



Grosse Pointe Historical Society

LAKE ST. CLAIR

Local History Brought to Life!

Uncovering History: How Do Historians “Figure it Out”?

**A Series of History Discovery Experiences
Designed for Fifth Graders at
The Grosse Pointe Historical Society
Provencal-Weir House, circa 1823**

Sponsored by the

Grosse Pointe Historical Society

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The development of the school curriculum was generously
donated by the Louisa St. Clair Chapter, DAR of Grosse Pointe.

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SERIES OF ACTIVITIES

Before the trip:

- I. Learning about History of an Era by Studying an Archeological Dig**
- II. Learning about History of an Era by Studying How to Build a Log Cabin**
- III. Learning about History of an Era by Studying Artifacts**
- IV. Learning about History of an Era by Studying the Life of a Pioneer**

During the trip:

- V. Learning about History of an Era by Reading Old Newspapers**
- VI. Learning about History of an Era by Studying Photographs, Paintings, or Pictures**
- VII. Learning about History of an Era from Old Records**
- VIII. Learning about History of an Era by Visiting a Local Cemetery**
- IX. Learning about History of an Era by Reading a First Person Narrative Account, Autobiography, Biography or Historical Fiction**

After the trip:

- X. Write a historical fiction story using the historical knowledge gained before or during the trip to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society Provencal-Weir House, circa 1823**

Standards and Benchmarks Addressed in These Activities

Related Grosse Pointe Public Schools English Language Arts Curriculum Standards

Narrative: Analyze elements and styles of historical fiction.

R.WS.GP>05.08 Use etymology.

R.WS.GP.05.09 Use reading to expand vocabulary.

R.NT.05.01 Analyze how characters and communities reflect life (in positive and negative ways) in classic and contemporary literature recognized for quality and literary merit.

RNT.GP.05.06 Identify types of conflict and how it is resolved in stories read.

R.IT.05.02 Identify and describe informational text patterns (e.g., theory and evidence, compare/contrast, position/support, problem/solution)

R.IT.GP.05.04 Use a variety of strategies to read primary source material including journals, diaries, and documents.

R.CM.05.01 Connect personal knowledge, experience and understanding of the world to themes and perspectives in text through oral and written responses.

R.CM.05.02 Retell and summarize grade level appropriate narrative and informational text.

W.GN.05.01 Write a narrative piece (e.g., historical fiction) using time period and setting to enhance the plot; depicting conflicts and resolutions.

S.CN.05.05 Be aware that language differs from early American history to current day America as a function of linguistic and cultural group membership.

Related Michigan State Social Studies Curriculum Goals

Technology: Standard II: All students will use technologies to input, retrieve, organize, manipulate, evaluate communicate information.

Standard 11: Inquiry and Research: All students will define and investigate important issues and problems using a variety of resources, including technology, to explore and create texts.

Standard V: Inquiry: Students will use methods of social science investigation to answer questions about society. Locate information about local, state and national communities using a variety of traditional sources, electronic technologies, and direct observations.

Content Standard 1: All students will acquire information from books, maps, newspapers, data sets and other sources, organize and present the information in maps, graphs, charts and timelines. Interpret the meaning and significance of information and use a variety of electronic technologies to assist in accessing and managing information.

Social Studies: Content Standard III: Later Elementary. Use primary and secondary records to reconstruct past events in their local community, Michigan as a state and the United States as a nation.

Benchmark 3: Place major events in the early history of the United States in chronological order.

Content Standard IV: 1 Later Elementary Identify problems from the past that divided their local community, the state of Michigan, and the United States and analyze the interests and values of those involved.

Content Standard II: Benchmark 1: Summarize the sequence of key events in stories describing life from the past in their local community, the state of Michigan and other parts of the United States.

Geographic Perspective, Standard I: Locate and describe cultures and compare the similarities and differences among the roles of women, men, and families

Overview and Objectives of These Activities

Overview:

During the day of learning activities at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society, the fifth graders will find out some of the ways that Historians “Figure Out” What Happened “back in time”? Before coming to the Society, the class will experience several learning activities using the internet at home. With a parent or parents, the students will explore a website that illustrates the hardships of pioneers who settled in Montana on land claimed as a result of the Homestead Act. This website is called **The Frontier House**.

The students will examine a website that briefly describes **How to Build a Log Cabin** and they will experience another website that tells about an archeological dig on the site of a former farm in Pennsylvania that was in operation during the Civil War. The name of the website is **Discovery Zone**. At school, the teacher will make certain that the students understand about the Homestead Act and have learned the definition of an archeologist and artifact. What does an archeologist do? An archeologist finds artifacts that tell us or help us understand the past. An artifact is an object that was used in the past.

To further enrich the students’ knowledge of this period of settlement, the teacher will read a story aloud from **The Library of Congress** about a pioneer family who moved to Dearborn, Michigan when it was a small town covered with forests. The title of the story is **Back in the Woods Again**. The family moved from the state of New York. This is an exciting first person account of the experience giving the feelings and personalities of this brave family. Students will be encouraged to read historical fiction and biographies of people who lived during the time of the pioneers.

At the Grosse Pointe Historical Society, on the day of the visit, the docent will show the fifth grade students the log cabin on site, review the steps for building the log cabin and introduce them to the artifacts that are in the log cabin. This will help the students understand what it was like to live in a log cabin.

The students will walk to St. Paul’s Historical Cemetery where they will participate in activities that will encourage them to identify the period of history in which the deceased people lived. They will find the oldest grave marker and the most recent grave marker. Back at the Society, the students will summarize their discoveries from these two experiences.

