

Lesson Plan Four

Women on the American Frontier

Participants will understand the contributions women made to life on the Kentucky frontier as related to the actions of the Lincoln women. Through this program, students will not only be able to understand but to experience life on the frontier. Students will understand the life and thoughts of frontier women through their daily activities. Students will also be able to explain how the role of women on the frontier was not only an effect of traditional gender roles but of necessity. Furthermore, students will be able to place the role of frontier women into the larger picture of westward expansion and the growth of democracy into the frontier

Content: Social Studies: U.S. History

Grade/Age Level: 5-12

Length: 3 – 5 days

Essential Question/Objectives:

How did women contribute to survival and the ease of living on the Kentucky frontier?

Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to **explain** methods used by frontier women to survive using only the environment surrounding them.
2. Participants will be able to **identify** several Kentucky women on the frontier and their contributions to history.
3. Participants will be able to **visualize** activities of frontier women and compare these activities to current activities of men and women today.

Key Concepts:

Students have been introduced to the life of people on the frontier in the late 18th and early 19th century. Students have basic knowledge of westward expansion and the geographical constraints of life on the frontier.

Curriculum Standards:

**This lesson plan/program aligns with the Kentucky Department of Education's Core Content for Social Studies Assessment, Middle School Version 4.1.*

SS-08-5.1.1 Students will use a variety of tools (e.g., primary and secondary sources) to describe and explain historical events and conditions and to analyze the perspectives of different individuals and groups (e.g., gender, race, region, ethnic group, age, economic status, religion, and political group) in U.S. history prior to Reconstruction.

SS-08-5.1.2 Students will explain how history is a series of connected events shaped by multiple cause-and-effect relationships and give examples of those relationships.

SS-08-5.2.3 Students will explain how the growth of democracy and geographic expansion occurred and were significant to the development of the United States prior to Reconstruction.

Through this program, students will not only be able to understand but to experience life on the frontier. Students will understand the life and thoughts of frontier women through their daily activities (SS-0805.1.1). Students will also be able to explain how the role of women on the frontier was not only an effect of traditional gender roles but of necessity (SS-08-5.1.2). Furthermore, students will be able to place the role of frontier women into the larger picture of westward expansion and the growth of democracy into the frontier (SS-08-5.2.3).

Materials/Resources:

- “Plants on the Frontier” handout
- “Women on Frontier: Stories” handout
- “Plants on the Frontier: Story and Song” handout
- “Who am I?” worksheet
- “Plants on the Frontier” worksheet
- “Life on the Frontier vs. Life Today” worksheet
- Video clips:
 - Women on the Frontier: an Overview
 - Frontier Women and Making Butter
 - Frontier Women and Making Clothes
 - Frontier Women and Cooking
 - Frontier Women and Use of Cabin Items
 - Frontier Women and Bedding

Procedures:

A. Students need:

- Copy of “Women on the Frontier Stories” handout
- Copy of “Plants on the Frontier” handout
- Copy of “Plants on the Frontier: Story and Song” handout
- Copy of “Who am I?” worksheet
- Copy of “Plants on the Frontier” worksheet
- Copy of “Life on the Frontier vs. Life Today” worksheet
- Ability to view video clips: Access to computer for individual review of video clips or view video clips as a class.

B. Review:

1. You may have heard of pioneers and frontiersmen like Daniel Boone, Simon Kenton, or James Harrod, but have you ever heard the names Mary Draper Ingles, Jenny Wiley, or Jane Todd Crawford? When you study famous Kentuckians like Abraham Lincoln and talk about his humble beginnings on the frontier, do you ever discuss the contributions of his mother Nancy Hanks Lincoln? (Pass out “Women on Frontier Stories Handout and “Who am I?” worksheet.)

2. Women played a very important role on the Kentucky frontier and today we'll talk about some of the problems on the frontier and the solutions that the ladies on the frontier developed.
3. Today when we have a stomach ache or a cut we go to drug store and buy medicine to cure our ailments. When Abraham Lincoln was a boy, medicines were not readily available and your surroundings often acted as a pharmacy. Nancy Hanks Lincoln would have known about herbal remedies and also about the different plants that make a specific dye, tea, or pot herb. We will identify several plants that could have been found in the field of the Lincoln farm. Further research will identify how Nancy Lincoln would have used them. (Pass out "Plants on the Frontier" handout, "Plants on the Frontier: Story and Song" handout and "Plants on the Frontier" worksheet)

C. Lesson Expectations:

Deliver the Objectives:

1. You will be able to **explain** methods used by frontier women to survive using only the environment surrounding them.
2. You will be able to **identify** several Kentucky women on the frontier and their contributions to history.

