

Trades During the Colonial Era

Grade Level: 3-5

Time Allotment: 30-45 minutes

Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-5.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.3-5.7	Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3-5.1	Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3-5.4	Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 3, 4 or 5 topic or subject area.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.3-5.7	Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

Objectives

Students will:

- Understand and explain the apprentice system used in the colonial time period.
- Understand and explain trades that were important during the colonial time period.

Materials

- Smart Board for presentation/pictures
- Paper
- Internet access
- *Early American Trades Coloring Book* by Peter F. Copeland
 - <https://amzn.to/31pHHsc>

Anticipatory Set

- The teacher will ask students how often they think about how things were made and where they came from.
 - For example, they could ask about a specific object, like shoes or desks or books.

- The teacher will explain that today many things we buy come from all around the world. However, during the colonial period, it was harder to transport goods and people often depended on those in their area for many goods.
- This also meant that people tended to always know who made their goods and where it came from. Any metal wielded in a house or shoe on a foot came from a person's neighbor.
- The teacher will explain that many people had a job relating to a trade during the colonial period.
 - A trade means a skilled job that requires training, usually in a field that requires creating something like hats, shoes, etc.
 - Trades were very important within towns and villages. The teacher will explain that this is shown in people's last names today.
 - For instance, Smith is a common last name, and it represents blacksmiths and other types of smiths.

Teacher Presentation and Modeling

- The teacher will explain the apprenticeship system to students, introducing it as a way to get a craftsmen or trade job during the colonial time period.
 - An apprenticeship was when a younger teenager would begin to get trained by a master tradesmen or craftsmen like a blacksmith.
 - Apprenticeships were sometimes seven or more years long, sometimes beginning when teenagers were fourteen years old.
 - It was usually unpaid, but they would be provided room and board at their apprenticeship. Sometimes they would get paid towards the end.
 - The process was to train younger people to be able to enter the craft or trade of the person educating them.
- The teacher will now introduce a few of the common trades during the colonial time for students to get an idea of different job types before they do independent research.
 - Tailors: The tailors made custom clothing for men and women, whether it is formal and casual. Most tailors were men. Rather than making clothing and selling it to people like stores today, people would purchase their own cloth/fabric and then the tailor would create their clothing.
 - Apothecary: This was essentially the colonial version of the pharmacy. These people gave out medicine for people, usually made out of herbs and other natural aliments.
- The teacher will explain to students that it is now time for them to learn about more trades.

Guided and Independent Practice

- The teacher will assign students different trades from the book, *Early American Trades Coloring Book* by Peter F. Copeland. Recommended pages are Carpenters, Weavers, Printers, Shoemakers, and Blacksmiths.
 - The students will be instructed to read the description from their coloring page and to color in the different tools and the picture of the worker provided. This will help them to learn more about the trade and tools used.
 - This step can be optional if the teacher would rather do more presentation on the trades instead and skip to the journal assignment below.
- Once the students have read about their trade, the teacher will now explain that students will write a diary entry or entries that is in the point of view of a young apprentice.
- Laptops or internet access should be available for students to further research into their trade if they need more information.
- The students can answer the following questions within their diary entry:
 - Who is the writer? How old are they? How long have they been an apprentice for? Where do they live?
 - Who is their master? What is the apprentice's relationship with their master?
 - What is their daily life like? What jobs are they assigned within their trade?
 - What do they make? What tools do they use?
- The teacher can also assign this as homework rather than doing it in class, letting the students take notes in class to write entries later.

Closure

- Once students are done their journal, the teacher can break students into groups so that every group has at least one person representing each trade assigned.
- After groups are created, students should take turns sharing what they have learned about their assigned trade. They should also discuss some of what they wrote in their apprentice diary.
- The teacher can conclude that these trades young people were apprentices for were incredibly important during this time period.
 - Teacher can compare it to not having certain jobs necessary today.

Assessment

- The teacher will collect the journals that the students wrote and read them, analyzing not only their writing skills but also if they understand the position of an apprentice and are able to describe the trade that was assigned to them.

Extension of the Lesson

- Students can go on a field trip to Washington Crossing Park, where they can see different trades like a blacksmith and apothecary come to life.
- Students can create “artifacts” out of clay or other materials that were used in different colonial trades. The class can create a museum and include their journals in the museum.
- Students can read books from the series *The Library of Living and Working in Colonial Times*. Some books include: *A Day in the Life of a Colonial Miller*, *A Day in the Life of a Colonial Doctor*, etc.

Resources

- *Early American Trades Coloring Book* by Peter F. Copeland
- *The Library of Living and Working in Colonial Times* book series