At the Historical Society, the students will read a newspaper entitled “Articles and Advertisements from **The Detroit News** and **The Detroit Free Press** Newspapers,” Circa 1890. It includes articles from the 1890’s in the city of Detroit. Using the Newspaper worksheet, the students will comb information about this period of history from these interesting articles.

Another real life experience at discovering authentic information from primary sources is examining photographs. The students will see what information they can glean from these photographs of historic streets in Grosse Pointe and Detroit and the people who lived and worked there.

Also, they will examine the primary source, a Time Record for two weeks ending Thursday, May 5, 1904 from the Dodge Brothers' Company, Detroit, that will give information about time on their job and their salaries for their work. Many discussion questions should come from this information, because some people made much more money than others. Perhaps children were some of the workers.

Before returning to their elementary school, the students will be lead in a discussion by the teacher with the students summarizing information gained through these history discovery lessons.

Upon returning to school, the teacher may require that the students write a piece of historical fiction using the information learned at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society. It could be about a family who lived in the log cabin while their regular sized house was being built. Students may wish to use the name of a family that they found on a tombstone at the cemetery. Historical fiction is a story based on something that happened in history. The characters, setting, or plot of the story could be real or imagined. The author attempts to keep the story as close to history as possible.

Objectives:

The students will be prepared to:

- Write a chart that explains that the Homestead Act passed in 1862, and signed by Abraham Lincoln, offered a 160 acre plot of land to any United States citizen who was willing to clear it, build a house on it, develop it and live on it for five years.
- Describe the difficulties of travel in the 1800's for a family trying to reach their plot of land awarded to them by the Homestead Act.
- Imagine what it was like to build and to live in a log cabin while examining the one at 376 Kercheval Ave. in Grosse Pointe, MI.
- Describe how the historical Society's log cabin was built in the 1840's, had many uses starting with being a shelter for a settler's family to live in until they were able to build a larger farmhouse.
- Explain how this particular log cabin with a sleeping loft was moved to the Christ Church property in Grosse Pointe where it was used as a playhouse, an animal shelter during religious pageants and later as a tool shed.
- Explain how the Christ Church congregation donated the log cabin to the Historical Society, then moved it to the Provencal-Weir House property in 1997 where it became a historic model of a log cabin.
- Examine the artifacts stored in the log cabin and explain their historical significance to Grosse Pointe.
- Identify examples of the artifacts which are:
 1. Antique Farm Implements
 2. Tools and Household Appliances and
 3. Local Architectural Fragments

- Use the following primary sources to discover information about a historical era:
 1. photographs
 2. paintings
 3. newspapers
 4. records
- Visit a local cemetery and look for relationships to various points in American history and individuals who contributed to the development of Grosse Pointe.
- Play games that children would have played during pioneer days.
- Participate in cooking activities or crafts that represent a historical period.

Letter to Parents & Permission Slip

UNCOVERING HISTORY: How Do Historians “Figure It Out” ?

Date sent home: _____ Date due: _____

Dear Parents of _____,

We have planned an exciting trip designed especially for Fifth Graders to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society’s Provencal-Weir House, circa 1823, where they will become historians for a day. We will travel to the Society by car and walk to and from the St. Paul’s Cemetery from the Historical Society.

This trip will help our fifth graders gain information that is required in the Michigan State Curriculum Standards and Benchmarks. These standards and benchmarks are ones that will be tested on the MEAP tests. The Outcomes and Objectives addressed in this experience are included with this letter. Students will learn about the Society’s authentic log cabin and its artifacts, examine old photographs that reveal information about particular eras in history, read a newspaper with articles from the 1890s, read a Time Record from the Dodge Brothers’ Company in Detroit and walk to a local cemetery to study history there. These fifth graders will be historians for a day. Dressing in clothes worn during the late 1800s would be fun, but not required.

Since we will be walking to the St. Paul’s Cemetery, be sure that your fifth grader has clothes appropriate to the weather for the day. If it’s raining, an umbrella would be helpful. Of course, we will adjust our schedule if there is severe weather.

Before and after the trip, we will be participating in some related activities in our classroom. **Also, there are several internet historical activities that need to be completed at home.** These exercises will provide prior knowledge so that the students will understand the information presented on the fieldtrip more adequately. **It will be necessary that you and your fifth grader work together as a family, because parental guidance and involvement will make the experience more meaningful.** Thank you for your enthusiastic cooperation.

Date of Trip: _____

Departure Time: _____

Mode of Transportation: _____

Time of Return to School: _____

Lunch will be eaten at the Society’s Provencal-Weir House at _____ o’clock. Please send a sack lunch and have your student wear appropriate clothes for the predicted weather.

If you have a pioneer food or activity that you'd like to share before the trip, please let the teacher know. For example, you may know how to make yarn, knit clothing, or have a family treasure that you'd like to share, etc. A classroom demonstration may be needed. Perhaps you have a story from your grandparent's childhood that you or your fifth grader would be willing to share before or after the trip.

Here are examples of our scheduled activities at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society's Provencal-Weir House:

