

LESSON PLAN FOR USE WITH “MEET JOAN PEIRCE” DVD

Grade Level: Recommended for students in grades 4 through 8.

Behavioral Objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the first permanent English settlement in North America by recognizing:

- The reasons for English colonization
- The hardships faced by the settlers at Jamestown
- The relationship between the English and the Virginia Indians
- The contributions of women, indentured servants and Africans to the colony.
- The importance of tobacco in the success of the colony and the problems created by the tremendous need for land and labor to grow it.
- The significance of the creation of the General Assembly
- The changes that took place in the colony that contributed to its success

2. Students will evaluate the information they have gained by watching the “Meet Joan Peirce” DVD and researching material found in the **Supplementary Materials** section and answer the following questions:

- Do you think the Virginia Colony in 1638 was a good place to live? Why or why not?
- Would you have been willing to go there as a person who had paid for his/her own passage? Why or why not?
- Would you have been willing to go as an indentured servant? Why or why not?

National Standards of Learning:

National Center for History in the Schools:

Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585-1763)

Standard 1: Why the Americas attracted Europeans, why they brought enslaved Africans to their colonies and how Europeans struggled for control of North America and the Caribbean.

Standard 2: How political, religious and social institutions emerged in the English colonies.

Standard 3: How the values and institutions of European economic life took root in the colonies and how slavery reshaped European and African life in the Americas.

Historical Thinking Standards:

1. Chronological Thinking
2. Historical Comprehension
3. Historical Analysis and Interpretation
4. Historical Research Capabilities
5. Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making

National Center for Social Studies:

Theme II: Time, Continuity and Change

Focus on reading and reconstructing the past to:

1. include various perspectives on historical events
2. draw upon historical knowledge during the examination of social issues
3. develop the habits of mind that historians and scholars employ

Standards of Performance:

Students will be expected to gather information on the Virginia Colony by viewing a DVD and selecting supplementary materials to read; to organize that information; to apply their understanding of the living conditions in Virginia to what they themselves would be comfortable with; to identify the pros and cons of living in the colony; to evaluate this information in order to answer the questions in the second **Behavioral Objective**.

Anticipatory Set (Introduction): Set up the lesson by turning your students into investigative reporters in the year 1638.

Let us suppose that in 1638, there were television sets, VCR's and DVD players along with news programs and newspapers. And then let us suppose that your students are investigative reporters working for a network news channel or a large newspaper. You, as the network producer or newspaper editor, have just received a DVD from the colony of Virginia in which Mistress Joan Peirce, a long-time resident of Jamestown, is speaking with new arrivals to the colony. She tells them of the early years when the people in the colony struggled to survive and then how the colony grew and prospered. She thinks Virginia is a good place to live. You want your reporters to investigate and determine whether she is right, and whether your newspaper or news program should encourage people to go there to live.

Students' Objectives: posing as investigative reporters, find the answers to the following questions:

1. Do you think the Virginia Colony in 1638 was a good place to live? Why or Why not?
2. Would you have been willing to go there as a person who had paid for his/her own passage? Why or why not?
3. Would you have been willing to go as an indentured servant? Why or why not?

Preparation:

Equipment and materials needed: copy of the "Meet Joan Peirce" DVD, access to the Teachers' Guide website, a computer and equipment to show the DVD.

The DVD "Meet Joan Peirce" is 35 minutes long and contains a large amount of documented information. The **Using the DVD** section (found in the **Teachers' Packet**) has been designed to help students assimilate the material in the video. It includes:

- A chart for students to use while viewing the "Meet Joan Peirce" DVD to help them focus on the advantages and disadvantages of living in the colony of Virginia.
- Suggested places to pause the DVD so students can have a chance to digest the information and make notes on the charts.
- Suggested questions to use for short discussions during the pause.

Procedure:

Before beginning the lesson, pass out KWL charts (found at the end of the **Lesson Plan**) and have each student or

team of students fill them out. Then:

1. Pass out charts found in the **Using the DVD** section to each student or team of students and go over contents.
2. Inform your students they are investigative reporters and will need to find answers to the questions posed in **Students' Objectives**.
3. Have students view "Meet Joan Peirce" DVD—pausing the DVD at suggested places and leading a short discussion session using questions found in the **Using the DVD** section.
4. Students fill in charts during the pause break.
5. After viewing the DVD the teacher should explain that the students will have an opportunity to gather background information found in the **Supplementary Materials** section to supplement Mistress Peirce's narration. They will not have time to read all the supplementary materials, as there is a deadline for the project. They will have to choose what materials they think will be most helpful. This information along with the information on their charts can then be used to answer the questions in the **Students' Objectives**.

Options:

- The teacher can assign one or two of the activities found in the **Teachers' Packet** before having the students answer the questions in the **Students' Objectives** or
- The teacher can proceed directly to having the students answer the questions in the **Students' Objectives**.

