

Linking Cultures and History During Colonial Pennsylvania

Karen J. Burrell

Mitchell Elementary School

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Overview

Children should be exposed to a variety of robust children’s literature. “Biographies” are an example of informational text. Students are taught how to read and analyze informational text, use technology and apply skills within the context of Social Studies exploration. This curriculum unit was created to provide students with an opportunity to learn about the founding of Pennsylvania through the biographical accounts of William Penn.

The target students for this curriculum unit will be fourth grade. The School District of Philadelphia incorporates Pennsylvania History in the fourth grade Social Studies component of the curriculum. This curriculum unit can also be modified for other grades as well. According to the fourth grade curriculum, students must identify and describe Pennsylvania’s first people. Students must identify the first European settlements in Pennsylvania. Students must also examine the relationship between William Penn and the Native Americans. This curriculum unit will provide information for students to learn about William Penn and why William Penn is a major contributor to the founding of Pennsylvania.

Rationale

The curriculum unit for this seminar will consist of activities that will feature William Penn and a few cultures that played a major role in the founding of Pennsylvania. The activities will connect historical events with the contributions, sacrifices and accomplishments of these key people and how it has shaped Pennsylvania History. The curriculum unit will incorporate biographical information of William Penn.

The purpose for this curriculum unit is for students to learn about how Pennsylvania was started and how William Penn and other cultures played a vital part in that process. The students will be able to learn more about the cultures of the important Pennsylvania pioneers. Learning about their cultures may bring knowledge to how certain events led to the founding of Pennsylvania. The curriculum will include activities to highlight key moments in the life of William Penn.

Background

History is a major component under Social Studies in many school districts' curriculums. Learning multiple facts about people, places and events in our world can become cumbersome for many elementary students in regards to retaining and memorizing the information for various assessments. Educators have the task of providing students with all of the factual information needed to demonstrate proficiency in Social Studies by the end of each quarter within a school term. Delivery of the factual information is crucial to attain some positive outcomes regarding student learning. Teaching history through biographies is one way of providing students with important factual information about our world's past.

Biographies are a detailed description or account of someone's life written by a different person. Biographies often include information regarding the birth, education, work, accomplishments, relationships and death of a person. Biography is a genre that is considered nonfiction. Fiction may also be incorporated into the biographical sketch of one's life. Connecting the lives of key people to important moments in time or history is crucial for students to understand the reasons why and how events have shaped our past. The connection of biographies and history may also bring light to current events and situations of present time.

Pennsylvania History began with land in North America that was granted to William Penn by his father King Charles II in 1681. The land was found by European explorers. Swedes, Finns, Dutch and the English migrated to North America for a new start. The land was to be used to start a new colony to have religious freedom from that of England's rule. William Penn had difficulty exercising his Quaker beliefs in Europe. He was punished and jailed for his Quaker views. William Penn gathered fellow Quakers and set sail to North America to begin a new colony. William Penn created a government and constitutional guidelines for the Quakers to live by on this land.

The land of North America was originally inhabited with a group of people called Native Americans. Several tribes of Native Americans lived throughout the land and used the land to meet their survival needs. The Lenni-Lenape, the Shawnee, the Delaware, the Iroquois and the Susquehannock are a few major Algonquian tribes that lived throughout the land given to William Penn.

William Penn promoted admiration and respect for the Native Americans. Penn wanted the Native Americans and the colonists to share the land as neighbors and friends. Some conflicts transpired when the colonists settled on the land. William Penn met with

the Native Americans to persuade them to have peaceful relationships with the colonists. A treaty of agreement was formed between Penn and the Native Americans in 1682 regarding the land and hunting provisions.

William Penn wanted to spend the rest of his life peacefully in Pennsylvania. But Penn had to return to Europe to deal problems with the king over the ownership of the colony. William Penn endured several challenges and misfortunes with business dealings and his health over time. Penn died in 1718. William Penn's wife, Hannah Penn and their sons John and Thomas Penn served as governors of Pennsylvania after his death.

