



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2003 Volume II: Everyday Life in Early America

Home Skills of Early America

Curriculum Unit 03.02.07
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My career as a Family and Consumer Sciences (Home Economics) teacher has led me to research the historical development of home life skills. One of my personal objectives is to analyze current methods of caring for home and family in hopes of offering suggestions for improvement. Studying the historical development of home life skills gives me insight into past practices but also makes me realize how much has been forgotten or ignored over time. Understanding past methods, makes me confident that many of our current practices could certainly be rethought. In a sense, it is going back to basics.

Rudimentary home skills are extraordinarily similar in today's home and in a colonial home. A striking difference however, is the home skills of colonial times were very gender specific. Both boys and girls would learn basic skills which were sequential to performing the same tasks as the fathers' and mothers'. Although the gender barrier has been removed, children today should also learn the basics before being able to assume adult jobs. If a child desires to be a chef or a gourmet cook, he must understand how to use the tools and equipment safely. The first step might be learning how to regulate the temperature on a stove top before simmering a sauce. If a child desires to be a seamstress, tailor or fashion designer, he must understand differences in fabrics and again, how to use the equipment safely. Step one in a sewing lesson, for a child who has never sewn, is how to thread a needle and knot the end of the thread. My interest in learning and teaching home skills of the present and past has made me realize that in any period in time, children learn these tasks by mastering each developmental step, one at a time. Significant, however, is the motivation to learn the skill, the need for the skill and, for children, how much gratification will result from the end product (in other words, is it fun?).

Another component, to teaching in the arts, is the ability to collaborate with teachers in the academic subjects by enhancing units of study with "hands-on" application. One unit, that is particularly fulfilling, is working with fifth grade students who are studying colonial America. This is the ideal point at which academic and "hands-on" synergy may be achieved. I have been able to explore some of the foods and methods of cooking, some of the games children played, and also some of the crafts or necessary skills of the past that children were required to learn. The lessons provided will give a deeper understanding of colonial children's lives. I also recognize that much of what I do in my lessons, not only provides children with some basic home skills, but it also becomes "the fun part" of the unit as a whole. This extra creative, "hands on" component, not only augments, but hopefully helps to foster the objectives of the integrated unit.

This unit is designed to be integrated with the fifth grade Social Studies curriculum. It should be a means by which classroom teachers can tap into the resources of the specialized talents of the Family and Consumer Sciences department. It should give our New Haven students a “hands-on” dimension to learning about colonial times. Fifth grade and even younger students will be able to experience some activities that colonial children experienced, thereby achieving a greater insight into the ways of colonial living. The lessons provide instruction for younger students, by demonstration, discussion and distribution of supplies, to use their hands to create a sense of the past, and also make a tangible take-home project. This supplemental strategy will broaden the scope of the social studies unit and at the same time incorporate “hands-on” skills.

This unit will also be used to instruct seventh and eighth grade students to assist in presenting demonstrations. Concurrently it will become a means of developing leadership abilities, while improving and creating an awareness of past and present basic home skills. The older students will be able to use organizational and speaking skills to present demonstrations and help with “hands-on” activities for the younger grades. It will increase the awareness of all age groups involved, about the everyday life of the New England colonists. It will encourage educating the “whole child”. It will broaden horizons.

The period selected as a model is eighteenth century New England. Although, the colonial period begins earlier, by the eighteenth century many of the original obstacles and hardships had been resolved and the people were able to settle into more of a routine within their families and communities. It is these routines of everyday life upon which the unit will focus. Each member of a household had specific responsibilities which were integral to the success of family life. It is these tasks, skills, and responsibilities of the individual family members; men as husbands, fathers and sons, women as wives, mothers and daughters, and others within the household, which were the operating structure of the family. Who comprised the family? What were their responsibilities?

