



Colonial Survival and Civility Teacher Resource Packet

Thank you for registering for a Historic Newton youth program! In this packet you will find information about your visit, pre- and post-visit activities, and additional resources to support your teaching. Please reach out to education@historicnewton.org with any questions.

Contents

Program Overview	2
About Your Visit.....	2
Suggested Vocabulary.....	3
Suggested Activities to Supplement Your Visit.....	4
Background Information for Educators	6
Related Content Standards from the MA History & Social Science Framework.....	8
Selected Bibliography	9

Program Overview

Location: Durant Kenrick House and Grounds, 286 Waverly Avenue, Newton, MA 02458

Audience: Grades 2-5

Duration: 1 ½ hours

Essential Question: How did families survive in the colonial era?

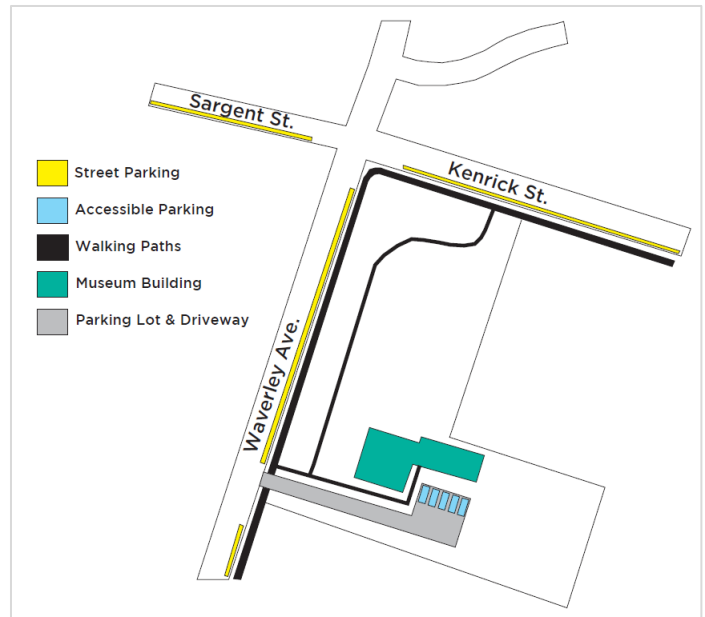
Overview: In *Colonial Survival and Civility*, students will get a deeper understanding of what life was like in the colonial era. Students will explore the museum, use colonial era tools, and play a game in which they try to get what they need from their colonial skills, bartering, and community relationships.

About Your Visit

Colonial Survival and Civility is held at the Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds. In order to preserve the artifacts and documents on display, flash photography is not allowed in the museum.

Part of this program will take place on the grounds of the museum. Please have students dress appropriately for the conditions and weather; they may get dirty.

Please refer to the diagram on the right for information on drop off and parking. Groups can be dropped off in front of the museum, at the base of the driveway. Ample on-street parking is available on the even side of Waverly Avenue, Kenrick Street (the same side as the house), and Sargent Street. Parking is not permitted within five feet of any driveway on the street. Please do not park on the grass.



We ask for at least 1 chaperone for every 6 students. Chaperones are expected to:

- Remain with the group at all times and model appropriate museum behavior.
- Assist the museum educator as needed, such as reading aloud to students, dividing students into groups, escorting students to the bathroom, or other classroom management tasks.
- Keep cellphones and other electronic devices silent.

Please have your students divided into groups of 5 prior to arrival; this will facilitate the hands-on part of the program. It will also be helpful if each group has a chaperone.

If you wish to conclude your program with a snack, please notify the staff in advance and plan for an additional 15 minutes. You must bring all snack supplies. There are no water fountains on site but students can fill their water bottles from the kitchen tap.

Suggested Vocabulary

Below are some terms that you might incorporate in your teaching about the colonial era leading up to the Revolution. Once you define the word with students, reinforce their understanding by using the term in context and supporting them in using their own words to describe what it means.

Barter: Exchange (goods or services) for other goods or services without using money.

Colonial period: 100 years after the arrival of the first English settlers, before the start of the Revolutionary War.

Commonwealth: One founded on law and united by compact or tacit agreement of the people for the common good. Massachusetts is legally designated as a commonwealth.

Domestic Animal: An animal of a species that has been domesticated by humans so as to tamely live and breed and depend on humankind for survival.

Hearth: Area in front of a fireplace.

Homestead: A person's or family's residence, which comprises the land, house, and outbuildings.

Indigenous Peoples: Those native or indigenous to the United States who lived on the land for thousands of years and continue to do so today.

Parlor: Formal sitting room.

Slavery: Condition in which individuals are owned by others, who control where they live and at what they work. Slavery had previously existed throughout history, in the United States slavery was primary a system in which those of European descent oppressed those of African descent.

Three sisters: Corn, beans and squash are referred to as the Three Sisters when they are grown in close proximity to form a symbiotic relationship. This method yields the most food per square foot of any farming method.

Yoke & Bucket: Used to fetch water, a piece of wood that goes over the shoulders, with a bucket hanging on each side.

