

Springfield Armory National Historic Site

Grade: 3-5

Topic: Forging an Armory

Background:

This lesson can be used as an introduction to Springfield Armory National Historic Site and the geographic features that led to it being established in Springfield, Massachusetts. This lesson also provides background on the role of Springfield Armory in the Industrial Revolution and the opportunity to explore primary sources.

Massachusetts History Standards:

- HSS.3.T2.01 - On a physical map of North America, use cardinal directions, map scales, legends, and titles to locate the Northeast region and identify important physical features (e.g., rivers, lakes, ocean shoreline, capes and bays, and mountain ranges).
- HSS.3.T6.02 - Analyze the connection between events, locations, and individuals in Massachusetts in the early 1770s and the beginning of the American Revolution, using sources such as historical maps, paintings, and texts of the period.
- HSS.4.T4a.04 - Develop questions, conduct research, and analyze how people have adapted to the environment of the Northeast, and how physical features and natural resources affected settlement patterns, the growth of major urban/suburban areas, industries or trade.
- HSS.5.T4.04 - On a map of New England, locate cities and towns that played important roles in the development of the textile and machinery industries, whaling, shipping, and the China trade in the 18th and 19th centuries and give examples of the short- and long-term benefits and costs of these industries.

Pre & Post-Visit Classroom Activities for Teacher

Time:

Pre-visit - 30 minutes

Post-visit – 45-90 minutes

Teacher Background:

Complete the pre-visit activity prior to a ranger visit, virtual visit, or field trip to Springfield Armory National Historic Site. Complete the post-visit activity after the ranger-led lesson.

Materials:

- Graphing paper
- Coloring supplies
- Printer paper
- Brochure Rubric

Objective (SWBAT):

- Students will be able to survey a familiar location and create a map of the area.
- Critique the accuracy of the map and evaluate its uses.
- Assess what man-made and natural resources would be needed to build and sustain an armory.
- Develop an argument about why an armory should be built in a specific location.
- Graph the amount of armory workers and the production of firearms over time and make hypotheses about the causes for the changes.
- Develop a recruitment brochure to summarize the job opportunities and natural resources of the area.

Prior Knowledge/Words to Know:

Students should have basic map reading skills.

- Cardinal directions – the four main points of a compass: north, south, east, and west.
- Resources – things that can be used to help meet needs and wants. These can be man-made (such as money, possessions) or natural (water, wood, plants).
- Compass – a tool used to identify which directions are north, south, east, and west, using a magnetic needle.
- Landmark – a significant object or building in an environment.
- Map Legend – a collection of symbols used to read a map.
- Armory – a place where firearms or weapons are made and stored.
- Arsenal – a place where firearms are stored.

Pre-Visit Directions:

1. Provide students with a piece of graphing paper and writing utensils.
2. Instruct students to create a map of their classroom. They should be as detailed as possible.
3. Their map must include a title, compass, and legend (if creating symbols for objects or color-coding objects). Their map should include relevant furniture, windows, doors, desks, etc that are found around the room.
4. Give students ~10 minutes to complete this task. Allow students to roam around the room and use rudimentary ways of measuring spatial distances.
5. Pair students up and give students 3-5 minutes to compare and contrast their maps.
6. Lead a group discussion with students by asking the following questions:
 - What are different reasons for creating maps? (i.e. road maps, topographic, tourism, weather, political, etc.)
 - Who might want a map of our classroom?
 - Why might it be useful to have a map of the classroom?
 - Were there any objects that you left off your map? Why?
 - How does your map compare to another student's?
 - What part of your map is most detailed? Why might that be?

Post-Visit Directions:

1. Pose this question to students: "When you are an adult, do you think you would leave your home and move to a new place for a job? Why or why not?" Discuss responses.
2. Read the following passage from *Forge of Innovation*.

"Early information on the quality of the Springfield Armory muskets indicates serious problems with many muskets made before 1805 and leaves little doubt that recruitment of sufficient numbers of experienced artificers was initially a major problem."
– pg 191

3. Explain to students that recruitment at the Armory when it was first created was a major concern. But, as the Armory grew, so did the demand for housing and food. As a result, more farmers and carpenters were needed to feed and house the new community members.
4. Task students with creating a tourism trifold brochure to entice people from around the region and world to move to Springfield for the job opportunities available at the Armory, as well as other necessary jobs to support the growing city, and access to astounding natural resources (Connecticut River, Pioneer Valley, etc.).
5. Provide students with adequate class time to complete or assign as homework.
6. Provide rubric to students so students can tailor their work to the grade they wish to achieve.