



Five Senses Literature Lessons

American History Colonization and the Creation of a Country

Level: Yellow

A picture book history with developmentally appropriate, hands-on activities for children ages 6–10.

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Five Senses Learning, LLC

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Introduction

This is a hands-on, easy-to-use, age-appropriate curriculum for children that focuses on the Colonial Period of the United States of America through picture books. You will read great children's books and do accompanying activities that teach a wide range of subject areas in a child-friendly manner by engaging your child's Five Senses.

History is not meant to stand alone as part of education. Neither is science, language arts, math, health, art, or any other subject. With this in mind, this program is designed to integrate all of these different areas of study into one single program. Your student doesn't need to know which subject area they are studying today, they just need to know that they are learning. You and your student will learn about eating a well-balanced diet while discussing the perils of not having enough to eat faced by colonists. You will write a family newspaper while studying Benjamin Franklin. You will create art that mimics the flags of the Revolutionary War. You will try some Colonial recipes. All these projects bring the lessons alive and give them meaning for your child.

Introducing the Story of America

In this curriculum, you and your student are going to explore many of the classic stories of American history. Concepts of exploration, colonization, and revolution are part of that classic narrative you are going to explore. This program seeks to balance these well-known narratives with stories that are often relegated to footnotes or anecdotes, those of women, Native Americans, and African Americans.

The goal of this curriculum is not to tell every possible story, but to understand the big picture of American history. The big names and events are included, along with lesser-known stories that tell a rounder, more complete version of history. That said, there is no way that a picture book based program will be able to convey all the important men and women of American history. Your student should return to studying American history again, when they are older. This program will give them the basis to set events into a general framework that will make it easier to understand the more in depth lessons that will come later.

As the instructor, you may want to read ahead and decide where to expand on the lessons provided here. Your local library and historical society may have ideas for books and field trips you can use to go beyond the lessons given here. However, if you don't choose to do that, know that the stories here are going to give your child a solid foundation in American history that they can build on when they are older.

Because this program is built on a combination of biographies and stories of events, some of the lessons are going to have some overlap. This means that the program provides you a chance to review events and historical figures so that your child will remember them longer and with greater understanding in the long run. The books here have been chosen not only as history, but also as literature, and works of art. The picture books in this program include some tall tales, historical fiction, biographies, and more diverse story telling. This is designed to help your child stay engaged with the program. Be sure to read the literature notes each week before reading the book to your child, so that you know what the goals of the book are for your lesson.

Lessons alternate between longer and shorter books as the central theme of the week. You will alternate between some books that are rather intense and some that are much shorter and easier to read. This alternating pattern is there to help your student understand both the big picture, and the personal nature of history. Alternating the lesson style will maximize both learning and engagement with the program.

One other thing to note is that this program is designed to work organically. This means that in a natural way, some lessons are longer than others. Remember, your child's education is not a race. If you want to spend longer with some lessons than others, that is up to you.

African American and Black History

All too often, American history programs don't mention slavery until the lessons on the Civil War. Slavery existed in American for hundreds of years and there were millions of people who experienced slavery, each with their own story to tell. I have done my best to cover this topic in a way that will help your child come to understand African American history as part of American history, not apart from it.

This curriculum has three lessons that focus on Black and African American history. The stories of Phillis Wheatley, Oney Judge, and Congo Square were chosen not just because of their own significance, but because of their place in the larger picture of history.

Phillis Wheatley was born in Africa, forced into slavery, and then became a free person because her owners freed her. She was part of the English slave trade, and the part of Africa she came from was the one frequented by English slave traders.

Oney Judge, was born into slavery in Virginia. She ran away to become free. The stories of these women bring alive those who were both forced into slavery and those who were born into it. These stories also give you a chance to discuss how there were Black and African American people who were not slaves, living in America long before the Civil War. They each became free, but in different ways.