Suggested Activities to Supplement Your Visit

Below are some short activities you can incorporate into your classroom practice before and after students participate in the *Colonial Survival and Civility* program. Please note you may need to scale up or down the activities based on the needs and abilities of your students.

Pre-Visit Activities

Household Chores. Ask students to make a list of chores they do at home, either individually or in groups. Have students compare their list to the ones below. What would your day as a colonial kid look like? What is the same still today? What is different? Lead a discussion on why some chores may or may not be relevant to our lives anymore.

Colonial Chores for Boys and Girls

- Sweep floors
- Make beds
- Wash dishes
- Pick up sticks
- Keep fire going
- Milk cows
- Feed cows, horses, oxen, goats and sheep
- Pick apples, pears, and plums
- Pick wild berries and nuts

Colonial Chores for Girls (With Their Mothers)

- Tend vegetable garden
- Salt meat and fish, dry or pickle vegetables, make fruit into preserves, make cheese and butter
- Make soap and candles
- Spin flax and yarn into thread and wool
- Make, repair, and wash clothes
- Clean the house

Colonial Chores for Boys (With Their Fathers)

- Plow with teams of oxen
- Cart manure to fertilize crops
- Mow meadow and make hay
- Harvest crops
- Press cider
- Store root vegetables
- Fell trees and haul them with oxen

Post-Visit Activities

Letter Writing. Have students write a letter as a colonial character to a friend. In the letter they should describe their house, gardens, animals, the village, their daily lives, etc. Include how things might smell, sound, and feel as well as how they look. Students can send their letter to a classmate, then respond to the letter they receive in return.

Food Preservation. Try out food preservation for yourself! Colonists needed to keep food fresh and store it for long periods of time. They pickled vegetables by soaking them in salt, water, and vinegar. All kinds of fruit and berries were made into preserves by adding honey or sugar. Native Americans taught them to dry meat, vegetables, and fruit. They dried berries, apple slices, corn, and green beans.

Below is a recipe for Leather Britches, an Appalachian recipe to preserve beans. They got the nickname because they resembled men's pants hanging on a line. You can make this recipe as a class or provide it to students as an assignment, extra credit project, or as an optional fun activity.

Leather Britches

Materials:

- 2 pounds fresh string beans
- 8 cups hot water
- Kettle
- Colander
- Large-eyed needle(s)
- Fishing line

Procedures:

1. Snip off stems and tips of the beans with your fingers. Then wash the beans.
2. Bring water to boil in the kettle. Add beans and cook for a minute. Strain the beans in the colander and let them cool for a few minutes.
3. Thread the needle with a fishing line. String the beans by sewing through one end of each bean. Keep them from touching each other.
4. Hang beans in a cool, dry place for about 3 days or until they feel crisp.
5. Store dried beans in plastic bags or sealed jars.
6. Before using beans in soups or stews, place them in a medium bowl and cover with boiling water. Let beans stand for about 2 hours to become plump.

Note: Only wealthy colonists had steel needles. Others might have used needles of cheaper metal or fish bones. Instead of fishing line, linen thread made from flax was used to hang beans from the kitchen rafters. Water was boiled in a large pot over the fireplace.¹

¹ Ichord, Loretta Frances. *Hasty Pudding, Johnny Cakes and Other Good Stuff: Cooking in Colonial America*. Brookfield, CT, 1998. Printed by The Millbrook Press. Page 17.

Background Information for Educators

Colonial Daily Life

In the 18th century, everyone in Newton lived and worked on a farm. Even if a man practiced a trade as a blacksmith or miller, he still needed to farm in order to provide his family with food. Families were large, typically with six children. They often included grandparents, unmarried aunts, and uncles since no one was able to live on their own. By working together and trading with other farmers colonists were able to get by. Tax records indicate that the average farm had 4 cows, 2 horses, 2 oxen, 4 goats and sheep and an undetermined number of chickens. The average farm was 50 acres. About half of it was a wood lot, which provided fuel for heat and cooking. Most of the farm was dedicated to feeding the livestock: pasture for grazing and meadow for hay. Only about 3-4 acres was used for crops. Often a farm had a small orchard. Newton farmers traveled a short distance to Brighton or Boston to sell excess crops, cheese, butter, and wood.

There were several mills on the Charles River in Newton Lower Falls and Newton Upper Falls. A paper mill made paper from wood pulp, a sawmill cut logs into boards, and a grist mill ground grain into flour. Instead of grinding grain for themselves farmers brought it to millers who ground it for them. In return the miller kept some as payment and resold it. At harvest time the whole family worked together. It was a laborious process to cut wheat, barley and oats with a sickle and beat it to separate the grain from the stalk. Everyone pitched in to make hay to feed animals in winter, cutting fields of grass and drying it. Records indicate that Newton farmers shared tools with neighbors.



The Columbian magazine, or, Monthly miscellany. Philadelphia : Printed for Seddon, Spotswood, Cist, and Trenchard, 1788 (September). <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004671568/>

Colonial Kids

Children as young as three years old had chores. They swept floors, made beds, and washed the dishes. Outside they weeded and fed the chickens. Four-year-old boys and girls were taught to knit. Young children picked up sticks and had the important job of keeping the fire going. Children also milked cows and spread manure on the fields to fertilize the crops. Older children helped feed the cows, horses, oxen, goats, and sheep each day. Some children picked apples, pears, and plums from their family orchards. They often picked wild berries and nuts.