- I. Arrive at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society: Time: _____
- II. Review what the Homestead Act was
- III. Discuss results of internet quiz, Could You Be A Pioneer? Would you be a city slicker, Hapless Homesteader, Fair Weather Frontier Person or a Perfect Pioneer?
- IV. Make a pioneer recipe or a pioneer craft depending on the time allowed.
- V. Review the steps for building a log cabin.
- VI. Go to the log cabin and study the structure, examine the artifacts that are there, and imagine what it would be like to live in this structure. In your mind, start creating a story of a family that might have lived there. Pretend that it's your family.
- VII. Examine pictures/photographs/records from the past to see what you can learn about history from them. Put your information on the worksheet provided.
- VIII. Read from a newspaper with articles from the 1890's in Detroit to find out what life was like at that time.
- IX. Examine a U. S. history timeline to prepare for the trip to the cemetery.
- X. Talk about behavior at the cemetery. Show respect for people who have relatives or friends buried there. Remember, if there are other people there, allow them to be by themselves. They may be there to visit the grave of a loved one. Go about your work quietly in a business-like manner. Don't ask the people who are not with us questions. Do ask the docent and other adults from our group questions.
- XI. The docent will go over the worksheets to be completed at the cemetery and hand out the clipboards with attached pencils or pens.
- XII. Walk to the cemetery.
- XIII. Complete the assigned activities of recording dates, etc.
- XIV. Return to the Provencal-Weir House and summarize what was learned about history in the making during this exciting day. What did the students like the most? Why?
- XV. Ask the students to summarize what we have learned about how people find out what happened in the past. Some scholars say that, "History is Our Best Guess."
Do you agree? Why or why not?

We will need at least two parent chaperones and drivers for this experience. Thank you for your help.

Your student's fifth grade teacher: _____

Please send the following signed permission back to school with your fifth grader. Thank you.

We give our fifth grader, _____, permission to accompany their class to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society's Provencal-Weir House for the experience:

Uncovering History: How Do Historians "Figure It Out?"

_____ I will be able to drive for this trip. My car will hold _____ students safely belted in.

_____ I can't drive, but I would be happy to chaperone, if needed

_____ Please send me a note to inform me whether I'm needed.

My email address is: _____

Parent's/Guardian's Signature _____

Any questions?

Dear _____, You (are / are not) needed. Thanks for volunteering.

----- *Cut here, send to teacher and keep the rest for your information.* -----

PARENTS:

Please participate in the following programs on the internet to increase prior knowledge while preparing for the trip.

Home fun: These are activities for the student and parents to do together. Most of the programs will take more than one 45 minute session. I would suggest that you reserve a couple hours per session. If you have more time than you need you can spend your time at the library reading books about pioneers, or looking for several other pioneer websites. If you decide to spend more than two sessions, that is up to you and your family. You'll all have fun learning together. Computers are available at the public library if yours is not working or not available.

Three Weeks before the trip to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society's Provencal-Weir House:

On the internet type in the following Web address: <http://www.kidsdigreed.com/discovery.asp>

This program, called **Discovery Zone**, tells about an archeological dig at a former farm in Pennsylvania that dates back before the Civil War. In an entertaining way, students are given information about how archeologists decide where to dig, how archeologists know what they found, the history of the area, the buildings that existed there, games and puzzles for active participation, artifact gallery quizzes and more.

Perhaps your family can find a place to do an archeological dig. Are you next door to a vacant lot? Or do you have relatives who live on a farm that would allow you to dig there?

Two Weeks before the Trip to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society's Provencal-Weir House:

This internet program called **How to Build a Log Cabin** can be found at this internet URL or address: <http://www.2020site.org/cabin>

This program describes briefly, the step by step process of building a log cabin. Read the information aloud and take notes under the heading: **How to Build a Log Cabin**. This should give you an understanding of how difficult it would be to build your own house. The illustrations will help. The authors admit that this is not enough information. So don't try to build a log cabin without more thorough instruction.

How to Build a Log Cabin

1. **Choose an elevated area that is not at the base of a hill or near marshy or boggy ground.**
2. **Be sure that drinking water is near. Look for a spring or flowing well.**
3. **Decide on the size and style of your house. This will depend on the amount of timber and the size of the logs that are available. If you have small logs, you will have a small cabin. The logs should be cut at least two feet longer than the dimensions of the cabin.**
4. **Stake out the length and width of your cabin.**
5. **Clear the area of trees, stumps or brush.**
6. **Make the ground as level as possible.**
7. **For a good roof, floor, and the finishing of the door and window openings, some boards should have been brought with you.**
8. **Cut a notch in the logs one foot from each end. Fit the notches over the sills one foot from the ends.**
9. **After finishing the floor, fasten the joists in place and continue laying the logs, placing a fourteen foot log on each side and then a twelve-foot log on each end, until the height of the doors and windows has been reached. This should be about six feet eight inches from the floor.**
10. **Cut out the openings and finish them with jambs.**

One or Two Weeks Before the Trip to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society:

There are many web sites that teach about the Life of a Pioneer. A very fascinating one is called **The Frontier House**. The internet address for this is:

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/frontierhouse/quiz.php>

Be sure to study about and understand that **The Homestead Act** was signed on May 20, 1862 by Abraham Lincoln. Its purpose was to encourage people to move to the west. The pioneer was given 160 acres of surveyed public land after payment of a small filing fee and after living on the

property for five years. **While they were there they must farm, improve the land, and build a dwelling.** What do you think? “Was the land really free?”

This website is packed with information. Three modern day families are given the opportunity to relive the pioneer experience. Start with the introduction and then go to the essays. Each one has illustrations and it has easy to understand explanations. Take time to read, discuss and debate what you’re learning about.

Information about modes of travel and hardships are thoroughly explained. As you read, take notes so that you can remember the information. The question that you will be able to answer from this is, “Could I be a pioneer?” “Would our family be able to make it?” Many interesting family discussions should evolve during this website experience.

Here are more websites where you can find more information about Life as a Pioneer. Enjoy as many as you have time for. Remember, this is a family experience that is meant to be enjoyed. Learning is fun!

Pioneer Life:

<http://www.geocities.com/EnchantedForest/Mountain/9112/Piolife.html>

Pioneer Life

<http://pioneerlife.tripod.com>

The Life of Early Pioneers

<http://www.museumsofvv.org/kids/index.htm>

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Life as a Pioneer a Web Quest by Mrs. Armstrong

<http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/students/life5.shtml>

If you wish, you and your family can likely find many more sources for information about pioneers.

