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4th Grade Social Studies Lesson Plan

Living in the Edge of Empire: NEH Summer Workshop at Old Deerfield

Lesson Title

Why Various Groups of Native Peoples Joined the 1704 Raid on Deerfield

Curricular Unit Summary

The major focus of the social studies curriculum for fourth grade in Massachusetts is North American Geography. The following lesson plan fits into a unit of study which serves two purposes: to familiarize students with the five major geographical concepts of location, place, human interaction with the environment, movement and regions, and to introduce the places and people of Canada. To serve these ends, for part of the unit I will present an in-depth study of local history of the Connecticut River Valley in the 17th and 18th century and, in particular, a case study of the Deerfield raid of 1704.

Lesson Summary

By investigating images of period-specific everyday artifacts and reading creation stories, language excerpts and maps, students will understand that there was cultural diversity amongst the Native peoples who subsequently joined the French during the 1704 raid on Deerfield, namely the Kanienkehaka (Mohawk), Wendat (Huron), and Wôbanaki (including Pocumtuck). This understanding will provide a context to understand that there were different motivations for participation in the raid, and underscore the importance of understanding multiple perspectives of conflict in general.

The lesson will also help students to understand that history is shaped by the questions one asks or ignores, and the perspectives one considers or dismisses.

Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks:

In grade 4, students study the geography and people of the United States today. Students learn geography by addressing standards that emphasize political and physical geography and embed five major concepts: location, place, human interaction with the environment, movement, and regions. In addition, they learn about the geography and people of contemporary Mexico and Canada.

United States

4.14 Identify the five different European countries (France, Spain, England, Russia, and the Netherlands) that influenced different regions of the present United States at the time the New World was being explored and describe how their influence can be traced to place names, architectural features, and language.

4.15 Describe the diverse nature of the American people by identifying the distinctive contributions to American culture of:

A. several indigenous peoples in different areas of the country.

Canada

4.17 On a map of North America, locate Canada, its provinces, and major cities.

4.19 Describe the major ethnic and religious groups of modern Canada.

4.21 Identify the location of at least two Native American tribes in Canada and the Inuit nation and describe their major social features.

4.22 Identify the major language groups in Canada, their geographic location, and the relations among them.

Historical Thinking Benchmarks

Analysis of how historians use evidence.

An understanding of bias and different points of view.

Teaching Plan

Preparation Create a set of 5-8 laminated cards with images representing examples of the material world of each of the Kanienkehaka, Wendat, and Wôbanaki people of 1600-1750 respectively, as well as maps indicating homelands, examples of language, and creation stories. Use the resources from the *American Centuries* website and the *Raid on Deerfield: the Many Stories of 1704* website. Use a code to indicate which Indian group is represented by each card. Divide students into three balanced groups and assign small group roles of facilitator, recorder, time keeper, etc.

Step 1. Students will begin at one of three stations where resources of one of the Indian groups has been placed. Teacher will explain that historians begin with questions, and that care should be taken to formulate the questions because they will often determine the information which is noticed and collected and influence how it is interpreted. Students will then brainstorm what sorts of questions they can ask about the resources and the recorder will list them. Questions such as, “What are the objects made out of? What are the locations and regions indicated on the map, and how are the maps related to areas we know? What seems to be important in the creation stories? The list will be added to as new questions arise.

Step 2. Students will discuss the resources in terms of the questions they’ve generated. The recorder will list their ideas.

Step 3. Teacher convenes the three groups and students report on their ideas while teacher records on a chart. Teacher corrects any misunderstandings and expands on their information, while creating a whiteboard grid to enable comparisons and contrasts. Students will discuss and record differences and similarities in their notebooks.

Step 4. Next, the teacher asks “How might our understanding of these people have been different if we had asked different questions or if we had begun with all of the resources lumped together?” Teacher explains that recognizing that different Native peoples have distinct cultures will be important in our understanding of the event of The 1704 raid and its aftermath, as well as our understanding of any historical or indeed contemporary conflict.

Suggested future follow-up lessons:

Use the same teaching format to present resources of the same three peoples in a contemporary setting.