

Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

November/December 2013: Southern Life

By Debbie Vilardi

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Goal: To learn about life for all social classes in colonial Williamsburg.

*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

**All articles in the issue are based upon research conducted at Colonial Williamsburg.

Before Beginning:

What comes to mind when you think of the south in the 1700s? What might life have been like if you were neither wealthy nor a slave?

"Revolutionary City" (Pages 2-4)

Vocabulary: middling plantation

Comprehension:

1. What was the first permanent English colony in North America and when was it founded?
2. Why do you think the new capital was called Middle Plantation?
3. What were the beneficial features of Middle Plantation?
4. What was the primary crop in the region?
5. Why was Williamsburg important in pre-revolutionary Virginia?
6. What happened to Williamsburg after the war?
7. What was Reverend Goodwin's plan?
8. What steps were taken as part of the restoration?
9. What happens at Colonial Williamsburg today?

Writing Activity: Compare the Virginia Declaration of Rights to the U.S. Bill of Rights. Note common points as well as differences.

Research: Jamestown, Middle Plantation, College of William and Mary, King William III, Virginia Declaration of Rights, American Revolutionary War, Reverend W.A.R. Goodwin, John D. Rockefeller, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

"Men at Work" (Pages 5-8)

"People as Property" (Page 9)

Vocabulary: serving man, gentleman, apprentice, cooper, blacksmith, livestock

Comprehension:

1. What were the social classes in colonial America?
2. Why does farm work have a seasonal quality?
3. Give an account of a gentleman's day.
4. What leisure activities did the men of the gentry class enjoy?
5. How did owning slaves enable the lifestyle of the gentry?
6. Give an account of a field slave's day.
7. How did slaves spend their weekends?
8. Why were some slaves given apprenticeships?
9. How did a domestic slave's life differ from a field slave's life?
10. Why weren't the most successful middling farmers considered gentry?
11. Give an account of a middling planter's day.
12. What events could break the daily routine of 18th century life?
13. Why do you think slaves weren't permitted to participate in any legal matters?

Writing Activity: You are an 18th century male. Decide which class you belong to and write a diary entry detailing your day. Feel free to make up details such as the name of your wife and the number of heads of cattle you own, if any.

Math Activities:

1. If the population of the Virginia colony was approximately 114,000 people, how many people were in each social class?
2. What was the average acreage owned by a middling planter?

"At Home" (Pages 10-12)

Vocabulary: weatherboard

Comprehension: Answer the questions on page 10.

Research: Homes in the 1700s

"Life of Labor" (Pages 14-17)

Vocabulary: germ theory, millinery, mantua making,

Comprehension:

1. What did all women have in common in the 1700s?
2. What determined whether someone was likely to survive an illness?
3. Why did urban life offer more opportunity for leisure activities?
4. Describe the life of a gentry class woman.
5. Describe the life of a middling class wife.
6. Describe a cook's day.

Writing Activity: Read the captions that accompany the article. Use the information in previous articles along with this article to write a new section about a lower-sort wife's daily activities. Try to make your writing fit with the style of the rest of the article.

"Growing Up" (Pages 18-21)

Vocabulary: genteel, chaperone, harpsichord,

Discussion: Which child presented has a life most similar to your own? How is it similar? Which child would you prefer to be? Why? Which parents remind you most of your own and why?

Writing Activity: What do the passages tell you about the values of each family? Do those values differ? If so, how and why?

"At Play" (Pages 22-23)

Play the games presented. Research other 18th century games.

"Made to Fit" (Pages 26-28)

"From Underwear to Outerwear" (Pages 28-29)

Vocabulary: breeches, waistcoat, osnaburg, shift, petticoat, stomacher, stays

Comprehension:

1. Where did clothing come from in the 1700s?
2. Who sewed clothes for men and who sewed clothes for women?
3. How did the gentry dress?

4. How did clothing for the middling and lower classes differ from that of the gentry?
5. How did slaves get their clothes?
6. How many layers did a gentlewoman wear?

Experience: Gather samples of wool, silk, osnaburg, and linen. Try sewing a few stitches through each fabric type. Which is easiest to work with? Which is hardest? Which do you think would be most comfortable to wear? Which would be warmest?

Online Activity: Complete the activity mentioned at the end of the articles on page 29.

Research: Colonial clothing and fabrics mentioned in the article

“Time to Eat” (Pages 30-33)

Vocabulary: hominy, ashcakes

Comprehension:

1. Who did the cooking for each social class?
2. Why did it take so long to prepare a meal?
3. What were some of the morning chores that had to be done before breakfast?
4. Why might dinner have been served later than usual when guests were attending?

Writing Activities:

1. Compare the menu on page 33 to your daily meals.
2. Look at the illustrations associated with these articles. Describe the differences you note in the eating habits and laid out tables. What social class is represented in the picture on the bottom of page 31? How do you know?

Research: Colonial foods and diet

“Meet Eve” (Pages 36-38)

“Meet James Southall” (Page 39)

Comprehension:

1. What is Eve’s social class?
2. How did she learn her role?
3. What are her primary responsibilities?

4. Why does Eve get to sleep in the main house?
5. What is Eve's family life like?
6. What is Eve's view of freedom?
7. What is Mr. Southall's social class?
8. What does Mr. Southall grow and why?
9. What jobs do his slaves do for him?
10. What is his family life like?

Writing Activity: Sidebars describe how the interpreters researched their roles. What kinds of research did they do? Would you be interested in interpreting a colonial person at Williamsburg? Why or why not? If you would, what social class would you want to be?

Research: James Southall

"Plantation Crops" by Marcia Amidon Lusted (Pages 40-41)

Vocabulary: indigo, indentured servant, ferment, brackish

Comprehension:

1. What is the process for growing tobacco?
2. What is the process for preparing indigo dye?
3. Why was indigo a valuable crop?
4. What is the process for growing rice?

Research: crops of southern plantations

"Doing the Right Thing" by Dennis Denenberg (Page 45)

Vocabulary: manumission

Activity for the Entire Issue: You are alive in colonial times. You visit family in Williamsburg. Decide what class you are. Write a letter home describing your visit. Include encounters with people of all classes and the meals you would eat.