

I had every intention of doing a lesson plan dealing with the Indians—perhaps a discussion of the different approaches to white people moving into Indian lands as demonstrated by Red Cloud and Crazy Horse. However, the more I thought about this, the more I was dissatisfied with my ideas. I wanted something that could be used by teachers at all levels, and it just seemed that what I was thinking about was limited to upper level or AP classes. As I was driving towards the Black Hills, I began to go over some of the things we had talked about, and some of the trips we had taken. As I thought about what I had seen, I went back in my memory to the visit to the Museum of the Fur Trade. Something that was said in the workshop came back to me—the expansion westward all revolved around the trade in hides and fur. The importance of this trade is not something that is usually taught in history classes. Certainly fur trading is mentioned, but its critical importance to bringing settlers to the frontier areas is not stressed. I had never really given much thought to the significance of the fur trade to the movement westward.

As a result, I decided to concentrate on the fur trade and the life of the trappers, hunters, and traders. This lesson can encompass the role of human migration in shaping the context and course for power shifts on the plains, environmental and ecological changes as factors both driving and driven by the actions of human inhabitants of the plains, and the connectedness of the plains to emerging national, continental, and global economies.

Students will have to research the trade in fur and hides. They will then have to concentrate on the life of one trapper, trader, or hunter. This research should include his relationship with the eastern and European markets for the sale of his furs or hides and his relations with the Indians. Students should also get an idea of how this person helped to bring other white people to the Plains. I have written the lesson in such a way that it can be adapted to various grade levels and abilities. It could also be adapted to various time periods and parts of the country. If a teacher wants to use it to discuss the fur trade in the Great Lakes, for example, it would be easy to do. It incorporates technology but can also be used even if students do not have access to technology.

UNIT: Westward Expansion

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS: What was it like to be a fur trapper, hunter or trader?

What role did fur trading have in the westward expansion of the United States?

GRADE LEVEL: Upper elementary grades through high school

TIMELINE OF LESSON: Students have one week to complete the project

PA CONTENT STANDARDS: 8.1 Historical Analysis and Skills Development

8.3 United States History

RESOURCES: Textbook; various books and internet sites

The following are internet sources. There are many good books and other resources that can be used if students do not have internet access.

<http://www.montanatrappers.org/history.htm>

<http://videos.howstuffworks.com/hsw/12096-the-frontier-the-fur-trappers-video.htm>

<http://www.whiteoak.org/learning/lrn-online.shtml>

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/HNS/Mtmen/home.html>

<http://www.42explore2.com/mtnmen.htm>

<http://www.isu.edu/~trinmich/Discoverers.html>

Fur Trapper/Trader Myspace page

After completing research about fur trappers, hunters and the fur trade, students will complete a sample Myspace page about a fur trapper, hunter, or trader. This can be adapted to any part of the country and any time period. The teacher can choose to have students research a particular fur trapper/hunter/trader or have students research the fur trade and then pretend to be a fur trapper/hunter/trader and have them complete the Myspace page. The Myspace template is done with Microsoft Word. If there are no computers available for students to use, they could easily recreate the template as a poster. Teachers can make this an individual assignment or allow students to work in groups.

Once the research and project have been completed, students should explain how the fur trade influenced the movement westward. This can be done as an essay or oral presentation.

Instructions for Myspace page

1. Find a picture of the person you are profiling, use a picture of yourself, or create an avatar or picture
2. Either find a quote from the person or make up a quote that this person might have said
3. Fill in the age, gender, location, country, and time of last login
4. Write a brief description about the person. This must be 8-10 sentences. Tell a little something about the person.
5. Fill in the person's interests. For example, a fur trapper's favorite movies might include *Jeremiah Johnston* or *A Man Called Horse*. Think about books, movies, music, etc. that a fur trapper or trader might enjoy.
6. Include a list of the person's friends. If possible find pictures of these people and add the person's name to the picture.
7. Complete the person's details
8. Complete the person's friends' comments. Include a picture of the friend and a comment. You must have at least 4-6 friends and comments. For example, your person might have John Jacob Astor as a friend. Or another trapper might comment, "Had a great time at the rendezvous. See you next year." Or an Indian might write "Hope to never see you again. Your success is causing too many white people looking for wealth to come to our lands."
9. Complete the bumper sticker block. Find one or two bumper stickers that friends might send you. Ex: a fellow trapper might send you this

