

Colonial Landscape (45-60 minute lesson)

Grade Level: 3

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Content Standards

Science (NSTA):

- Standard D, E & F

Learner Background

- Knowledge of colonial America is beneficial.

Student Learning Objective(s)

- SWBAT identify different manmade structures and the time periods in which they were created.
- SWBAT understand how human endeavors affect the landscape.
- SWBAT analyze a landscape from a historical perspective.
- SWBAT simulate colonial life by recreating foods that would have been produced in colonial America.
- SWBAT identify several different types of plants that grow wild as a result of colonial farms

Assessment

- Informal: Teacher will gauge student's understanding of learning objectives through class discussions and individual conferencing during class time.

Materials/Resources

- Clipboards
- Paper
- Journals
- Potato
- Potato Chips
- Dirt

- Pots & potting soil
- Wild mint and wild onions

Learning Activities

Initiation

(10 minutes) The class is taken outside at the beginning of a nature trail or at the edge of the woods. Teacher asks students following prompt: “Picture yourself standing here 300 years ago. What would you see here?” This should start a discussion about the age of certain landmarks around the school.

Lesson Development

(10 minutes) Teacher now asks students to observe the trees and the landscape in the forest, encouraging them with the following prompts: How old are the trees? How can you tell? The discussion should lead to the stone walls on the ground. How did these stone walls get here? How old are they? Why would they be here? Where did the people get the stones? What purpose did they serve?

(10 minutes) The class discusses plants that colonists were able to grow or would have grown. Why build the stone walls if you are growing plants? The teacher points out that there are many plants that the settlers grew, which are still found in the wild today. Mint and onion are two excellent examples of plants that were grown for food and are now found wild near many stone walls.

(10 minutes) The teacher will now ask students how they think a person would grow either

mint or onion. The teacher elaborates on the different techniques that were used in colonial

America to create crops from only a few plants. The teacher shows the class how the plants are

subdivided in different manners according to the way they grows. The teacher may also

describe the way in which roots are grown and harvested. Potatoes are a good example.

(15 minutes) Each student can choose one type of plant to grow and plant it in a pot of soil. This plant will be monitored over the next few weeks to record its progress and

growth. Students are directed to compare results with the goal of isolating the most efficient crop.

Closure

(5 minutes) The teacher passes out a recipe for several different types of foods that could be made from the plants that the class found outside and informs the class that he/she will create one of them and bring it in for the class to taste the next day.

Extension

If the teacher wishes, this unit could lead into a discussion of colonial life, botany, or social organization. The teacher should follow/elaborate upon the connections that the students make. This will allow them to understand the information in the best possible manner.