
3. *What brought you to Bent's Old Fort?*
4. *Can you show us what you do for work?*

#### **Activity: Get Into Character**

Imagine you are a trader traveling along the Santa Fe Trail. Find the Main Trade Room, name the items you see for trade. Identify the top five you would want if you were traveling on the Santa Fe Trail. Why did you choose these items? Is there anything you would need that isn't in the trade room?



**Additional Activity:** Explore the Bent's Old Fort Nature Trail along the Arkansas River and watch for wildlife.

**Additional Resources:**

- Explore the lessons plans created by the NPS:  
<https://www.nps.gov/beol/learn/education/curriculummaterials.htm>
- Learn about the fur trade in Colorado by visiting this website and Bent's Fort role in the trade. [http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/bentsfort/bents\\_home.html#bentsfort](http://exhibits.historycolorado.org/bentsfort/bents_home.html#bentsfort)
- Watch this video about Bent's Fort from Colorado Experience.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mq35mc\\_lxWc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mq35mc_lxWc)