

ROBERSON MUSEUM AND SCIENCE CENTER

Iroquois Culture Post-Visit Activity

Grade Level: 6-7

New York State Learning Standards: Arts 1-4; ELA 1, 3, 4; SS 1-3; MS&T 4

Pennsylvania Learning Standards: H 8.1, 8.3; A&H 9.2; S&T 3.4; E&E 4.2, 4.4, 4.8

Objectives: This activity will provide an analysis of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign in 1779 from the perspectives of the Iroquois and the colonists. Students will write newspaper articles that describe the point of view of the American colonists during the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, and also create an oral history of the same events from the point of view of the Iroquois people. As a result, students can practice writing skills as well as storytelling. Also, they will develop a better understanding of the importance of recording history and the impact of a biased story.

Materials:

- Computer access
- Word processor
- Plain white paper
- String
- Hole puncher
- Tea bags, optional
- Needle and thread, optional
- Websites with useful information on the Sullivan-Clinton campaign:
 - ❖ www.sullivanclinton.com
 - ❖ <http://www.earlyamerica.com/review/1998/sullivan.html>
 - ❖ <http://www.fortplainmuseum.com/revolutionarywar/sullivanclintonexpediti.html>

Procedure:

1. Have students do some research on the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, using the suggested websites. They can also use encyclopedias or library books.
2. Have the entire class brainstorm for ideas for the title of the newspaper of the American colonists.
3. Design the front page of the newspaper with suggestions from the class. Be creative. Include the date, a weather report, volume and issue number, price, etc.
4. Divide the class into two halves: one half working on the newspaper and the other on the oral history of the Iroquois.
5. Using a word processor, make sure to set a template for the newspaper for students to work in. Be creative in designing the template. Use a large size font (size 36) for the name of the

newspaper. Any font can be used, as long as the name of the newspaper is legible. Center the title in the middle of the page.

6. In Microsoft Word, you can place a border around the edge of the page, which can be customized. Click on “Format” and choose “Borders and Shading” in the dropdown menu. Go to the tab “Page Border.” Choose the style of the border you want. Click on “Options,” and you can adjust the distance between the border and the edge of the page.
7. The margins of the page should also be adjusted to ½ inch, or according to how you want the pages to look. In order to do this in Microsoft Word, click on “File” and go to “Page Setup” in the dropdown menu.
8. Insert page numbers on the top right corner of the page.
9. The article on the front page should be written underneath the title of the publication. The title of the front page article should be in bold, across the width of the page, and have a large font because the story is about the launching of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign. Use a catchy headline for the front page.
10. For the rest of the article, make sure to use a small font (size 10) and set the article into two columns (or however many looks best). The column settings can be found under “Format.” Select “Columns” in the dropdown menu. This font size and number of columns should be standard throughout the newspaper.
11. For the headlines of other articles, check to see that they are clear and concise. They should all be in bold and in a larger standard font than the contents of the article, with the exception of the front page headline, which should be larger.
12. The teacher should search for appropriate pictures that can be placed with the articles. Images can be scanned from books or found on the internet. Suggestions include portraits of Generals George Washington, Sullivan or Clinton, or a map of the lands where the Six Nations lived.
13. When the groups are ready, provide them with the images to be added to the text.
14. Students should choose the images that are relevant to their articles and place them with the text.
15. For the students working on the newspaper, assign groups to work on different newspaper articles. The number of groups will depend on the size of the class, and how many people you want to work on each article.
 - A. One group can write about the declaration of the launching of the campaign and the intentions of the American nation. One question to consider while writing this article is:
 - What is at stake for the American colonists during this campaign, or Revolutionary war in general?
 - The colonists want the ability and freedom to construct an empire on the American continent; control of the rivers in order to further trade and transport along these water routes; readily available land for the expansion and growth of cities and settlements.
 - B. Several groups can each cover specific battles during the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, and provide updates on the progress of the Revolutionary War.
 - C. For one article, one group can interview an American soldier or someone in the military, a politician, or someone else.
 - D. Another group can discuss the results of the campaign. Some sample questions to consider for this article include:
 - Were there any alternatives to the aggression of the colonists? Was it necessary?