Information for the Teacher

On the internet, the Library of Congress has a special section that includes all sorts of diaries and stories of pioneers. We are highlighting one that you might like to use with your fifth grade class. (This is a first person, graphic and thrilling description of real pioneer life retelling how the author's family moved to the wilderness of Michigan in what is now Dearborn, from a community in New York State.) It is written and illustrated by William Nowlin, Esq, 1876. The title is **The Bark Covered House**, or **Back in the Woods Again**. You may want to read the story aloud to your students and use some parts for Reading Strategies Instruction. It is a spellbinding story.

This can be found in the Rare Book and Special Collections Division of the Library of Congress, number 13002622. The subject is **Pioneering in the Upper Midwest**, books from Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin ca 1820-1910. This is a complete collection of stories. There is a collection of stories from every part of North America. You may wish to select from the ones written about MI, the upper Midwest. Some of them may be too mature for classroom use, so you'll want to read them over before selecting them for your students.

The internet address for the Library of Congress website explained above is:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/umhtml/>

Classroom Assignment: History in the Making or WE PREDICT HISTORY

For this discussion, the classroom teacher may ask the students to bring in a newspaper, or the teacher could start collecting and bring in newspapers from the last couple of weeks. If you take the Detroit News or The Free Press in your classroom, you might want to order it for a particular day.

Class Discussion:

What are some events that happened long, long ago that people still talk about and remember? Those are the events from which history is made. Historical experts who work at the New York Society of History say that, "History is Our Best Guess," What do you think they mean by that?

Tell about something that happened recently that you think will not be remembered in the future. Why?

Tell about something that happened recently that you think will be remembered in the future. Why? What do you think makes the difference?

Think about what has been happening in the news in the last week or two. Look at yesterday or today's newspaper. Choose an event from the news that you think will be one that might be remembered in 50 to 100 years. Write an article about this event. Be sure to include the following information. Most newspaper articles are written in a pyramid format starting with the

main event that happened and continue with smaller and more intricate details for those who want to know more.

Reporter's Name _____

Include the following information:

- _____ Make a headline/title for this article.
- _____ Have an attention grabbing beginning.
- _____ What is the event that you think will be remembered?
- _____ Why do you think that it will be remembered?
- _____ Who is involved in this event?
- _____ When did it happen?
- _____ Where did it happen?
- _____ Write an ending that mirrors your beginning and draws the article to a close.
- _____ After you are sure that you have included all the above information, recopy the polished article.
- _____ Be sure that one idea follows another. You could type or word process it on your computer.
- _____ Leave a space at the top or the bottom for a picture or illustration of the event that you will draw.

Allow the students to share their ideas and use the polished copies to make a bulletin board display. You could call it Our Predictions for History, OUR BEST GUESS, WE PREDICT HISTORY, or a title of your choice.

Uncovering History: How Do Historians “ Figure It Out”?
Fifth Grade Visit to the Grosse Pointe Historical Society
Possible Responsibilities List (for teacher)

1. At least one to two months ahead of time, the classroom teacher makes trip arrangements with the Grosse Pointe Historical Society.
 - By email: info@gphistorical.org
 - By Phone: 313-884-7010
 - By Fax: 313-884-7699
 - By Mail: 381 Kercheval Avenue, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI 48236
2. The teacher enters the Grosse Pointe Historical Society web page which is: <http://www.gphistorical.org/oneroom.html> and makes a copy of the information and worksheets included there for the Fifth Grade Visit. The docent will be responsible for attaining the worksheets and writing tool for the students.
3. At least 3 ½ weeks before the trip, send home the note to parents with the permission slip
4. Beginning, three weeks before the trip, and after becoming familiar with the **home fun** activities for families of your fifth grader, the teacher should take about 15 minutes each week to introduce the assigned websites to the class. If possible, introduce these websites during your computer time so that the students will feel comfortable with the material at home.
5. Be sure that the students do the quiz from the program called THE FRONTIER HOUSE called COULD YOU BE A PIONEER? Briefly compile the results, and bring them with you to the Society on the trip day so that the docent can discuss them with the students.
6. Several weeks before the trip, the teacher could start to read aloud the story, **The Bark Covered House or Back in the Woods Again** from the Library of Congress:
[http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/lhbum:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(lhbum02622\)\):@@@SREF\\$](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/lhbum:@field(DOCID+@lit(lhbum02622)):@@@SREF$)
You may wish to copy the whole story so that it's handy for your classroom use.
7. You could make class copies of sections that you think are important for the students to read. Plan to teach some reading and writing strategies that correspond to this type of writing. (diaries and personal narratives) You might want the students to illustrate the story as you read aloud. The class could choose the most important events to illustrate. Allow enough time for discussion of the components of historical fiction.
8. Several weeks ahead of time, respond to parents who volunteer to drive or to chaperone. Let them know ahead of time, if you need them.
9. About a week before the trip, discuss and assign the **We Predict History** paper. You might want to have a newspaper delivered on the day of the assignment or use your class **Time for Kids**, or other kids' news magazine. An economical way to handle it would be to have students bring in old newspapers.
10. The teacher could suggest that students read one of the following books during their reading time. In fourth grade they were to read, **Sarah Plain and Tall**, which should have enriched their prior knowledge about pioneers. **Little House on the Prairie** by Laura Ingalls Wilder, and/or **Running Out of Time** by Margaret Peterson Haddix could be suggested. **At the local library, students could type in Juvenile Literature and Pioneers on the computer and they will find many wonderful selections.**
11. The day before the trip, read the planned activities in the schedule, talk about appropriate clothes for the weather, lunches, and expected behavior and manners during a field experience like this one.
12. Be sure the students understand the purpose of the trip.