Learning about Congo Square and the history of slavery in New Orleans focuses in on another aspect of African American history that many history book neglect. The story of those who were forced to come to American from Africa as slaves, and their descendants, is not one story, but many. These stories were chosen to reflect a diversity of experiences in this time period.

For two of these lessons, the geography includes finding specific countries in Africa. This curriculum is written for a range of ages and abilities, but finding just a few specific countries instead of the entire continent or the region, is important and doable for all students. Just as your student will learn a few countries in Europe with this curriculum, they should learn a few in Africa. If your student is good at geography, you may want to spend more time learning all the countries of West Africa and Central Africa during the appropriate lessons. With younger students, learning a few countries that they can remember may be more manageable than learning many at once.

Native American History

This curriculum focuses on stories that tie together the stories of colonization and the Native Americans who were here first. There are several specific lessons that are going to be covered differently than most American curriculum. First, instead of just focusing on the romantic story of Pocahontas at Jamestown, you will learn about her people, the Powhatan. Read about their way of life and then learn how they tell the story of Pocahontas's life. It is not the version taught in American schools.

Next you will learn about the Wampanoag people who live in Massachusetts as you also learn about the Pilgrims. Instead of focusing on the myth of the first Thanksgiving, you will learn about what life was like for both Pilgrim children and Wampanoag children. This deep dive into what life was like for children of the time period will give your child more to relate to and a deeper understanding of the time period.

Native Americans appear in many more lessons, they are part of American history, not separate from it. Sacagawea's help was essential to the success of Lewis and Clark's expedition. The main book chosen for this lesson makes her the central figure of the story. It is important to understand that some books make her an accessory instead of a human.

Women's History

Women's history is human history. All of it. However, some programs focus only on the men of history and not the women. This curriculum seeks to put women back into the story of America. In addition to the stories above, you and your child will explore stories about women who helped win the Revolutionary War and Abigail Adams, who made the role of First Lady one of political power. Women may not have been able to vote, but that didn't stop them from being leaders.

Symbol Key

For quick reference, we have color-coded our lessons with our flower petal system. This allows you to see at a glance the many ways you are helping your child learn and grow with each lesson.



Red – Language Arts



Orange – Child Development (including social skills, life skills, and physical development)



Yellow – Arts and Crafts



Green – STEM, Science, Math, and Engineering



Blue – Social Studies, Geography, and History

In addition to the flower petals, different symbols indicate external resources, tips and important information which supplements the lesson.



Website – This icon means we recommend visiting a website for an extra activity, handouts or other materials to supplement the lesson.



YouTube – This icon means there is a video to go along with the lesson.



Tip/Hint – This icon indicates some extra information or a tip to help with the lesson.



Student Workbook – This icon indicates that there are worksheets or additional pages in the Student Workbook to support the lesson.



Looking Deeper – This icon indicates a note about how to expand the lesson or dive deeper into a particular aspect of the lesson if your child is interested. These additional resources are optional and are provided to give you ideas about how to expand the subject matter to support your child's particular interests.



Why It Works – This icon indicates a discussion about child development, occupational therapy strategies and techniques, and the science behind why the activity in the lesson is more important than it may seem.



Teacher's Resources – This icon indicates some additional material included to give you better understanding of the people or topic. The material included may not be suitable for children but will give you information to help provide context for the rest of the lesson.



Literature Notes – This icon indicates notes about the story or people for you to read before starting the lesson with your child.

Colonization and British America

The story of the North American continent spans thousands of years before the first European sailors grazed its shores. But the story of the United States, the events that shaped its founding and destiny, really pick up steam when the first Europeans explored North America in the pursuit of financial gain. That decision, to colonize this New World and export its natural resources, sets the stage for what is to come.