Many more people began arriving to this land from Ireland, Germany and Scotland in the early 1700s. These groups of people also brought their culture and customs to their new land. Pennsylvania was a huge attraction that caused many to want to travel to it for a new beginning. In conclusion, many cultures of people participated in the founding of Pennsylvania History in conjunction with William Penn. Pennsylvania continued to grow as a colony moving into the next century.

Objectives

- Students will be able to access prior knowledge by discussing the writing process and the elements of biography.
- Students will be able to apply prewriting strategies generating ideas organizing writing.
- Students will be able to improve comprehension by researching a historical figure and reporting the most significant information about him.
- Students will be able to identify character traits about an historical figure.
- Students will be able to identify cause and effect incidents in early Pennsylvania History.
- Students will be able to discuss cause and effect relationships in early Pennsylvania History.
- Students will be able to track important stages in Pennsylvania History on a timeline.

Strategies

The curriculum unit will include several instructional strategies that are designed to strengthen and improve the reading comprehension skill of the students. The usage of the writing process will also be included in the curriculum unit. Reading biographies and excerpts from biographies will be incorporated in the unit for students to demonstrate understanding of the text. Discussions will be a part of the direct instructional portion to give students the opportunity to provide verbal input about the people and cultures that influenced early Pennsylvania history.

- **Direct Instruction** will be teacher-led. Direct instruction will be administered to the entire class. Small group instruction will be provided to differentiate instruction for those students that need additional support. Direct instruction will

be used to facilitate lessons on vocabulary, reading comprehension skills and the writing process.

- **Accessing Prior Knowledge** will be used to assist students with making connections between the people, cultures and real life experiences as they pertain to this curriculum unit.
- **Graphic Organizers** will be used to organize information the students will use to complete reading and writing activities.
- **The Writing Process** will be incorporated into the curriculum unit to assist students with organization in their writing.
- **Group Discussions** will be organized in order for students to collaborate and share feelings, opinions and information regarding the people, cultures and events that shaped early Pennsylvania history.

Classroom Activities

Lesson 1 *Who was William Penn?*

Overview: This lesson is designed to get students thinking and discussing what they may or may not know about William Penn. This lesson will also incorporate a graphic organizer that students can use to store information regarding William Penn. The teacher will pose the lesson question to the class and allow time for discussion in order to record information regarding William Penn.

Objective: Students will be able to access prior knowledge about the topic of William Penn. Students will be able to record what they know about William Penn, questions about William Penn, and information learned about William Penn on a graphic organizer called a KWL chart. Students will use this graphic organizer throughout the unit.

Materials:

KWL Graphic Organizer
(Appendix 1)
William Penn Biographies
Pictures of William Penn
Folders, pencils, crayons, markers

Procedure: Prior to beginning this lesson, the teacher should designate a place in the classroom to display all work completed and used in this curriculum unit. William Penn biographies and pictures of William Penn should be displayed in this area.

1. The teacher will write or creatively display the name William Penn on a board.

2. The teacher will tell students that they will be learning about Pennsylvania History and how Pennsylvania was founded. The teacher will also explain that there is one important man that will be the focus of our lessons. His name is William Penn. The students will be asked to “turn and talk” with a neighbor or partner about what they may know about William Penn and why he would be important to Pennsylvania history.
3. The teacher will distribute the KWL chart to each student to complete. The “K” section will include what the students know about William Penn. This is the part that will access prior knowledge. The “W” section will include questions the students may have about William Penn. Students should have five or more questions in this section.
4. The teacher will allow time for the students to complete the “K” and “W” sections of the graphic organizer. The teacher will walk around and monitor the students talking about William Penn and completing the graphic organizer.
5. The teacher will follow up with the discussion by having the students share out their responses to what they completed in the “K” and “W” sections. The teacher may write the responses on the board.
6. The teacher will explain to the students that they will be able to add information and facts they learn about William Penn to the “L” section of the graphic organizer.
7. The students will keep the KWL chart in a folder about William Penn.

Extension: The teacher will explain to the students that they will be decorating a folder to keep all of the information about William Penn. The materials for the decoration of the folders will be distributed and students will be allotted time to decorate and personalize their folder. The folders will be distributed and collected daily. The folders should be near the William Penn board or wall in the classroom.