The Family

When a young married couple established a household they did so with much help from the parents. Sometimes land was given to them by the parents of the young man or it might be part of the same property on which the parents lived. The parents of the young woman provided furnishings and household equipment. Most household linens were made by the bride and her family. These included sheets, blankets, pillow cases, toweling, and table linens. These items took a tremendous amount of time to prepare and were recognized as the woman’s property. The term “portion”, which later became known as a dowry, refers to the property the woman brought with her when she was married. Usually the portion included cooking and serving tools necessary to set up housekeeping. Until the portion was completed, the young couple might stay with either of the families until all the basics were accumulated to start an independent household. Often the parents of the bride would add to the portion with such items as the daughter’s best needlework designs in order to attract a more well-to-do husband. Once the husband and wife were established in their own home, he became the household head and she the manager of all household operations.

Most New Englanders were farmers. This livelihood, in conjunction with the location, seasons and climate dictated the regularity of household chores. Young families were small and chores were many requiring extra help. Hired hands might help the husband with farming. The hired hands would likely be paid in goods produced on the farm, or with credit in a store, but they were also provided with food, clothing and board

while employed. Another way of getting help with farm work was to share with other members of the community. That way draught animals and farm equipment could be shared for similar tasks among neighbors.

Young wives also usually needed extra help. Girls from less prosperous families, who were about twelve years old, would often move in with a family to help out with the routine household chores but were especially needed as children were being born. At the time of an actual birth other family or community members would come to assist the new mother. Once the mother and child were stable, however, the new mother would need the girl to stay on. The girl not only helped with household chores but they also helped tend the baby. They were usually assigned the more menial tasks as the wife was still the manager and would want things done in her own particular way. These girls were given small wages for a few personal items, but were also provided with food, clothing and board. Both hired men and hired girls were part of the household and were considered as part of the family.

Families usually grew to be quite large. It was common for a wife to have a child every other year. After a child was born the mother generally would nurse for about a year. It was a routine occurrence to have a new child in the family for many years. As each child was born the siblings were bumped up in their position within the family and eventually they would be taking on responsibilities like those of their parents. The boys worked with their fathers and learned about farming. The fathers, additionally, imparted other skills, like leather crafting, barrel making, tin smithing, etc. This allowed them to exchange their talents for other services within their communities. Their sons would in turn learn these specialties. Almost all, however, were farmers first.

The girls learned from their mothers the many tasks of managing a household. At a very early age they would learn needlework. All young girls were expected to complete samplers which taught them a variety of stitches, as well as how to initial their clothing and household linens. This detailing not only added a personal touch, but also made it easier to separate articles of clothing and linens after laundering. Additionally, drying laundry outdoors might cause items to be blown from the yards during windy days, the initials would allow them to be returned to their rightful owners. Sewing and mending were ongoing tasks in a colonial home. The wife was expected to plan and create all garments for all members of her family, which included the hired help. There were so many components to this task that women learned how to minimize the number of garments they would have to make. Wool and linen were the most common fibers. To produce wool they kept sheep. For linen, flax was harvested. Although the sources for the fibers were very different, the processes of cleaning, sorting, spinning yarn, weaving, dyeing and clothing construction had many similarities. Women developed different specialties. Each knew all the steps from fiber to fabric, but if one was a better spinner and another owned a particular loom, they did exchange some jobs. Although it has been our assumption that colonial families were completely self-sufficient this was not always the case. Even in the early years, families settled in communities that allowed them to help and work with one another.

As families matured, sons and daughters were able to take over some of the work of the hired hands. The hired men would move along to work with other families. The hired girls would return to their families or would start families of their own. The hired girls had been cared for and educated by the families for whom they worked, and they often made strong bonds with the family members, especially older daughters. These bonds were often life long, but the girls were prepared to move out on their own.

If a family faced a tragedy or hardship and a person were to become alone, whether a child or an adult, the extended family would take them in. People cared for one another. The size of families swelled and shrank. Men made provisions for their wives and the community watched out for the children. Elders who were alone

would move in with a daughter's or son's family. Whoever joined or left the family didn't change the fact that the man was the head, and his wife the manager, of the household.

