

CLASSROOM PRACTICE

1. Teaching Thesis & Guiding Questions: The legend of Pocahontas has endured for hundreds of years, but the popular animated version of the story has distorted many of the important facts of her life. Although different accounts of her life vary with regard to the details, historians agree on many points. She was a very young girl, upon whom a great deal of responsibility was placed, and she died at a very early age. Students will be intrigued by how Pocahontas's appearance changed as her life progressed. Students will be able to make inferences regarding the actual person who was Pocahontas, and the legendary person. This will take place while observing the physical changes that she underwent, as well as the way she was presented to others. Her appearance and the degree to which she resembled a Native American or an Englishwoman will directly correlate to her geographical location.

2. Suggested Grade Level and Length of Activities- Kindergarten-3 lessons-30-45 minutes each.

3. Significance & Relevance:

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K.1a The student will recognize that history describes events and people of other times and places by identifying examples of past events in legends, stories, and historical accounts of Pocahontas, George Washington, Betsy Ross, and Abraham Lincoln;

K.2 The student will describe everyday life in the present and in the past and begin to recognize that things change over time.

K.3 The student will describe the relative location of people, places, and things by using positional words, with emphasis on near/far, above/below, left/right, and behind/in front.

K.4 The student will use simple maps and globes to
develop an awareness that a map is a drawing of a place to show where
things are located and that a globe is a round model of the Earth;
b) describe places referenced in stories and real-life situations;
c) locate land and water features.

OAH Standards

1 Chronological Thinking

Distinguish between past, present, and future time.

F. Reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration in which historical developments have unfolded, apply them to explain historical continuity and change.

2 Historical Comprehension

B. Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.

C. Read historical narratives imaginatively, taking into account (a) the historical context in which the event unfolded--values, outlook, options, and contingencies of time and place; and (b) what the narrative reveals of the individuals involved--their probable motives, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.

D. Evidence historical perspectives--the ability (a) to describe the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; and (b) to "present-mindedness," judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

E. Draw upon data in historical maps in order to obtain or clarify information on the geographic setting in which the historical event occurred, its relative and absolute location, the distances and directions involved, the natural and man-made features of the place, and critical relationships in the spatial distributions of those features and the historical event occurring there.

G. Draw upon visual, literary, and musical sources including: (a) photographs, paintings, cartoons, and architectural drawings; (b) novels, poetry, and plays; and (c) folk, popular, classical music to clarify, illustrate, or elaborate upon information presented in the historical narrative.

4. Lesson Objectives:

- Students will make inferences about how the movie version of Pocahontas is different from the real life images of Pocahontas, and they will complete a drawing depicting at least one difference between the images.
- Students will recognize the differences and similarities between people of different cultures, times in history, etc. by using a Venn diagram and placing the images of, or words describing Pocahontas in the correct areas of the diagram (set theory).
- Students will map the different places that Pocahontas lived by placing images of her in the correct places on the map. They will show how different images of Pocahontas changed peoples perspectives of who she was as a person.

7. Annotated list of supplemental resources:

References

Bruchac, J. (2005). *Pocahontas*. New York City: Harcourt Paperbacks.

This book is intended for ages 12 and up and is written alternately by both Pocahontas and Captain John Smith. Each chapter is prefaced by some piece of period writing. This helps to bring the reader into the frame of time in which the story takes place. The book has no illustrations, but does include a glossary of old English language and one of the Powhatan languages. An easy, but interesting read for upper elementary and middle school students.

Eitzen, A., & Jassem, K. (1998). *Pocahontas: Girl of Jamestown*. New York: Troll Communications.

This story is presented as historical fiction and includes only tonal drawings as its illustrations. It does use a drawing of an old map, which may help children relate it to the past. Although it is written for the more accomplished reader, it avoids controversial issues that might be appropriate

for the more mature student.

Jenner, C. (2009). *Pocahontas (DK READERS)*. New York: DK CHILDREN.

This book is intended for beginning readers and tells yet another version of the story of Pocahontas. It uses some reproductions of famous works, including the beautiful cover. Most of the pictures, however, are original drawings and depict very violent and frightening Native Americans.

Knudsen, S., & Zemlicka, S. (2002). *Pocahontas (On My Own Biography)*. Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books.

This is perhaps a more honest version of the life of Pocahontas. It is meant for independent reading in first and second grades. The stylistic drawings lend an artistic feel to the book. The Author's note poses some good questions regarding point of view and should be used in the study of Pocahontas. The book also includes a time line of Pocahontas' life.

Milton, J. (2000). *Pocahontas: An American Princess (All Aboard Reading)*. New York: Grosset & Dunlap.

This is a completely illustrated version of the legend of Pocahontas. It is intended for the independent reader and includes appropriate depictions of the Native American people. However, like most versions written for children, it is more of a legend than a biography and should be used as such.

Penner, L. R. (1994). *The True Story of Pocahontas (Step-Into-Reading, Step 3)*. New York: Random House Books for Young Readers.

This is a very simplified version of the legend of Pocahontas. It is meant for very young children as it avoids any material that might be controversial including the young age at which she died. In the original drawings, Pocahontas is depicted as a young child, which may help children relate to her life more easily.

Polette, N. (2003). *Pocahontas (Rookie Biographies)*. New York: Children's Press (CT).

This is an easy to read biography of Pocahontas. The illustrations are predominantly copies of famous works of art. It also allows for the possibility that the Native Americans did not intend to

harm John Smith during what is believed by many to be a ceremony. Simple and easy to read, it is suitable for K and 1st.

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5. Lesson Plans or Instructional Activities-

- In Lesson 1 students view different images of Pocahontas and make inferences about who she is, where she lives, etc. Then, students will complete a diagram of how she differed in the movie version and the historical drawings. This helps students recognize that point of view can change the way history is related.
- In Lesson 2, students use set theory to look at how people from different cultures or periods in history are both alike and different in many ways. Students complete a Venn diagram as a group with each child contributing to the diagram. This allows students see that people and the way in which we live, changes over time. New inventions and improvements in roads etc. change how we live.
- In Lesson 3 students look at the map and track Pocahontas and the places she lived. They create their own maps with pictures of Pocahontas, putting her image in the correct places. This helps children understand that people change over time, and that people can move to and live in different places. It allows them to become familiar with the map and our location on the Earth.

10. Technology (if applicable) –Not needed

11. Modifications, Differentiation, and Extensions-The Bibliography lists many good books for different ages and reading/comprehension levels. Reading and completing independent study projects is a great way for children to extend the learning.

12. Related Materials & Resources –

Lesson One-Who Are You?

- Form #1
- Form #1 Answer Key
- Pocahontas images for lesson 1

Lesson Two-A Day in the Life of Pocahontas

- Lesson 2 Venn diagram activity labels and answer key
- Lesson 2 pictures
- Pocahontas images for lesson 2

Lesson Three-Pocahontas Travels

- Lesson 3 Picture- large classroom size and student size
- Lesson 3 student activity maps
- Lesson 3 student activity map answer key