

Clash of Cultures Unit – 3 weeks

Grade 8, Canaan, Vermont

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Overview:

Students will learn what factors comprise the concept of *culture*. Emphasis will be on early English culture as seen through colonial New England and eighteenth century Eastern America, as well as Indian cultures including Mohawk, Wampanoag, and Delaware. The concept of shifting between cultures will be introduced through the story of the 1704 raid on Deerfield, MA, and the historic fiction book *A Light in the Forest* by Conrad Richter. The idea of captives and assimilation into differing cultures will be explored through reading primary documents, the “Raid on Deerfield: the Many Stories of 1704” website, children’s books and various writing assignments culminating in a compare contrast essay and a literary essay answering the question of why True Son has no home to go to in the end of the book.

Materials:

A Light in the Forest, Conrad Richter

If You Lived in Colonial Times, Ann McGovern

Tapenum’s Day: A Wampanoag Indian Boy in Pilgrim Times, Kate Waters

Web Site: <http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/index.html>

General Description

The reading of *A Light in the Forest* is on-going during the unit.

1. Website introduction piece on the Deerfield raid – play and discuss, especially the idea that differing cultures interpret events differently.
2. Website piece “English Lifeways- England circa 1600” – discuss, especially notion of *culture*
3. Children’s book: *If You Lived in Colonial Times* – to learn about daily life in English culture
4. Write: 3 diary entries for what your life would be like in 18th century New England
5. Website piece – “Eunice Kanenstehawi Williams”
<http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/popups/people.do?shortName=EuniceKWilliams> -
Prologue –Compare her life to your diary
6. Similar process to familiarize students with Indian culture – Use website piece “Kanienkehaka Lifeways- Mohawk Valley circa 1600”
<http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/groups/lifeways.do?title=Kanienkehaka> - with special attention paid to Mourning Wars; use *Tapenum’s Day*, having students list what appeals to them about Wampanoag life. Use “European Land Use and the Transformation of the Northeast”:
<http://1704.deerfield.history.museum/popups/background.do?shortName=expLand>
7. As we discuss *A Light in the Forest*, emphasis will be on cultural differences.

Culminating essays:

1. Compare and contrast Indian and English colonial culture in these three areas: daily life, family life, and use of the land. In your opinion, could these cultures have come to a compromise?
2. At the end of *A Light in the Forest*, why is it that True Son has nowhere to go? What do you think will happen to him?

Sample lesson:

Students will learn what it would have been like to live in colonial times and consider how they would have liked living as an English colonist.

Students read *If You Lived in Colonial Times* and record likes and dislikes, at least 20.

Students read the Eunice "Prologue" from the web site and add to their list with at least 10 more items.

Students write a 3-day journal/diary of what their life is like as an 18th century child.