The Powhatan and Jamestown



Primary Resource

Life of the Powhatan

by Rebecca Sjonger and Bobbie Kalman



Secondary Resource

Pocahontas: An American Princess

by Joyce Milton, illustrated by Shelly Hehenberger



Supply List

- Cord or yarn for necklace
- 24 pony beads (in red, yellow, white, orange, and brown if you have them)
- 2 pipe cleaners
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Kitchen sponge
- Bamboo skewer
- Construction paper
- Drinking straw
- Scissors



Teacher's Note

The text of this lesson emphasizes the Powhatan but many of the activities also teach about colonizing Jamestown. If combining these is difficult for your student, consider breaking this lesson into two sections. First, study the Powhatan and the book that goes with them. Learn about the biomes of Virginia and make some art. Then jump into the videos from Jamestown and do the other activities that focus on the settlement.



Literature Note

Life of the Powhatan paints a picture of the people who lived in Virginia before English colonists arrived. Take time to read this book with your child over several days if needed. Look at the pictures, discuss it as you go. This book also tells us the story of Pocahontas that is rarely told in America, the version of history that the Powhatan have passed down for generations. This book has a child-friendly version of that more accurate story.

The book *Pocahontas: An American Princess* tells a more English version of her life. This version is less sunny than many, but it is still far different from the Powhatan version. Why would the English push this version of the story?

The story of settling Virginia has featured Pocahontas as a primary historical person of interest as long as Virginia history has been taught in schools. Without the little girl who bridged the gap between the settlers and the Powhatan, the story of Virginia's first colony has little human interest. In truth, Virginia's first settlers were almost all men. They traveled to Virginia as part of a business venture. When the settlement's first group arrived in 1607, most of the group were single men seeking fame and fortune. Several groups of men had to be sent over the years, as settlers died. The men often were at war with the local Native Americans and are hard to see as anything other than colonizers. Pocahontas's story has drama and human interest. It creates this idea that the Powhatan and the settlers would eventually live happily together.

Pocahontas is now taught almost as an American legend more than a real person. The Disney version of her story is so far from the truth that it might as well be pure fiction. But the fact that she became a Disney Princess speaks to the appeal of her story. It is important to learn that Pocahontas is a real historical figure who lived an interesting and difficult life.

Learning about how Indigenous People were living throughout North America before the arrival of Europeans is important. This week, take time to read about the Powhatan people and discuss with your child the story of Pocahontas. You may wish to read both suggested books and compare them if your child is mature enough to do that. If your child is upset to learn that Pocahontas was not the "princess" she is often depicted as, let them feel sad about that. Finding out that a beloved figure was treated so poorly in life is sad.

Copywork



The Powhatan lived in Virginia before the English arrived.



Geography



Have your child color Virginia on the United States map in the Student Workbook. Explain that Virginia was named for the Virginia Company of England that sent settlers to Jamestown, which was the first permanent settlement in what will later become the United States of America.

At the time Jamestown was settled, Virginia was a large area with undefined boundaries. By the time of the American Revolution, the colony of Virginia had defined borders and included the area that is now West Virginia. Coloring the modern state is most helpful for most children who will be reading modern maps.



Virginia



If your student wants to learn more about the shape of the colonies through time, there are some maps you can look at together on the Online Resources page for this program on the Five Senses Literature Lessons website.



History

The Virginia Company sent settlers to North America from England seeking gold like the Spanish had found in South America. They never found gold, but they did set up the first permanent settlement in what would eventually be the United States of America. Eventually, they found that farming tobacco and other crops was a source of revenue for the colony. These crops could be sold in England for a profit and the money used to pay the investors in the Virginia Company and pay for more settlers to come to Virginia.

There are several videos on the Jamestown Settlement website which you can explore with your child to see what life was like in Jamestown. This website has regular updates, so it is not possible to link to a single video here. If you are concerned about how your sensitive child may react, watch the video yourself before sharing with your child.



<https://www.historyisfun.org/video>



Fine Motor Development / Art



The biomes of Virginia and most of the East Coast of the United States are deciduous forests. Deciduous forests have trees that lose their leaves in the winter. Most of these forests also have some evergreen trees that do not, but those are in smaller numbers than the deciduous trees. The forest animals of Virginia include foxes, deer, raccoons, squirrels, and hawks, among others. England also has deciduous forests, with deer and foxes. While some of the trees and animals are different, the settlers may have felt comfortable with the forest that they found in Virginia.

