

The Good Old Days: Were They?

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OVERVIEW

Topic: Colonial America / Work and Family. Many people think that work and family values were very different back in Colonial Times, but were they so different? What was important to families and how children spent their time in those times will be explored with other issues such as work and respect for adults. In this lesson, students will compare and contrast these values with today's accepted values.

LENGTH OF LESSON

3, 45 minute sessions.

Subject: Social Studies

VIDEO/TECHNOLOGY HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE

Colonial Life Series, Family and Work #101
TV/VCR
Computer(s) with Internet access.

WEB APPLICATIONS

Telefieldtrips and Impersonations:

- <http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org>
- <http://www.history.org>

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student will be able to:

- Explain colonial life relating to work and family.
- Compare Colonial Life to life as it is today.

This lesson covers SOL VS.3 with emphasis on the life in the colonies and the 18th Century.

MATERIALS AND TEACHER PREPARATIONS

- Small clay pots or small brown sacks. One Classroom set.
- five rocks (medium size)
- five-twelve inch sticks per child
- three five by seven index cards per child
- data retrieval charts and t-charts
- One large data-retrieval chart for the teacher and one for each child.
- three large sheets of paper
- colored markers or colored chalk Markers will be for the teacher to use.

PREPARATORY/PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Tell students: Today we are going to study a segment of Colonial Life. This segment will deal with work and family. Ask the students, what they already know about Colonial America. Have students create a t-chart that lists known facts about Colonial America on one side and leaving the other side blank for facts learned after the video. Tell students: We are going to find out some of the things Colonial Americans did in their daily lives, at home, in the community and at work. Say: Now, I want you to get into groups of three. (Count off one, two, three, beginning back at

one, two, three... this forms one group and so on...) Say: I am going to give each group a clay bowl. In the bowl will be five rocks and five sticks. Using your great imaginations, I want you to come up with a game that could be played with the rocks, the stick and the bowl. You will have ten minutes to create your game. After the games have been completed, each group will explain and demonstrate how their game works.

FOCUS FOR VIEWING/ OTHER TECHNOLOGY

Tell students: We are now going back in time. We are going back to Colonial America. We are going to experience what life was like during Colonial times. I would like for you to watch some parts of this video. Pay close attention as to what you see and hear about Colonial America. As we view sections of the video, I want you to think about where they lived, how they earned a living, what made them happy, what made them sad, and what they considered family duty. I want you to listen carefully for answers to questions that I will give you. Think about how your lives are different and how they are like those of the Colonial Americans.

VIEWING AND /OR ONLINE ACTIVITIES

1. **FOCUS:** Say: This video will help you understand what life was like in Colonial America. As we go through the video, pay close attention because I will ask you questions about different parts of the video. For this first part I want you to listen for where most people in Colonial times lived and how they spent their time. **Play** video from the beginning, where the title reads, Family and Work in Revolutionary America. **Pause** when you see the two men leading the horses and after the narrator says, “ family farms were the main economic unit in Colonial America.” Ask: During Colonial times, where did most people live and how did they spend their time?” (they lived on farms and spent most of their time with

family) The teacher should also ask the question, why were farms important then, and are they still important now? The teacher should allow students time to respond to the questions.

2. **FOCUS:** Now say: I want you to listen carefully to this section of the video and answer this question: What are some things that were important to the family during the Colonial days? **Resume** video and **Pause** when you see the words, “Parents and Children”. Ask the question and allow students to respond. (Ans. Rearing children, education, marriage, and work)
3. **FOCUS:** Discuss with your students the role of parents today and how parents love and take care of their children today. Have the students discuss the things their parents do for them daily. Say: Listen carefully to this next section of the video. I want you to tell me after watching this section, how Colonial parents felt about their children and how they saw their children. **Resume** video and **Pause** after you see the face of the woman and after the narrator says, “I am beyond measure pleased of the blessing God has sent me.” Say: How did the parents feel about their children or how did they see their children? (Ans. They saw them as delightful little people, a joy, a gift from God, pleasing)
4. **FOCUS:** Ask the students to discuss the terms reliance and character. Put the words on the board. Have the students come up with five adjectives to describe each term. (Possible answers for reliance could be dependence, confidence, trust, count on) For character, possible responses could be quality, temperament, personality, disposition, spirit, moral fiber, makeup. Now say: We are going to watch another section of the video. Be able to tell me what values parents wanted to instill into their children? **Resume** and **Pause** at the leaf being put on the hat by the father and after the narrator says, “ ...and strong character.” Re-ask question and allow student responses. (Ans. They wanted to root out disobedience and bad behavior.) Then ask: Do parents still try to