Routine Household Tasks

Because of the lack of what we would consider common conveniences, light, running water, refrigeration and heating or cooling systems the colonial family structured its daily routine somewhat differently from the way we do. They would rise very early, probably before sunrise to get the house warmed, the fires ready for cooking, and some water heated, in order to take full advantage of daylight. Usually the wife, or perhaps the hired girl would get up first to get the fire going. The wood would have been set out by the men and boys the night before to expedite the process. Kindling and logs were readied each evening, while embers were carefully preserved in the ashes to last until morning. This method made it easy to restart the fire. If by chance the embers had burned out it would be a chore to start a fire anew from flint and straw. It was more commonplace to go to a neighbor's home for some live coals, than to reignite the fire.

Once the fire was started, the preparation of a hearty breakfast was underway. Men and boys were probably already working outside while the women and girls prepared the breakfast. The boys were responsible for bringing fresh water to the house. Surely, there were many differences in family tastes and appetites but generally breakfast was ample and hot. Besides porridge, bread and warm milk, some enjoyed eggs, fish, ham or sausages and potatoes. If breakfast followed a baking day, a crock of baked beans might be served after being kept in the slowly cooling bake oven overnight. Following the meal, the men would go back to their outdoor activities and the women would proceed with the routine tasks: straightening the beds, arranging the furniture for the day's use, sweeping, especially the ashes which would accumulate around the fireplace, cleaning candles or small, iron fish oil lamps, called Betty lamps, readying the lighting for the evening, then preparing the main meal of the day which was eaten in the early afternoon.

The mid-day meal was served hot. This required expertise in the use of the fire tools, cooking utensils, judging temperatures and the physical strength needed to juggle the heavy iron cooking pots above the heat of the fire. Because women's skirts were ankle length it was not unusual to have one's clothing catch on fire. A bucket of water was kept at the side of the hearth to quickly dip smoldering hemlines. A typical meal would include some kind of meat with root vegetables, sometimes cooked as a stew and more that one baked item, as cornbread and a cake or pie. Dairy products provided puddings and cheeses and well as butter and cream. The woman was usually in charge of the dairying because she used the milk products in cooking or neighborly exchange and had to be fully knowledgeable about caring for her animals and procuring and preserving the milk products. For similar reasons, the woman managed the chickens and eggs. Eggs were also used for exchange and that money was her own. A favorite purchase with the money from eggs was pins, which were used in sewing but also to secure clothing. It became known as "pin money".

In the later part of the evening the family would have a light supper. This was often the leftovers from the mid-day meal, but if none were to be had, smoked or salted meat with bread would suffice. Cider was the common beverage. This was due partly to the absence of refrigeration and partly to impurities in the water.

The tools and equipment which furnished a cooking fireplace were slowly acquired and expected to last a lifetime. Some of the cookware would have been provided by the bride's family in her portion. These would

include very basic pieces, like a water kettle, which would be multi-purpose, a stew pot, and a ladle. Some pots were hung over the fire from a lug pole, which was a greenwood log across the back of the fireplace, or they might be hung from a crane, which was an iron arm attached at the side of the fireplace which could swing out away from the fire. Assorted trammels or S hooks would permit the raising or lowering of the kettle to control the heat. Other parts of the cooking could be done by moving the coals to make several small fires, within the total hearth space. With a few specially designed cooking pots, several recipes could be cooking at the same time. One such pot was a spider, a three-legged frying pan. Cod fish cakes, made with salted dried cod, which was soaked overnight, combined with boiled, mashed potatoes, minced onion, seasonings and rolled in cornmeal, make a delicious recipe when fried with a little oil in the spider. Another unique method of cooking in a bed of hot coals was with a Dutch oven set upon a trivet. Cornbread, for instance, was placed in a baking dish, then set inside the Dutch oven. It is covered with an indented top, and then the top was filled with more hot coals. The cornbread then baked inside the Dutch oven absorbing heat from both the top and the bottom, not unlike the process of cooking in a modern oven. A reflector oven, which was introduced in the mid eighteenth century, was a tin, drum shaped, container, placed horizontally with an open side in front of the flame. The food could then cook by the heat of the flame on one side and by the heat reflecting from the tin on the other. When used with a spit this was an excellent method of preparing meat or poultry. A proficient, energetic, and strong cook could utilize various methods of cooking in an open hearth all at the same time.