Have your child color the picture of the animals of the deciduous forest in the Student Workbook and discuss them.



If you live in a place with a deciduous forest, take your child for a hike this week and look at the plants and animals. Point out evergreen trees, like pine and holly, and deciduous trees like oak and maple. If you don't know how to identify your local trees, you can use a field guide or an app like LeafSnap. The Arbor Day Foundation also has a helpful website.

<https://www.arborday.org/trees/whattree/>

Encourage your child to think about what it must have been like to explore the woods in a land you've never been to before. Would it be scary or exciting? What would be important to look for? After the hike, or even during it, pull out sketch pads and encourage your child to draw what they saw.



Arts and Crafts

Corn was an important crop for the Powhatan and many other Native Americans. Use 2 pipe cleaners and beads to create a corn necklace. Have your child twist the two pipe cleaners in the center, making an X. Thread 6 pony beads on each end. Twist together the 4 ends. Then thread the necklace cord under the twist and tie to create the necklace. Watch this video for help with this project.



<https://youtu.be/XWQGQJW7FVE>

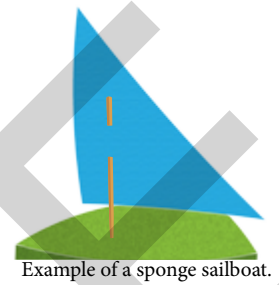


Stringing beads is a great way to work on fine motor skills, and threading them onto pipe cleaners is easier for children than putting them on cord or thread.

Science – Wind Power / Motor Development

The ships used by sailors and explorers in this lesson did not have engines, like ships of today. Instead, they relied on sails and wind.

Make a simple boat with a sponge, bamboo skewer, and paper for a sail. Cut the sponge so that it has a triangular shape at the front. Cut the skewer in half. Cut a triangular sail of paper, and make it bow out onto the skewer, and then poke it into the sponge. For most purposes, cutting the skewer in half results in the correct size compared to a kitchen sponge.



Example of a sponge sailboat.

Then have your child be the wind by using a straw to blow air at the sail. Have your child push their boat across a tub, bathtub, kiddie pool, or other body of water using only their own breath. Point out that if there is no wind, the boat just has to sit there. Sailors sometimes had several days with no wind and would have to just wait and hope that the wind would pick up to help them reach their destination.

If your child made a foil boat in the last lesson, discuss how it worked differently than this boat. Ask your child: Which one do you like better?



Allow your child time to experiment with more sails or less and to make found object boats to see which ones will float or sink. Having items like plastic bottles, corks, lids, dowel rods, sail materials like plastic bags and papers, and appropriate glue on hand can lead to a wonderful exploration of what makes a good boat and a bad boat. A glue gun would work well for this. Use appropriate adult supervision if using a glue gun.



Language Arts



Pretend to be a settler that has come to Jamestown. Write home to tell your family members what it is like. You may wish to watch more videos from the Jamestown settlement to better understand what it was like to be there.

Example Letter:

Dear Mama,

We made it to Jamestown. The ocean crossing was

The weather here is -----.

I was surprised that when we got here -----
-----.

Love,

[sign your name]



If your child struggles with writing you can give them the letter template from the Student Workbook to fill in. You can also fill it in as they wish, and let them copy the letter in their own handwriting. If they are not yet writing, you can fill in the template for them while they watch and tell you what words to add. By using this fill-in-the-blank system, many children who struggle with creative writing can still participate.



Field Trip

Visit the Jamestown Settlement, if you can. They have homeschool days and it is a great field trip. The settlement has a recreation of the boats, the fort, and of a Powhatan village so that your child can explore all aspects of the story.



