

Should We Give Peace a Chance?

John Burns

Goal: After completing this lesson, students will understand how cultural frontiers create both competition and opportunities for cooperation that affect the development and identity of the societies that are meeting.

Objectives: Students will:

- a. attempt to negotiate a peaceful coexistence between the various parties in the northeastern Americas, ca. 1700;
- b. examine how the way human societies interact with their environment affects their potential for cooperation or competition;
- c. describe the economic, social, and religious influences affecting societies in the region; and
- d. explain why fighting along the European-Native American frontier took the form and intensity that it did.

Homework: Students will be instructed to read background information necessary to represent one group in a peace negotiation in North America, ca. 1700. Each student will be assigned to one of the assignments below, all taken from the website *Raid on Deerfield: the Many Stories of 1704* (<http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/index.html>). They should be placing relevant information on the graphic organizer provided.

- a. the English and French, the respective section under “Explanations” at the bottom of the main page: “English Colonization” or “French Colonization.”
- b. For the other 3 groups, their culture under “Meet the Five Cultures”.

The Class Activity: a Hypothetical Peace Conference through Jigsaw

Introduction: Everybody says they want peace. But if everybody wants the same thing, why is it so hard to make it happen? We will consider one such case study today.

The frontier experience in the 17th-18th centuries was one of frequent and brutal war, interrupted periodically by uneasy peace. Provide chronology of conflicts, such as are available on the *Raid* website.

Each side saw itself as the victim, threatened by untrustworthy rivals. Today we will try to see beyond blame, and examine why peace was so difficult to achieve.

Step 1: Students meet in mastery groups by assigned persona to develop a common understanding of their perspective, leading to their diplomatic priorities. Based on the homework reading, each group must agree upon:

- a. its geographic location, how it uses the land, and its economic base;
- b. its political organization and recent demographic (population) pattern;
- c. any trading or other cooperative ventures with the other groups, as well as any recent conflicts with or dislocations due to other groups;
- d. defining cultural traditions that create tension with one or more of the groups
- e. and its 2-3 specific diplomatic priorities *important to their historical individual*. In other words, what **MUST** your group have in order for its society to be prosperous? What are you not willing to concede, even if it means war?

Note: “Peace”, at least for our purposes, is not really a goal; nor is war a goal of very many societies. Peace and war are the means through which you attempt to achieve your goals, such as acquisition of a specific and necessary resource or expansion to an easily defensible geographic feature that provides greater security from acts of violence by others.

The teacher should circulate to be sure each group is on target, and specifically that their diplomatic priorities are logical but incompatible (e.g., English need for future growth of farmland vs. native hunting needs).

Step 2: Regroup for the Peace Negotiations

Each new group is instructed to try to negotiate a peace agreement, but they may only agree to one that meets their diplomatic priorities above. Each student issues his/her group's demands.

Step 3: Groups report out- the Results of the Negotiations

This could be done through a Wordle, if time and technology permit.

Each group should take responsibility for reporting out their successes and failures. Meanwhile, the teacher should project a map of the region, identifying locations, symbols for economic usage, trade routes, conflicts, etc., as they are raised. Key terms should be added here (e.g., "mourning war").

Groups should be asked how objectives b, c, and d were demonstrated in their negotiations.

Closure: Return to central question: was peace worth the cost to anybody? What might this suggest about how we as Americans can better understand our own international relations?

The American Northeast, ca. 1700

| | Land Use How do they use the land? Economic base? | Population Changes & Management Political organization and population changes in late 1600's? | Relationships Trading/cooperative ventures with other groups? Recent conflicts? | Traditions Cultural traditions that cause tension? | Needs? Diplomatic priorities <i>needed</i> for future prosperity? | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| English | | | | | | | | | | |
| French | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mohawk (Kanienkehaka) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Abenaki (Wobanaki) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Huron (Wendat) | | | | | | | | | | |
| Other Important factors? | | | | | | | | | | |