Docent's Responsibilities

Materials Needed

1. For each student, prepare a clipboard with a pen or pencil attached with a piece of yarn so that it's not easy to lose. Distribute worksheets for the activities and blank sheets for illustrations, notes, etc. Have these ready ahead of time.
2. Also, a few rulers and tape measures would come in handy.
3. If you choose to do a cooking component, there are ideas in this packet or you may use the "Little House" book, available at the public library: **The Little House Cookbook; Frontier Food from Laura Ingalls Wilder's Classic Stories**, New York; Harper Collins, 1979. ISBN:0064460908
4. Make yourself a copy of the Quiz from **The Frontier House Website** called, "**Could You Be a Pioneer?**" <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/frontierhouse/quiz.php>
5. A clear understanding of the Log Cabin Artifacts and their uses. Choose some of the more mysterious artifacts to be featured in the large group presentation with the Artifact Worksheet.
6. A plan for outdoor games or pioneer activities. Suggestions are included in this packet.
7. Newspapers from Detroit News and Detroit Free Press, circa 1890, which is a collection of articles from the 1890s (enough for one per student.) Students should use the prepared worksheet for this activity. Dividing up responsibilities for completing the worksheet would be a good idea.
8. Pictures or photographs from the 1800's (enough for a set for each group of Students). Be sure to select the pictures that you think will help the students answer the questions. They should have the appropriate worksheet for this activity.
9. Large Group Activity: Business Records from the 1800's (enough for each group of students) Dodge Family Business Record Sheet. Discuss the information that is learned from this record. The docent may want to write the information on a chart.
10. Chart paper with rules for the Homestead Act.
11. Chart showing the steps to build a log cabin.
12. Be sure to copy pages 17, 18 and 19 from the History "Written in Stone" Unit. Give a copy of each worksheet to each student and give directions for filling them out before going to the cemetery. The URL for this material is:
http://www.arkansaspreservation.org/pdf/youth_education/cemetery_lesson_plan.pdf

At this website you will also find information on symbols used in cemeteries that will prove very helpful when students have questions. You may want to share some of these symbols ahead of time so that you, the students and parents can be looking for them. It would be a good idea to give a copy of this information to the classroom teacher and the parent helpers.

13. Give each student a copy of the United States/Michigan Historical Timeline.

All about the Homestead Act

Signed by Abraham Lincoln on May 20, 1862.

What was happening in history at that time? Use your United States/Michigan Historical Timeline to answer this question.

Purpose: To encourage Western Migration.

Discussion Question: (Do you think that it worked?)

If you wanted to own 160 acres of unsettled, but surveyed land, this is what you would have to do:

- I. Pay the small filing fee.
- II. Live on the land for five years.
- III. You must be willing to
 - A. Clear the land,
 - B. Farm the land, (plant crops and/or raise animals)
 - C. Improve the land and
 - D. Build a dwelling on the land.

If all these requirements are met, then the land is theirs. The Homestead act was repealed in 1976 until 1986 where it was reinstated in Alaska.

Discussion Question: Is it still in operation? How could we find out?

Tentative Schedule for the Day for Fifth Graders at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society

9:30 Arrive at the Grosse Pointe Historical Society

9:35 Review what the Homestead Act was. The docent or teacher can write on a chart as the students give the information. This chart could be sent back to the classroom with the students.

9:50 Students should have taken the quiz, **Could You be a Pioneer?** From the internet website, <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/frontierhouse/quiz.php> Ask the teacher if she brought the results of the quiz.

This discussion was taken directly from the above website: Please make yourself a copy and take the quiz so that you can be familiar with the material for discussion.

What time do you most like to wake up?

Most pioneers were in bed by eight or nine at night and woke up at 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning.

10:15: Your Imaginary Trip as a Pioneer: In Pioneer times it was called **The Story Game**. The students will create a story together. One of the players starts an original story about a pioneer family who lived in a log cabin. At an exciting point, his or her left-hand neighbor instantly must continue the story stopping at an exciting place in the story. The game continues until the story is ended by the last player. By the end, the story is usually quite an interesting tale!

Be sure that students do not insult Native American groups or pioneers. Establish the information that follows before continuing with the story.

Students now should pretend they are pioneers and they're on their way to the new property given to them by the government. Where did their trip start? Why did they decide to go on this trip?

How are they traveling? What are the hardships that they must endure? Questions that you might ask are:

What was your mode of transportation?

What did you have to leave behind that you really regret and miss?

What did you take with you on this trip?

How far did you travel each day?

How many people are traveling with you? Who are they?

What problems did you run into?

What animals did you bring with you?

Be sure to include the above information in your story. As the teacher, you may wish to start the story and set the stage for the story something like this: It was 1853 and the United States was full of disagreements. Every time a new state came into the union of United States of America, there would be a big argument over whether slavery should be allowed in that state, etc... The further the settlers were from the East, the least amount that they had to hear about this argument. In 1861, a Civil War began between the southern states and the northern states over whether or not slavery should be legal. In 1862, President Abraham Lincoln signed the

Homestead Act that offered 160 acres of land to anyone who would meet the requirements for ownership.

My family lived in New York State and we had heard that there was a great place to settle on the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair in the Grosse Pointe area. Dad decided we should go there to settle. My Mother didn't want to move, but the men were the decision makers in the family and she went along with his decision. My name is _____ and I am ten years old. In my family, there were ____ children. Their names and ages were:_____ Going to Michigan sounded like a great adventure to me. We took the canal barge on the Erie Canal to Lake Erie and took a Great Lakes ship across the dangerously shallow lake. When a storm came up it was very dangerous.