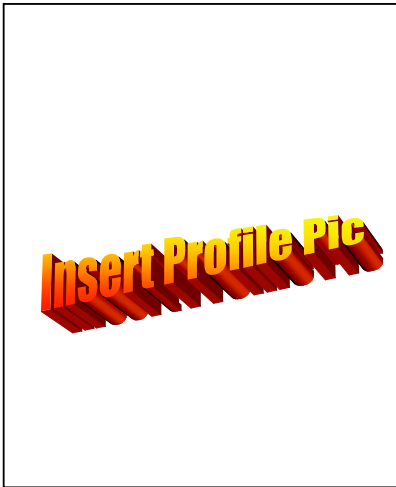


EVALUATION

The project will be judged on:

- a. The accuracy of information used to complete the Myspace page
- b. The visual appeal of the Myspace page
- c. Whether all instructions were followed
- d. How thoroughly the Myspace page covers the life of a fur trapper/trader
- e. Whether resources were properly cited in MLA format
- f. How well the essay or oral presentation covers the essential question

Name of Profile



"...Famous quote..."

Age:

Gender:

Location:

Country:

 **Online Now!**

Last Login: _____

Name of Person's Blurbs (8-10 sentences)

About Me:

Person's Interests

General:

Music:

Movies:

Heroes:

Books:

Television:

Person's Friends

Person has _____ friends

Person's Details

Marital Status:

Children:

Here For:

Home Town:

Ethnicity:

Zodiac Sign:

Education:

Occupation:

Places visited:

Relations with Indians:

Person's Friends Comments

Showing 6 comments of 78 ([View All](#) | [Add Comment](#))

Bumper Stickers

Name of Profile

Insert Profile Pic

“... Famous quote...”

Age
Gender
Location
Country

 **Online Now!**

Last Login: _____

Name of person is in your extended network

Name of Person's Blurbs (8-10 sentences)









About Me:

Hello, my name is Patrick Henry. I was born in Hanover County, Virginia on May 29, 1736. I was married to Sarah Shelton, but sadly she passed away some time ago. Now I'm married to my beautiful wife, Dorothea Dandridge. I went from being a store clerk and unsuccessful farmer to being a lawyer, politician, patriot, and orator. I was willing participant in every aspect of the founding of America. Everyone who is familiar with me knows that I speak my mind. You may know me for my famous words "Give me Liberty or Give me Death!"



Mood need smiley face:)

View My: [Pics](#) | [Videos](#)

 Send Message	 Forward to Friend
 Add to Group	 Add to Favorites
 Add to Friends	 Block User
 IM / Call	 Rank User

Person's Interests

General: *Strong speaking, law*

Music: *All types of Classical*

Movies: *National Treasure
Pirates of the Caribbean*



(Need at least 5)

*The Patriot
Gladiator
The Da Vinci Code*



Heroes: *Samuel Davies
Robert Carter Nicholas*

Books: *To Kill a Mockingbird
The Da Vinci Code*



Television: *Law and Order
Monk
Without a Trace
Football/Baseball*

Person's Friends

Person has 77 friends

[Dorothea Henry](#)



[John Adams](#)



[Washington](#)



[John Marshall](#)



[Richard Lee](#)



[Tom Jefferson](#)



[George Mason](#)



[George Clark](#)



[Lord Dunmore](#)



[\(View all\)](#)

Person's Details

Status: Married

Children: Proud parent of 17 -
not planning to have
any more

Here For: Job/ fun

Orientation: Straight

Home Town: Scotchtown, Virginia.

Body Type: 6"0

Ethnicity: White/Caucasian

Zodiac Sign: Gemini


Education: - My father taught me
when I was young
- Taught myself law

Occupation: Gov. of Virginia
House of Burgesses
Virginia Militia Leader

Bumper Stickers

Sent by General Wayne



Sent by Abigail Adams



Person's Friends Comments

Showing 6 comments of 78 ([View All](#) | [Add Comment](#))

George Mason



December 21, 2007 6:03 am

You sir, are by far one of the most powerful speakers I have ever heard. Well done!

Dorothea Henry



December 17, 2007 7:31 pm

Sweetie, I'll give you death if you don't come home in time for supper again without informing me that you'll be late!



♥ p.s. i love you

Tom Jefferson



November 14, 2007 2:23 pm

It was such a delight leading the House of Burgesses with you.

Lord Dunmore



October 23, 2007 5:02 pm

I truly despise you and the rest of the House of Burgesses. Have you not learned as I dissolved you twice before?!

Richard Lee



October 13, 2007 2:13 pm

Every word you speak just surpasses everything I have ever heard in all my life.

Washington



May 29, 2007 10:01 am

The House of Burgesses and the Continental Congress would be nothing without you!