Assessment Tools: Students can be assessed on their understanding of life in the Virginia Colony by undertaking one of the following projects. The teacher may assign a project to the whole class or allow each student or team of students to choose a project to complete.

1. Write a newspaper article explaining why Virginia is or is not a good place to live.
2. Design an advertisement or a TV commercial to attract new settlers to the colony.
3. Create a blog with comments from different people on life in the Virginia colony and a recommendation for or against settling there.
4. Create a web page for the newspaper's website explaining why Virginia is a good place to live or not.
5. Create a TV news report on the Virginia colony (could be a project for the whole class):
 - Students portraying a panel of "experts" (the "talking heads" we see so often on news programs) can give background information on life in the colony and give their predictions on the future of the colony: Will there be more trouble with the Indians? Will enough indentured servants come to the colony to fill the great need for labor? Will the governor be able to start new industries in the colony? (You may want to videotape these presentations)
 - Interviews with residents of the colony (the people and their backgrounds are included in the **Supplementary Materials** section). Students can be assigned to portray the people involved and be interviewed by another student or the whole class could pose as reporters and ask questions in the manner of a press conference. (You may want to videotape these presentations).

The teacher should give whatever directions are needed for students to begin their projects, set the time frame for completing the projects and establish the standards for their completion.

After students have finished their projects, the teacher might want to find out how many students think Virginia in 1638 was a good place to live; how many would have paid their own way to come to the colony and how many would have been willing to come as indentured servants.

The students can present their projects to the class or if there is not enough time then a project representing both sides of the question of whether Virginia is a good place to live or not should be presented. A class discussion on the pros and cons of life in the Virginia colony in 1638 should follow. Some questions for the class to think about:

1. What words would you use to describe the people who chose to come to Virginia to live in the early part of the 17th century? Why would you use those words to describe them?
2. Could those words be used to describe the people who left the eastern part of the United States in the 19th century and traveled across the plains to settle lands in the west? Why?
3. Do you know any people today who could be described using these same words?
4. If it were possible for people to live on Mars, would you be willing to go there to live? What kind of person do you think would be willing to go there?

Closure:

When the students have finished presenting their findings and discussing the results, show them the epilogue entitled: **What Happened After 1638** to find out how the colony developed. If they have made predictions about the future of Virginia, this could lead to a very interesting discussion, especially if you “re-air” their earlier news broadcasts.

Vocabulary:

Brackish: salty. Brackish water is fresh water that has been mixed with salty ocean water. The Jamestown settlers tried to drink water from the brackish James river; it made them sick.

Bodkin: a long, thin needle-like tool used by women as hairpins or as a sewing tool to pierce holes in cloth. Under martial law at Jamestown, a settler who stole food from the common store had a bodkin thrust through his tongue.

Cash Crop: a crop primarily produced to be sold for a profit rather than to be used by the grower. Tobacco was the cash crop of Colonial Virginia; cash crops for other colonies included rice, flax (the raw material for linen fiber) and indigo (used to make blue dye).

Colony: land under the control of a distant country. Virginia was a colony of England; England was sometimes referred to as the “Mother Country” of Virginia.

Common Law: a set of unwritten laws based on the outcome of past court cases. These decisions set a precedent or example that would help judges decide the outcome of future cases. Common Law, often referred to as “case law”, is the basis of the United States’ legal system today.

Fall Line: a geographic boundary separating low-lying coastal land from the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Above the fall line, it is difficult for ships to navigate, which is why major towns or cities are often found on the Fall Line.

General Assembly: the collective governing body for Virginia. In the 1630s, it included the Governor, the Council of Government and the House of Burgesses, meeting together to make laws for Virginia.

House of Burgesses: a legislative body similar to the present-day House of Representatives. Each Virginia county elected two men called burgesses to meet and pass laws for the colony.

Indentured Servants: people who contracted to work a specific number of years to pay for their passage to Virginia. Some came willingly, in order to have a chance at riches and success in Virginia. Others, such as debtors and criminals, were sent to the colony against their wills.

Isthmus: a narrow strip of land connecting two larger pieces of land. Jamestown used to be a peninsula, connected to the mainland by an isthmus. In the eighteenth century, a hurricane destroyed the isthmus and Jamestown became a true island.

Piedmont: literally translated as “the foot of the mountains”, this region of rolling hills is located between the Atlantic coastal land and the Appalachian Mountains. It stretches from New Jersey in the north to central Alabama in the south.

Pinnacle: the smallest sailing vessel used for ocean travel.

Powhatan Indians: a group of native peoples living in Tidewater Virginia under the rule of a leader the English settlers called “Chief Powhatan”. Today, the descendants of the Powhatan Indians prefer to be called Virginia Indians.

Tidewater: a region where the ocean tides affect the water levels in the rivers, creeks and marshes. Jamestown is located in Tidewater Virginia.

KWL CHART

What I Know	What I Want to know	What I want to Learn