Lesson 2 ***“The Character Traits of William Penn”***

Overview: This activity will allow students to identify and record the character traits of William Penn. The students will be able to describe William Penn’s behaviors based on specific time periods in his life. The time period will begin with his youth through death. The information will be recorded on a web graphic organizer made by the students.

Objective: The students will be able to identify and record the character traits of William Penn from different stages of his life. The students will create and design a web for the documentation of the character traits.

Materials: 11x14 in. light colored construction paper or card stock paper

Pencils, crayons, markers.

Photocopied excerpts from various sources regarding William Penn.

Excerpt from: *William Penn: Founder of Pennsylvania* (pages 4-7)

Excerpt from: *The Pennsylvania Colony* (pages 46-47)

Excerpt from: *Pennsylvania* (pages 126-132)

Procedure:

1. The teacher will be explaining to the class that the students will be identifying character traits of William Penn. The teacher will define character traits and provide examples. The teacher will draw a large circle in the center of the board. The center circle is where you place the topic. The teacher will draw and extend lines from the circle to write character traits. The teacher will model how to set up the web and place information.
2. Each student will receive a copy of excerpts from three sources about William Penn. The teacher will also distribute paper, crayons, and markers.
3. The students will work in groups. Each group will read through excerpts and identify character traits to describe William Penn. The students will discuss the character trait findings and tell why the character trait describes William Penn.
4. The student will design their own web on the large paper. Students may draw illustrations along with web.
5. Students should have 10 or more character traits on web.
6. This lesson may be modified for differentiated instruction by having teacher read excerpts on audio for students to listen to in a listening center. After listening to audio, the student may complete web.
7. The teacher should be circulating around the room and monitoring activity.

Extension: When students have completed web, the students should pick three character traits and write down why that trait describes William Penn based on what was comprehended from the readings. Students will share their traits with the class in a class discussion. Webs may be put on a display board or folded and placed in William Penn folders.

Lesson 3

“ Cause and Effect Relationships”

Overview: This lesson was designed to help students identify cause and effect relationships in early Pennsylvania History. William Penn interacted with other cultures during the founding of Pennsylvania. The students will be posed six questions that will have to be researched and answered. The students will be provided with reading material to use in order to find answers. The students will use the questions and answers to

complete a Cause/Effect graphic organizer. This activity may be completed in one or two days.

Objective: The students will be able to use biographical excerpts about William Penn in order to answer questions regarding early Pennsylvania history. The students will complete a Cause/Effect graphic organizer using the question and answer responses.

Materials: Questions Handout (Appendix 2)
Cause/Effect Graphic Organizer (Appendix 3)
Excerpt from *The Pennsylvania Colony* (pages 33-45)

Procedures:

1. The teacher will begin with a discussion about William Penn and other cultures of people he encountered while founding Pennsylvania. The other cultures include Native Americans, Swedes, Finns, Dutch and English.
2. The students will work in groups to read the excerpt from *The Pennsylvania Colony*.
3. The students will then answer the questions on the handout.
4. The teacher will circulate throughout the classroom and assist students with the activity.

Extension: The students will use the questions and answers from activity to complete a Cause/Effect graphic organizer. The students will share with the class everything they learned from the activity.

Lesson 4 “William Penn the Bad Boy”

Overview: This activity will involve students investigating some problems and conflicts William Penn endured in his lifetime. William Penn was beaten by his father not obeying the family’s religious beliefs. William Penn was imprisoned for writing a book about his Quaker beliefs. Penn was also arrested for preaching about the Quaker faith in the London streets. The students will develop a flyer to either defend Penn’s punishments or state why he should be acquitted. The flyer will be directed to the English ruler. These problems ignited Penn’s journey to this land called Pennsylvania.

Objective: The students will be able to develop a flyer to give to England’s ruler regarding Penn’s punishments. The students will be able to state whether Penn should be punished or freed. The students will be able to use illustrations on the flyer.