- accomplish these things with their children today? Why? (Students will probably respond that yes, their parents expect their children to behave, and that they teach them these things because they love them.)
5. **FOCUS:** I know at home, your parents expect you to act in certain ways and to do certain things.” Ask the students to share with the class some of the things they are expected to do and ways they are expected to act. Say: I want you to tell me, after we watch this section of the video, the role of children in Colonial times. **Resume** and **Pause** video when father puts the hat on the little boy’s head and after the narrator says, “and not out of fear.” Say: What were Colonial children expected or taught to do? What was expected of Colonial children? (Ans. Children were expected to obey parents, but not out of fear) Use this time to discuss the term respect. Develop a concept organizer on the bulletin board or on the overhead projector. Another word for concept organizer is Brain Storming, or Concept Web.
 6. **FOCUS:** Say: Students what happens when you do something wrong at home or at school?” Leave time for general discussion. Say: What does the term discipline mean to you? (Students will possibly respond by saying that they get punished if they do things wrong at school by their parents or legal guardians. Students may refer to discipline and punishment as the same thing.) Use this time for general discussion and refer back to the term respect. Say: Now students let’s look and listen again to our video. Pay close attention as to how Colonial parents disciplined their children. **Resume** video and **Pause** when father and son go to the block of wood and after the narrator says, “a family that worked hard, prayed together, and respected one another, was a happy family.” Ask: How did parents discipline their children? (Ans. They did not whip them; instead they modeled kind loving examples.)
 7. **FOCUS:** Say: Students we all know how it feels to be sad. I want you to think about something that has made you sad in the past. (Have students create a diary entry of an event in their lives that has caused them to feel sad. This may be assigned for homework or class work.) Diary entries should be shared voluntarily with the rest of the class upon completion. After activity is completed, allow time for discussion on this topic. Say: Just like we are sad at times, so were people in Colonial times. What are some things you think made them sad? Was it the same as today? (Allow students time to respond.) Say: Let’s listen and find out in this next segment of video. **Resume** video and **Stop** at woman crying and after the narrator says, “losing them could be a terrible blow.” Ask: What caused a lot of distress and sadness during Colonial times? (Ans. Death and disease of parents causing children to become orphans or death of babies) Emphasize to students that our sadness over matters today are not the same at all as in the Colonial times. Use this time to discuss the term distress. Have students come up with at least four synonyms for distress. (Possible responses include being sad, angry, distant or hurt...) Say: Students we have discussed things that make us sad, now we are going to discuss things that make us happy. Allow each team time to create a SOCIAL PYRAMID that lists the things that make them happy from least to greatest. Allow one student per team to come to the board and list one of the things that brings pleasure into their lives. (Teams will be the same as discussed earlier in this lesson plan.) A social pyramid is another form of brainstorming, where students draw a pyramid and divide the pyramid into sections based on the topic being discussed. On each section, students name the things that make them happy from least to greatest. Try to have students list as many as five things that make them happy. Outside of the pyramid, students can explain why these things make them happy.
 8. **FOCUS:** Say: Let’s listen now to find out what colonial children did for fun. You

were given some items to create a game from yesterday (or whenever they completed the activity). Let's see if you were anywhere close to playing the same games as they played. **Play** the video where you left off and **Pause** after you see the lady sitting in the chair and after the narrator says, "...and children often became the center of family life." Say: What did Colonial children do for fun? (Ans. They played games, played with toys; they roamed about their houses and their neighborhoods.) Use this time for review. Have the children discuss what they have learned so far about Colonial Life.

9. **REFOCUS:** Say, "What does the term duty mean to you?" Allow response and discussion time. (Possible answers may be things that students have to do around the house or at school...) Ask students what duties they feel their parents have toward them. List their responses on the board. Say: Now, we are going to see two more sections of our video. I want you to watch and listen carefully for the answers to the following two questions: What were the duties of parents? What were the children's duties to their parents? Let the video **Play** until the segment, "Education and Work," appears on the screen, and then **Stop** the video. Re-ask students: What were the duties of parents? (Ans. They were obligated to their children, raise their children properly, discipline when necessary and watch over them with care.) What were the children's duties to their parents? (Ans. Care for their parents when they became elderly, remain respectful and obedient all of their lives.)

POST-VIEWING AND/OR ONLINE ACTIVITIES

1. Say: Students, we are now going to complete the t-chart with the new knowledge that we have gained from this video. Allow time for students to work on their charts. Allow each team to share one fact of new knowledge gained from the video.

2. Say: Students, I want you, using the information from the video, to complete a Colonial data retrieval chart. This chart compares Colonial America to the lifestyle of Americans today. Categories on the chart should include the following: food, clothing, shelter and recreation. Use this time to allow each student an opportunity to complete this assignment.
3. Say: I want you to pretend that you are a colonist. In the form of a letter to one of your classmates, explain what was good, bad and interesting about colonial life.

ASSESSMENT

- Give each student three, five by seven index cards. Have each student write on each card three facts concerning Colonial America. One card should focus on work, the second card should emphasize expectations of parents, and the third card should focus on factors that caused Colonial families distress and worry. You may want to allow time for students to share what they have written.
- Have the students write a comparison paper on life in Colonial America and their lives today.

ACTION PLAN

1. Have each team in the classroom create and perform a small skit on Colonial America. All skits will be video taped and shown in class as a form of review for this topic.
2. Bring in people from Explore Park to speak with children about Colonial America.
3. Plan a field trip to Explore Park to see simulations of Colonial America.

EXTENSIONS

Technology:

1. Have the students take a Telefieldtrip to Colonial America in Williamsburg, VA. (See web applications)
2. Have students email students of a local middle school or high school in your

district to share their knowledge with other classes. (It is important for the teacher to establish a contact with other classrooms in the school area prior to participating in this activity.)

Language Arts:

Take the students to the library. After consulting with the librarian, have students read books on Colonial America, focusing primarily on work and family.

Art:

Consult with the Art teacher as to possible games that could be created relating with Colonial America.

T-Charts

T-Charts divide information into categories so that it can be looked at and studied separately. For this activity write down the information on Colonial America that you already know about in the first column, and then in the other, fill the column in with facts that you discovered, or learned after the lesson.

I KNOW

I LEARNED

I KNOW	I LEARNED