This is the time to allow the students to use their imagination and the information that they have gained this far. Students could sit in a circle and have each student add to the story. You may wish to ask questions to keep the ideas flowing. Each student should add at least one idea. The students should use the information that they've gained from their work at home and at school to embark on this imaginary journey. Make it as realistic as possible

At this point you may wish to divide the class into two groups. Half of them will go out to the log cabin for the lesson on **Life in a Log Cabin** and the other group could have the **Building a Log Cabin** lesson.

10:40 Building a Log Cabin (1/2 of the students)

Have the students tell you to the best of their ability, what steps would they go through to build the log cabin? Write the steps on chart paper and send their chart back to the school with them. The other group is in the log cabin learning about the artifacts and what it was like to live there.

11:00 Living in a Log Cabin: SWITCH GROUPS: (1/2 of the students stays in the Provencal Weir House and explain the steps for building a log cabin while the other half of the group is in the log cabin learning about what life was like there)

10:40 Out at the log cabin the students will learn what life was like when living in this building? Tell the students that the teacher may want them to write a story about a family that lived in this log cabin. They should make it as realistic as possible. Pretend that they lived there. Introduce all the artifacts and suggest that they include some of them in their story. What would the children's chores be that lived in this log cabin?

11:00 Students will sit in their small groups of two or three and docent will give directions for using the 1890's newspapers and the discussion worksheet.

11:20 Back in large group, discuss what the students learned about life in the 1890s from the newspapers and how these newspapers were used by the student historians to gather information about an era of history.

11:30 Pass out the photographs. Each group should receive at least two and they should complete the worksheets pertaining to the photographs.

11:40 Have the students share what they learned from the photographs. Now have the students **enter** the scene that is depicted in this photograph. Tell what they hear? Smell? Say? Feel? Do any of them live near there? What is it like?

11:50 Pass out the Dodge record. As a large group, discuss what could be learned by studying this record? How long did people work? How much money did they make? Was there any difference in pay? What was it? Why do you think there was this difference?

12:00 Large Group Save an artifact to study. Fill out the Artifact Study Worksheet

12:10 Have a large group discussion about the artifact.

12:15 Lunch time and a break. Have the students play the games that you suggest from the list of pioneer games.

12:45 Prepare for the trip to the St. Paul's Cemetery. Talk about behavior expectations in a cemetery. What if there is someone there who is visiting a grave? Or even a burial service? How do you act? Remember, go about your business with great care and consideration for someone who might have a family member buried there.

Draw attention to the worksheet assignments. Explain directions and tell the students a little about the history of this cemetery, etc.

1:00 Walk to St. Paul's Cemetery on the corner of Moross Road and Country Club Lane. On the way the teacher should stop and share the history of the church and the cemetery. This cemetery belongs to St. Paul's Catholic Church on Lake Shore Road. The first church was a small log chapel built in 1825. It was so muddy in those days that the people walked barefoot to church and put their shoes on after they arrived at the Mass or service that was held once a month. In 1848, the church was built where it stands today on Lake Shore which was a plank road at that time. The land behind the church was the old cemetery where members of the church were buried. Later, they moved the graves to Moross and Country Club lane and now they have a parking lot behind the church.

The first person to be buried in the St. Paul's Cemetery was Catherine Vernier who died in 1831. Her grave was moved, so you will not be able to find that grave marker.

1:20 Complete activities at the St. Paul's Cemetery. Students should try to find the oldest grave marker and the most recent grave marker. Grosse Pointe's Historical Society Newsletter, Provenance of Grosse Pointe's Only Cemetery, **The Moorings**, 5-22-2006

2:00 Return to the Provencal-Weir House and discuss what students learned About how historians decide, "What really happened?"

2:40 Return to school.

3:00 Arrive back at school. If there is time, discuss the historical fiction assignment.

Information from the following website: <http://www.2020site.org/cabin/>

First Steps for How to Build a Log Cabin in the Wilderness

- 1. Choose an elevated spot not at the base of a hill and not near marshy or boggy ground.**
- 2. Make sure that there is a source for drinking water, either a flowing well or spring.**
- 3. Decide what size you want the building to be and what style.**
- 4. The size may be determined by the width and length of the logs. (small logs, small cabin) Be sure that the logs are two feet longer than the length and/or width.**
- 5. Stake out the width and length of your cabin.**
- 6. Clear the area of trees or brush. Decide if you will have a wood floor or a mud floor.**
- 7. Make the ground as level as possible.**
- 8. The top of the windows and door should be about 6 feet 8 inches. It is not necessary to fill out every detail.**

Newspaper Study Worksheet

Learning about History of an Era by Reading Old Newspapers

Name _____ Date _____

Name of Newspaper Articles from the Detroit News and the Detroit Free Press

Date of Newspaper 1890's-1900's

Title of Your Favorite Article:

1. What were some problems that existed at that time?

2. What was daily life like?

3. What was some food eaten at that time?

4. What was the clothing like at that time?

5. What was the transportation like at that time?

6. What was communication like at that time?

7. What jobs were available?

8. What were some of the things people did for fun?

9. What were some of the prices of things compared to today?

10. What were some words or expressions used back then that is different from today?

11. What were some things that people thought were important in those days?

LEARNING ABOUT THE HISTORY OF AN ERA BY STUDYING
PHOTOGRAPHS, PAINTINGS OR PICTURES
Photograph/Picture/Painting Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

You are studying a Photograph, Painting, or Drawing. Circle the correct one.