Older boys worked by their father's side and learned how to manage a farm. The planting season began in April. Men plowed with teams of oxen and carted dung to fertilize the fields. In July and August the meadow was mowed and made into hay. Wheat, rye and barley were harvested. Late summer and early fall was the time to harvest corn, beans, squash and pumpkins. Cider was pressed in October. Root vegetables were stored in the root cellar in November. During winter months, men felled trees and hauled them with oxen².

Older girls helped tend the vegetable garden, which grew outside the kitchen. The most common vegetables were onions, cabbage, carrots and parsley. There were also potatoes, leeks, cucumbers, squash, radish, spinach, turnips and lettuce. Herbs were grown for spice as well as medicine.

Girls learned to preserve food: salting meat and fish, drying vegetables or pickling them and making fruit into preserves. To preserve milk they made cheese and butter. They made soap and candles and spun flax into thread and yarn into wool to make their own clothes.

About the Museum

At the Durant-Kenrick House and Grounds, you don't just look at history—you try it out for yourself. Here you'll find... a 1734 farmhouse, restored and renovated in 2013 with the addition of a large, modern educational space; family-friendly museum with period rooms, interactive activities, and puzzles; historic gardens; stories about colonial life, the Revolutionary War, slavery, abolitionism, the birth of American horticulture, and the historic preservation movement.



The plan of a farm yard - venerate the plow.
Trenchard, James, 1747-, engraver. [1786]
<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004671570/>

²Fuhrer, Mary. Colonial Families of Newton, Mass: Research for Newton Public Schools Third Grade Curriculum Project. 2006. Pp 16-17.

Related Content Standards from the MA History & Social Science Framework

Grade 2

Topic 5. Economics: resources and choices (shared with grade 1) [2.T5]

- Explain the relationship between natural resources and industries and jobs in a particular location.
- Give examples of products (goods) that people buy and use.
- Give examples of services people do for each other.
- Give examples of choices people have to make about buying goods and services (e.g., food for the family or a video game; bus far to get to work or a movie ticket for entertainment) and why they have to make choices (e.g., because they have only enough money for one purchase, not two).

Grade 3

Topic 5. The Puritans, the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Native Peoples, and Africans [3.T5]

- Using visual primary sources such as paintings, artifacts, historic buildings, or text sources, analyze details of daily life, housing, education, and work of the Puritan men, women, and children of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, including self-employed farmers and artisans, indentured servants, employees, and enslaved people.
- Explain the importance of maritime commerce and the practice of bartering – exchanging goods or services without payment in money – in the development of the economy of colonial Massachusetts, using materials from historical societies and history museums as reference materials.

Selected Bibliography

Barrett, Tracy. *Growing Up in Colonial America*. Brookfield: The Millbrook Press, 1995.

Bell, J. L. "Boston 1775." 2023. <http://boston1775.blogspot.com/>.

Colonial Williamsburg. "Bob & Marion Wilson Educator Resource Library".
<https://teacherresources.colonialwilliamsburg.org/>.

Fuhrer, Mary. "Colonial Families of Newton, Mass: Research for Newton Public Schools Third Grade Curriculum Project." 2006. *Read this at the Larner Library at Durant-Kenrick House (free admission with your MTA membership!)*.

Hinds, Kathryn. *Daily Living (Colonial Life)*. Armonk: Routledge, 2007.

Memorial Hall Museum. "Memorial Hall Museum Online. American Centuries...View from New England." 2014. <http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu/>.

Morse Earle, Alice. *Home Life in Colonial Days*. 1898. Distributed by Project Gutenberg, 2007.
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/22675/22675-h/22675-h.htm>.

Nardo, Don. *Daily Life in Colonial America*. Farmington Hills: Lucent Books, 2010.

Roberts, Russell. *Life in Colonial America*. Hockessin: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2008.

Sherman, Patrice. *How'd They Do That in Colonial America?*. Hockessin: Mitchell Lane Publishers, 2010.

Smith, Carter. *Daily Life: A Sourcebook on Colonial America*. Brookfield: The Millbrook Press, 1991.
Read this at the Larner Library at Durant-Kenrick House (free admission with your MTA membership!).

Smithsonian National Museum of American History, "Within These Walls: One House, Five Families, 200 Years of History." <http://amhistory.si.edu/house/default.asp>.

Sweetser, Moses Foster. *King's Handbook of Newton, Massachusetts*. Newton: Moses King Corporation, 1889. Retrieved from
<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=cTEAAAAAYAAJ&rdid=book-cTEAAAAAYAAJ&rdot=1&pli=1>.

Tunis, Edwin. *Colonial Living*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1957.

Winslow, Anna Green. *Diary of Anna Green Winslow: a Boston school girl of 1771*. Alice Morse Earle, ed. 1894. Retrieved from <https://archive.org/details/diaryofannagreen1894wins>.