



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
1984 Volume VI: Geology and the Industrial History of Connecticut

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## The Ground We Walk On

Guide for Curriculum Unit 84.06.08  
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This unit is written on the assumption that geology is more meaningful when it relates to the student's own environment. It should be taught with field trips as the core (however, slides taken by the author are available and can be supplemented by the teacher and students using the unit if necessary). The field trips should stimulate interest and observations as students come into contact with natural geologic processes which they can relate to textbook material.

Four trips to sites on the New Haven harbor's borders were decided upon. Each site is associated with one significant geologic process or specific background information. They are:

1. Lighthouse Point—Erosion 2. Forbes Bluff—Bedrock and the Rock Cycle 3. Morris Cove—Coastal Processes 4. Return to Lighthouse—Glaciation

Three sample lessons plans are given, one in the form of an experiment, one for map skill development, and one as a lab which encourages expansion of math skills. They are all closely allied to field studies. Activities in this unit call for photography (using teacher's camera) collecting samples, students designing their own on-site experiments.

The continual growth in the understanding of the geologic processes that have shaped and continue to shape the ground the students walk on in the New Haven harbor area is one goal of this unit. Perhaps the most important objective, however, is to encourage students to look at, and relate to the earth and to its, and their past, present and future.

(Recommended for Earth Science classes, grades 7 through 9)

The Life and Times of the West River 1776-1896: A Study of Early Industry in Westville, by Valerie Ann Polino

The unit is divided into three sections. Part one covers the West River system as the source of water power for early industries. Part two deals with the five most important facts to be considered before erecting a mill along the river. Part three covers the specific industries located in Westville that used the river as their source of power. A set of slides accompanies this unit as the illustration for the text. The overall objective of the unit is to develop in the student the ability to make observations and draw conclusions from the available evidence. Three of the lessons deal with map skills, the fourth is a lesson on industrial archaeology using the Parker Paper Mill site. Although the material deals with Westville the skills and historical information can be applied

to any area of study.

(Recommended for 6th grade Connecticut History classes, 7th grade Western Hemisphere classes, and high school United States History classes)

**Key Words**

*Ecology Environmental Science Connecticut West River Geology*

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