Presentation/Activity:

A. Activity components:

1. Discuss Plants on the Frontier: Review the common plants found on the frontier. Review those that are common still today. Discuss how students could go home and find several in their own neighborhood! Many of these plants were problem solvers for great dilemmas on the frontier.
 - a. Ask students to read "Plants on the Frontier" handout and "Plants on the Frontier: Story and Song" handout and then find more information on frontier plants.
 - b. Discuss: food plants including walnut, ribwort, and violet leaves.
 - c. Discuss: possibly poisonous plants and often misidentified plants including daisy flea bane, Queen Ann's lace, and Virginia creeper.
 - d. Discuss: plants that were useful medicinally or could be used as a pot herb including sassafras, raspberry, and the paw paw tree.
 - e. Require students to complete the "Plants on the Frontier" worksheet
2. Observe the daily life of Women on the Frontier:
 - a. View video clips:
 - Women on Frontier:-an Overview
 - Frontier Women and Making Butter
 - Frontier Women and Making Clothes
 - Frontier Women and Cooking
 - Frontier Women and Use of Cabin Items
 - Frontier Women and Bedding

- b. Compare the daily activities of women on the frontier to similar activities performed currently. How do these differ? Discuss the difficulties pioneer women had to endure to complete these daily activities.
 - Any clothing on the frontier had to be hand made! There are many steps to making clothing so this was no easy task.
 - For wool clothing, a sheep had to be sheared and the wool had to be hand carded before it could be spun. Spinning the wool turns it into thread that can be knitted, crocheted, or woven.
 - Require students to complete the “Life on the Frontier vs. Life Today” worksheet.
 3. Study contributions frontier women had on Abraham Lincoln and his humble beginnings on the frontier.
 - a. Ask students to review the “Women on Frontier Stories” handout. Students can research these women and others online for more information.
 - b. Require students to complete the “Who am I?” worksheet.
 4. Discuss the lack of information on women in the frontier. Were they overlooked in the pages of history? After viewing these video clips, it’s easy to see that women were anything but invisible. Because of women, frontier families were fed, clothed, medicated, and entertained.

B. Ending/Closing:

Hopefully today you’ve come to understand a bit more about the importance of women on the Kentucky frontier.

Extension:

From this point forward when you hear about the life of frontiersmen, you can remember and inquire about the input of women. This can apply to any point in history!

Encourage students to play Question and Answer PowerPoint game on Abraham Lincoln and Women on the Frontier.

Impact:

This program provides much needed insight into the roles of women throughout history. Women are overlooked both in textbooks and at historic sites if for no other reason than because women were generally not the writers of history. The most common student responses are: “I never knew women worked so hard!” “Frontier women worked harder than men!” Most students are in awe of what our foremothers accomplished. Because of the feedback received, it cannot be denied that more programs highlighting the impact of women throughout history should be initiated.

Bloom's Taxonomy:

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Multiple Intelligences:

- Verbal-linguistic
- Bodily-kinesthetic
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal
- Naturalist

Student Assessment:

Objective	Activity	Assessment	Accommodations
Students will be able to explain methods used by frontier women to survive using only the environment surrounding them.	Students will research commonly used plants and their common uses.	Completion of the "Plants on the Frontier" worksheet	N/A.
Students will be able to identify several Kentucky women on the frontier and their contributions to history.	Students will be read stories about famous (and infamous) Kentucky frontierswomen and will discuss their accomplishments.	Completion of "Who Am I?" worksheet	N/A
Students will be able to compare activities of frontier women to current activities.	Students will watch video clips and discuss how these activities differ for the frontier women vs. current activities.	Completion of "Life on the Frontier vs. Life Today" worksheet	N/A

Students Section:

This lesson plan has an accompanying link for students that contain activities and games for student interaction. These activities are the interactive components from this lesson plan plus additional games and fun facts for the student. Overviews of the various components are listed below:

Information on Women of the Frontier and Plants on the Frontier:

- “Plants on the Frontier” worksheet
- “Plants on the Frontier: Story and Song”
- “Women on Frontier: Stories” handout
- Women on the Frontier “Who am I?” worksheet
- Video clips:
 - Women on Frontier: an Overview
 - Frontier Women and Making Butter
 - Frontier Women and Making Clothes
 - Frontier Women and Cooking
 - Frontier Women and Use of Cabin Items
 - Frontier Women and Bedding

Games:

- Crossword puzzles
- Word searches
- Matching
- Question and Answer PowerPoint Game