Materials: plain paper, pencils, crayons
Excerpt from *The Pennsylvania Colony* (pages 46-47)

Procedures:

1. The teacher will state that William Penn was a “bad boy” in his day. The teacher will pass out the William Penn Folders. The teacher will read aloud an excerpt from *The Pennsylvania Colony* (pages 46-47).
2. The teacher and students will identify the problems and conflicts William Penn encountered before coming to the land of Pennsylvania. The teacher will list the problems and conflicts on the board.
3. The students will then be instructed to develop a flyer to send to the English leader either defend Penn’s punishment or request he be acquitted.
4. The flyer should include the student’s argument. Students may decorate the flyer.

Extension: The class may act out a mock trial with a judge, jury, prosecutor, defense lawyer and William Penn. The teacher will assign parts. Allow students time to put the skit together and perform for the class. Hold a discussion about performance after skit.

Lesson 5 ***“Penn Biographies”***

Overview: This lesson involves students writing a three paragraph biography about William Penn. Students will be encouraged to use the graphic organizers and photocopied excerpts as a reference to comprise the biography about William Penn. Students will also be able to use the internet as well as other biographical books about William Penn. The students will have one week to work on the biography. The biography will include a title page, three paragraphs, pictures or illustrations.

Objective: The students will be able to use the Writing Process in order to complete a three paragraph biography about William Penn. The students will include facts from the KWL and Web charts in the biography.

Materials: lined paper, pencils, plain paper for cover page, crayons, glue

Procedures:

1. The teacher will pass out William Penn folders. The teacher will remind the students of all that has been covered about William Penn. The teacher will state that the class has looked at other author’s accounts of William Penn’s life. We will now write our own biography.
2. The teacher will review the definition of biography and explain the elements of biography.
3. The teacher will also review the parts of the Writing Process with the class. (Prewriting, Rough Draft, Editing, Revisions, Publishing). The Writing Process should have been used frequently prior to this curriculum unit.

4. The students will work on the William Penn biography daily during the writing block.
5. The teacher will monitor and conference with the students regarding their biographies throughout the week

Extension: The students will orally share the William Penn Biographies with the class and explain why William Penn is so important to Pennsylvania History. Biographies should be displayed on a bulletin board.

Bibliography

Fradin, Dennis B. *The Pennsylvania Colony*, Children's Press, 1988
ISBN: 0-516-00390-9.

This book is a resource for teachers that provides excerpts for the activities in this curriculum unit.

Scott Foresman. *Social Studies: Pennsylvania*, Pearson Education, Inc, 2004
ISBN: 0-328-05895-5

This book is a teacher's resource that provides excerpts for the activities in this curriculum unit.

Jacobson, Ryan. *William Penn: Founder of Pennsylvania (Graphic Biographies)*, Capstone Press, 2006
ISBN: 10 0736896651

This book is a graphic biography for children about William Penn. This book is a resource for students to read and use for the writing activity in this unit.

Schoolnet, <http://www.philasd.org>

This website provides teachers with the core curriculum standards for grades K-12.

“Super Teacher Worksheets”. <http://www.superteacherworksheets.com>

This website provides teachers with graphic organizers and activity worksheets that can be used with this unit.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Graphic Organizer

KWL Chart

K	W	L

Appendix 2

Questions:

1. Why did William Penn and other Quakers move to the land known now as Pennsylvania?
2. Why did William Penn write a letter to the Native Americans?
3. Why did William Penn and the Lenape sign the Treaty of Shackamaxon?
4. How did Penn get the land of Pennsylvania?
5. Why did William Penn create a constitution for Pennsylvania?
6. Why did Penn call his colony a “Holy Experiment?”

Appendix 3

Graphic Organizer

Cause/Effect Chart

Cause	Effect

Standards

Pennsylvania Social Studies Standards for Fourth Grade

8.1.4A. identify and describe how geography and climate has influenced continuity and change over time.

8.2.4A. differentiate common characteristics of the social, political, cultural and economic groups from Pennsylvania.

8.2.4D. distinguish between conflict and cooperation among groups and organizations that impacted the history and development of Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania Reading Standards for Fourth Grade

RI.4.1. refer to details and examples when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences.

RI.4.2. determine the main idea and explain how it is supported by details/summarize.

RI.4.3. explain events/procedures/ideas/concepts in a text.

RI.4.7. interpret information presented visually, orally or quantitatively.

RI.4.10. read and comprehend informational texts.