1. What is happening in this photograph?
2. How is what you see different from today?
3. What does it tell you about lifestyles in this period of history?
 - . Food?
 - . Clothing?
 - . Transportation?
 - . Customs?
4. Does it tell you anything about what is bought or sold?
5. Are there any clues about how wealthy or poor people are?
6. When do you think this happened? What clues or evidence tell you that?
7. What would you like about living during this period of history?
8. What would you dislike about living during this period of history?
9. Choose your favorite picture that you're studying and pretend that you're entering the scene. What do you hear? Smell? See? Pretend that you live close to this place. What is your life like? What is your job? Share this with your small group.

Name _____ Date _____

Artifact Study Worksheet

Learning about History by Studying an Artifact

An artifact is something that a person finds from a different period of history. The person may or may not know what this thing is. Use the directions below to discover what it is.

1. Where did you find it? _____
2. When did you find it? _____
3. Describe the object as thoroughly as possible.
4. Draw and color the object. Measure the object and put the measurements on the drawing.
5. About how much does the object weigh. Compare it to something we know about.
6. For what purpose do you think this object might have been used?
7. Compare this object to something that we use today.
8. Talk to other people about the object. Or, via the internet, you may be able to consult an expert. You could send a picture to one of these people. If you are unable to identify it, lay it aside for a while, but don't give up.

**Learning about History by Visiting a Cemetery
Grave Marker Survey**

Name _____ Date _____

Year of Birth: _____ **Year of Death:** _____

Name:

Epitaph:

Condition of Lettering (please circle)

Very Clear Clear Faded Hard to Read Very Hard to Read

Shape of Marker (sketch)

Decorations or symbols on marker (sketch)

Can you tell what the deceased person's occupation was? If yes, write it.

**Is there evidence that the deceased person was a veteran? Was the person involved in a particular war?
Is there any indication of religion or club membership?**

.....

Year of Birth: _____ **Year of Death:** _____

Name:

Epitaph:

Condition of Lettering (please circle)

Very Clear Clear Faded Hard to Read Very Hard to Read

Shape of Marker (sketch)

Decorations or symbols on marker (sketch)

Can you tell what the deceased person's occupation was? If yes, write it.

**Is there evidence that the deceased person was a veteran? Was the person involved in a particular war?
Is there any indication of religion or club membership?**

Learning about History by Visiting a Cemetery

U.S./Michigan History Timeline

- Land Bridge (Beringia) 11,000-12,000 years ago
- Leif Erickson (Vikings who explored northeastern coast of North America 1,000 A.D.
- Magna Carta 1215
- Columbus 1492
- Jamestown 1607
- Plymouth Colony and the arrival of the French in the Great Lakes area 1620
- Father Marquette and Joliet arrived 1668
- French and Indian War Pontiac's Rebellion/War 1763
- Declaration of Independence was written/ Revolutionary War was fought 1776
- The Northwest Ordinance 1787
- The War of 1812
- Expanding Michigan, the Toledo War 1834-1835
- Migration and Statehood, The Erie Canal 1825-1836
- Michigan became a state 1837
- The Underground Railroad 1820-1860
- Civil War 1861-1865
- Great Migration and Immigration from other countries and parts of the U.S. 1890-1930
- WWI 1914, United States entered the war in 1917-1918
- 19th Amendment (Women won the right to vote) 1918-1920
- The Roaring Twenties 1920-1930
- The Flint Strike; Organizing Labor 1937
- The Great Depression 1930-1940
- W.W. II 1941-1945
- Highways and Bridges Uniting Michigan and the nation 1956-1958
- Martin Luther King Speech "I Have a Dream" 1963
- First Man on the Moon 1969
- The Vietnamese War 1960s 1970s
- Environmental Issues become popular 1976

PIONEER YARD GAMES

Hide-and-Seek Follow-the-Leader Tag Games

Leapfrog Relay

Students will form two or more lines. All students will lean forward and the last person in each line, leapfrogs over the others who are squatting in line. Once the person reaches the front of the line, that person squats and the last person leaps to the front of the line. The team whose players all have moved up to the front of the line the fastest wins.

Earth, Air, Fire and Water

Players sit in a circle and one stands in the center holding a handkerchief knotted into a ball. He throws the ball into someone's lap calling out either, Earth, Air, Fire, or Water. Immediately he starts counting to ten. If he cries "Earth" the person in whose lap the handkerchief has fallen must instantly name some animal that lives on the earth; with the word "Water" some fish must be named; with "Fire" the person must name something that can exist in fire; with "Air," some bird. If the person holding the ball, allows the ball thrower to count to ten before answering successfully, he must move into the center. This can be played inside or outside.

Hunt the Slipper

The children sit close together on the ground with their knees crossed. A slipper is handed to someone in the circle and is passed around on the outside of the circle (behind the children's backs). One child stands in the center of the circle holding the other slipper and says,

"Cobbler, cobbler, mend my shoe, get it done by half-past two."

The child then attempts to guess who has the matching slipper until it is found. Whoever is caught with the slipper stands in the center and the game is repeated.

Education Department, The One-Room Schools of Greenfield Village. Information and Ideas for Teachers, The Edison Institute, 1983, pp. 24-25,

Other Optional Pioneer Activities

Making Soap

Recipe from Carolyn Kleinsmith, Washington D.C.

1 can of Lye 5 cups of cold water 1 oz. of scent 6 pounds of lard 3 tsp. borax

First, line small loaf pans with saran wrap and have borax and scent measured and ready. Cut lard into pieces and put into enamel pot. Pour 5 cups of cold water into enamel pot. Stir in lye gently until dissolved. Remember to wear glasses! Do not inhale fumes! Add the lye to the fat in a steady slow stream about the thickness of a straw. Stir constantly and slowly. Too rapid stirring will cause it to separate. Stir until it the thickness of honey or pea soup and you can trace its drip off the spoon into the kettle and make your name. If your name doesn't disappear instantly, then it is tracing. Add the borax and scent. Stirring well, pour into prepared molds and don't stop stirring. Cover with an old blanket or rug. Cut into bars in about 3 or 4 hours. Store so air can circulate between bars. Let the soap age at least two weeks. The longer, the better. This makes great gifts.