<https://5sensesll.page.link/JamestownHomeschoolProgram>



If you are not near Virginia or cannot visit Jamestown Settlement, you can take a virtual tour by using Google Maps Street View. Click this link to see a satellite view of the Jamestown Settlement area. Then click and drag the little yellow man in the lower right corner of the screen to any of the blue dots. There are four main areas to explore: the James Fort Replica, the Powhatan Village, the Susan Constant ship recreation, and the Jamestown Glasshouse.



<https://5sensesll.page.link/JamestownGoogleTour>



If you are near Virginia and would like to learn more about the Native Americans that live there, this link has more information and far more ideas for field trips.



<https://www.virginia.org/virginiaindians/>



Teacher's Resource

This video is a good overview of the different Native American nations that live in Virginia. It is made for children but at over 25 minutes, may be too long for your child. Feel free to watch it and show portions of it that you think your child will find interesting, or summarize it for your child. It is full of great information about the eleven different Native American nations within Virginia and how they are structured and relate to one another.



<https://youtu.be/lqGOhyIear0>

One great thing this video gets across is that Native Americans have active communities in Virginia today with their own governments, elections, schools, and cultures. Too often we think of the Powhatan and other Native Americans as part of history, people who lived long ago. But Native Americans are here today, living all throughout the United States.



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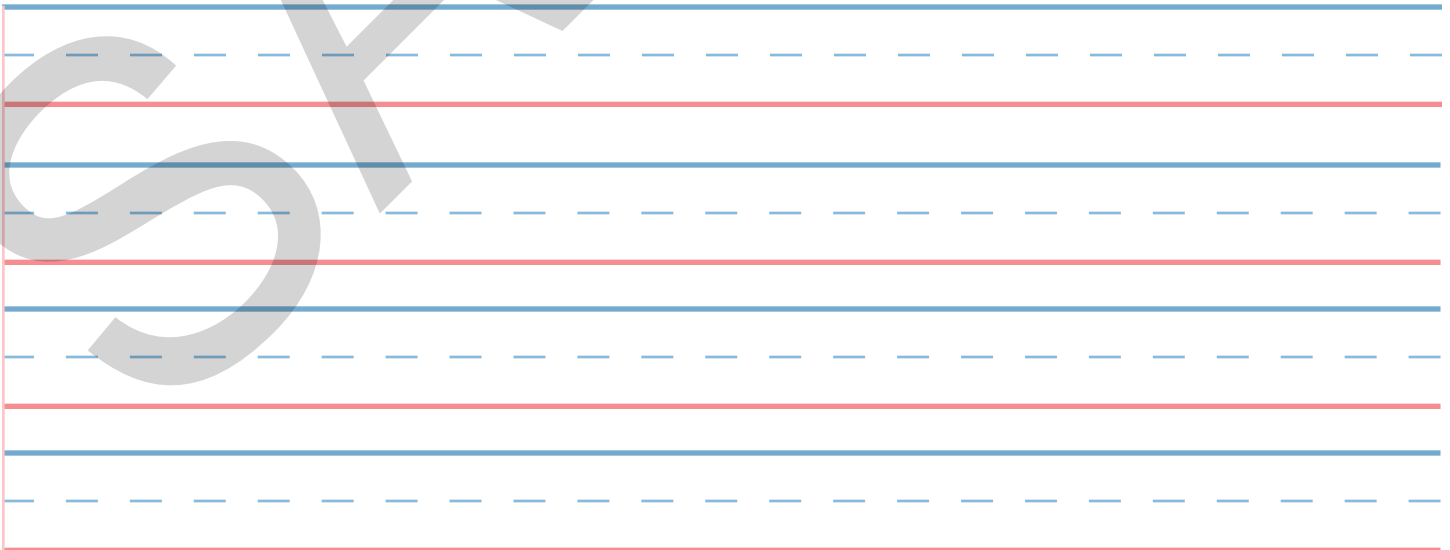
American History Colonization and the Creation of a Country Student Workbook

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Worksheets, copywork pages, and maps for use with
American History: Colonization and the Creation of a Country.

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Dear Mama,

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