- How do the colonists feel now that they have successfully demolished Iroquois culture?
 - Did everyone agree with the campaign's reasons and methods? Who would not have agreed?
- E. Also, there can be groups who write editorials or letters to the editor to express various perspectives and thoughts of the colonists during this campaign.
- How would the families of soldiers have felt about the campaign or war in general?
16. Have students work in groups on the computer to work on their article. Have them use the direct, clear and concise writing style of newspaper articles. Be creative! For example, include quotes from people who were interviewed for the story.
 17. Proofread the newspaper to check for grammatical and spelling errors.
 18. When the articles are done, print them out on the back and front of each sheet of paper.
 19. Using a hole puncher, make three evenly spaced holes in the left margin of the publication. To make sure that the holes on each sheet of paper line up with each other, punch holes in several sheets of paper at once. **Note: Do not use a three-hole punch because it is adjusted for a larger margin, and it will punch holes too far from the edge of the paper.**
 - For a more authentic look, make smaller holes in the papers with a nail or paperclip. Use a needle and thread to sew the sheets together. Follow steps 25-30 to bind the papers.
 20. **Note: This step should be done after holes are punched into the paper so that it will not rip or tear.** If you want to make the paper look old like an antique, follow this step through step 24. If not, skip to step 25. Make sure to practice on the same type of paper you plan to use for the final copy of the newspaper. Use a sheet of paper that has something typed on the back and front so that you can see the effects on the ink. If you are using a copy you have just printed, make sure that the ink is dry before you start this process.
 21. Dip a tea bag in hot water. Then squeeze out the water from the teabag and blot the paper, or you can smear the teabag onto the paper.
 22. Continue to do so until you have the desired effects. Do not place too much water onto the paper or it will lose its shape and be too difficult to handle.
 23. Set the sheet of paper aside and let it dry fully before handling it.
 24. Repeat this process on all sheets of the newspaper.
 25. Stack the sheets of the newspaper together.
 26. Thread the string through the middle hole, working from the bottom of the stack of papers to the top. Leave 1.5 inches of the string for tying at the end.
 27. Loop to the bottom of the stack through the bottom hole.
 28. Then thread through the middle hole, from the bottom of the stack upwards.
 29. Loop through the top hole towards the bottom of the stack, and bring the string down to the middle hole. Make sure that the string is not wrapping the papers too tightly so that they bunch up.
 30. Tie the ends of the string together.
 31. Cut off any excess string.
 32. Students who are working on the oral tradition of the Iroquois should also be separated into groups.

- A. One group should work on writing about how the Iroquois would have felt at the beginning of the Sullivan-Clinton campaign, such as confusion, grief, anger, or revenge.
 - B. Several groups should each write about the different battles of the campaign from the Iroquois' point of view and how the Iroquois dealt with the onslaught of destruction.
 - C. Another group can discuss the decisions of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Grand Council during the course of the campaign and Revolutionary War in general.
33. Each group should consist of a few performers who can act out their interpretation of their group's oral history. The performance can be interpretative or they can write their own dialogue in addition to the story being read.
34. Try to simulate the writing style of the Iroquois for the story for the best effects when telling it. An example follows:
- "When your army entered the country of the Six Nations, we called you *Town Destroyer*: and to this day when that name is heard our women look behind them and turn pale, and our children cling close to the necks of their mothers. Our counsellors and warriors are men, and cannot be afraid; but their hearts are grieved with the fears of our women and children, and desire that it may be buried so deep as to be heard no more."

Seneca Chief Cornplanter
To George Washington
1790

35. The Iroquois story can be written or typed, but have one person in each group be the secretary who is in charge of having a copy of their story.
36. The performers should practice several times before their performances. Make sure that their interpretation of the story is appropriate.
37. Have the groups take turns to read and perform their stories.
38. Pass around the copy of the newspaper so that students have a chance to read the articles.
- If possible, make several copies of the newspaper to pass around the class. In that case, have students separate into groups to create the antique effects with the teabag and to bind the paper.
39. Discuss the differences in the experiences of the Iroquois and the American colonists during the Sullivan-Clinton campaign and Revolutionary War. Some questions to ask include:
- Why did some Iroquois decide to engage in the Revolutionary War as allies with the American colonists, especially after the death and destruction that the Continental Army brought?
 - How could an oral history change over generations?
 - Could "facts" in a written historical document ever be proven wrong, such as in a textbook?
 - Yes. For example, textbooks have been rewritten to include less biased text.
 - Were there any alternatives to the annihilation of Iroquois culture brought on by the Sullivan-Clinton campaign?

- What were the long-term goals of the colonists in the Sullivan-Clinton campaign? Would a less aggressive tactic been effective in achieving those goals?
- Could the Americans have tried reaching a compromise with the First Nations people? How?

40. For further discussion of the topic, ask the following questions:

- Could the American nation have afforded to return more land to the First Nations people?
- Was there a better way to repair relations between the Iroquois and the American citizens after the Revolutionary War?
- How would you want to build a better relationship with the Native American population?

Conclusion: At the end of this activity, students will be able to understand that there is no one correct point of view even in documents that discuss historical events. Every story can be interpreted differently depending on the culture, society, and other circumstances of the people experiencing it.

Developed by: Michelle Cheng
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Suggested Readings

Aller, Susan Bivin with illustrations by Laurie Harden. **Living with the Senecas: A Story about Mary Jemison**. Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, 2007.

Althsheler, Joseph A. **The Shadow of the North: A Story of Old New York and a Lost Campaign**. Charleston: BiblioBazaar, 2006.

Canfield, William W. **At Seneca Castle**. Emmaus, PA: Salem Ridge Press, 2006.

Calloway, Colin G. **The American Revolution in Indian Country: Crisis and Diversity in Native American Communities**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Davis, Kenneth C. with illustrations by Rob Shepperson. **Don't Know Much about George Washington**. New York: HarperTrophy, 2002.

Hedstrom-Page, Deborah with illustrations by Sergio Martinez. **From Colonies to Country with George Washington**. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2007.

Marrin, Albert. **George Washington and the Founding of a Nation**. New York: Dutton Juvenile, 2001.