Dried And Smoked Foods - Source Unknown

BEEF JERKY Jerky can be made of almost any meat from beef to venison to pork. However, if you use wild meat or pork, you must boil the meat slices long enough to remove the red. This should kill any parasites in the muscle tissue.

Slice the meat in 1/8 to 1/4 inch strips with the grain and remove all fat. Avoid extra tough meats. Partially freeze the meat to make cutting easier. Be sure to remove all fat.

Marinate the strips in a solution of salt, pepper, onion, and garlic, Worcestershire or Tabasco sauce may be used if you want hot, spicy jerky. The basic recipe requires the addition of 1 tablespoon salt, 1 tablespoon onion powder, 1 tablespoon garlic powder and 1/2 tablespoon pepper to enough water to cover the meat. Marinate the meat overnight.

Drain marinated strips on paper toweling and then place the pieces on wire racks in the oven. Do not overlap the strips. Put aluminum foil under the racks to catch the drips. Bake at the lowest possible temperature setting (200 degrees F. or lower) for several hours. The strips will shrink and turn black.

Your jerky can usually be kept in sealed plastic bags or jars for at least a year without refrigeration. Jerky is a good food to carry when backpacking.

Smoked Fish - Source unknown

Smoking meats, poultry, and fish is a way to slow the growth of bacteria which spoil the food. Smoked fish can last up to about two weeks.

The brine solution starts with 3 quarts of water. Slowly add handfuls of Kosher salt while using a fresh egg as a hydrometer. Dissolve each handful of salt and carefully place the egg into the water. When the egg just floats with one end touching the surface you have added enough salt. Add one more quart of water to dilute the salt but you do not need to. To the brine, add two tablespoons of garlic powder, 4 cloves of garlic (minced), 2/3 cup of brown sugar, and one tablespoon of liquid smoke.

Filets of fish such as salmon will work, but steaks or whole fish come out better. Large fish should be cut into pieces so they absorb the brine more uniformly. Place fish in brine and marinate overnight. Start charcoal in a smoker grill and place fish on the greased rack. It helps to have a pan of water below the fish so they won't dry out. Smoke the fish for about 3 hours. Add woodchips that have been soaked in water to the fire throughout the smoking period. Do not let the fire get too hot. Ideally, it should be around 140 degrees F. Hickory or apple chips give fish a very good flavor.

Optional Cooking Experiences

Cornbread - Source Unknown

1 cup corn meal 1 cup flour 3 Tablespoon sugar
1 Tablespoon baking powder ½ teaspoon salt 1 cup milk 1 egg ¼ cup vegetable oil.

Combine dry ingredients. Add milk and egg until blended. Add vegetable oil. Mix well. Pour into greased square baking pan. Bake 20 minutes 425 degrees

Homemade Butter

1 pint of whipping cream 1 quart jar with tight lid salt
bowl to separate butter from buttermilk
tiny serving containers for taste of buttermilk. Of course, using an antique churn would be ideal. Teacher passes quart jar around the classroom and each student shakes it 15 times. Then keep passing the jar until the butter starts to separate from the buttermilk. When you start seeing the lumps of yellow butter form, take the lid off the jar and pour the separating butter and buttermilk into a bowl. Gently pat the butter until the buttermilk is separate enough to pour off the butter. Add salt to taste to the butter and spread on the warm Cornbread. Give each student a taste of the buttermilk.

Ruth Ramage's Dandelion or Violet Jelly

This is definitely a spring recipe when the dandelions and violets are in full bloom.

1 quart of dandelion blossoms 1 quart water 1 package pectin 2 Tablespoons lemon juice 4 ½ cups sugar a couple drops of yellow food coloring for Dandelion Jelly

Rinse the blossoms carefully. Only pick them where they have not been sprayed with fertilizer or pesticide. Boil the blossoms in the quart of water for 3 minutes. Strain off 3 cups of the water. Return to a large pan and add the sugar and boil for three minutes. Pour into jars and seal. When cleaning the blossoms, take the crown off the bottom of the blossom. This keeps it from being bitter. The little cap is okay on.

For Violet Jelly, use the same amounts for the violets except cut the sugar to 4 cups.

Apple-Cinnamon Cookies from the Park House Society in Canada

½ cup brown sugar 2 ounces lard 1 egg, beaten 1 cup flour 1 tsp. baking soda pinch salt 1 tsp. cinnamon 1 apple, skin on, chopped

Blend together sugar and lard. Stir in beaten egg. Fold in dry ingredients and chopped apple. Roll into small balls and press onto griddle or reflector oven. Cook until golden on underside. Turn and cook other side.

Conventional Oven: Preheat oven to 359 degrees F Press small dough balls onto greased cookie sheet. Baker 10-12 minutes

Bibliography

The following are a sampling of materials consulted and recommended in preparation for these lessons:

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<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/frontierhouse> <http://www.pbs.org/wnet/frontierhouse/quiz.php>

This site is the companion to the PBS series FRONTIER HOUSE. The site allows users to follow three families as they travel back in time to 1883, Montana.

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The Life of Early Pioneers <http://www.museumsofsw.org/kids/index.htm>

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Life as a Pioneer a Web Quest by Mrs. Armstrong <http://www.campsilos.org/mod2/students/life5.shtml>

Historic Cemeteries: "History Written in Stone" Learning from Local and Statewide Historic Places

Website: www.arkansaspreservation.org

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Grosse Pointe Historical Society

www.gphistorical.org