Baking was another task which was usually done on a specific day of the week. It required the heating of a beehive or brick oven which was part of the fireplace. In the earlier part of the eighteenth century it was at the back of the fireplace. Later designs placed it on the side of the fireplace. Hot coals were placed in the beehive from the main fire. When the bricks on the inside of the oven had sufficiently absorbed enough heat, the hot coals were removed. The food to be baked was placed on the inside with the recipes requiring the longest baking time at the back, and those requiring the least amount to time in the front. A frequently used type of bakeware was called redware, a type of glazed pottery which was a deep red color. Tin, in various shapes was also used for baking. If a woman didn't have enough bakeware, the last of the batters were placed on green leaves. When all the recipes were in order in the oven, which was quite deep, a heavy wooden or an iron door was placed to seal the oven heat. A peel, a long handled flat shovel, was used to remove the redware and tins when the baking was completed. Sometimes a crock of baked beans was left to continue cooking in the cooling oven overnight.

Laundry may have well been the most time consuming of the routine household chores. Large tubs of water had to be collected for both wash waters and rinse waters. Some families collected barrels of rain water so as not to have to carry the water too far. A common source of household water was the river or a stream. The men and boys would carry the water and would prepare the drying areas. Drying areas would consist of protected lawn on which to spread clothes, some ropes strung to hang clothes and sometimes trimmed bushes or hedges that the clothes could be rested upon to dry. Clothes were sorted by whites and darks. The water was heated over fires and some types of laundry were actually boiled. The clothes were moved to a hot rinse tub with a large washing stick and then were moved to a second rinse tub. After hand ringing the clothing the articles were set out to dry. Whites, especially, were placed in the sun on the lawn so they would bleach naturally. All clothing was not washed regularly. Undergarments, aprons, socks, and babies' hand stitched diapers were most frequently laundered items. Bed linens and children's clothing were washed less frequently. Men's and women's outer garments were seldom laundered. Heavy woolen garments and some household items, like blankets may have been washed annually and some items like bed curtains and valences almost never. As difficult as this process was, it was much harder in the winter months. The laundry would have to be done inside. Drying couldn't be done outside as it would freeze. Some items were hung on

poles placed between ladder back chairs to dry in front of the fire. Sparks from the fire would damage the fabrics and of course, created another fire hazard. Some clothing was placed in attics to dry from the radiant heat from chimneys but this was a slow process and frequently took away space from children who slept under the rafters in the attic where there was enough heat to keep them warm during the night. Much of the family laundry had to be postponed until the spring.

Sewing, mending and knitting were among the routine tasks which simply never ended. As long seams of garments needed finished edges to sustain the long life and rigorous cleaning procedures, sewing seemed to be always in progress. Also, to extend the life of garments mending was done regularly. So much time and effort went into spinning and weaving cloth that people had few outfits and they were not able to get new garments readily. Not all fabrics were woven on home looms. Some fabrics were imported from England, but these were more costly. Some women would prepare their skeins of linen or wool at home but would then bring them to a local weaver. Once the cloth was prepared it would be cut into sections to be stitched together into garments. Some people choose to bring the fabric to a cutter for the desired size and style of a garment but would then stitch the sections together themselves. The fact remains, however, no matter how much they had done and how much they did themselves an extraordinary amount of time and labor went into the creation and maintenance of every garment.

Children's clothing was usually constructed with a number of hemmed tucks. Girls' and boys' clothing was very similar until they were about five or six years old. This made garment construction for young children somewhat easier and also allowed for growth. The garment could be lengthened with growth spurts and when it was outgrown it could be hemmed to start all over again regardless of the gender of the younger child. When adult garments had reached a point where stress points could no longer be repaired the pieces were taken apart and cleaned. New patterns for smaller individuals were cut from the good sections and a new garment was ready to serve another person through many more wearings. Nothing was ever wasted.

Certain garments, like caps and socks or stockings were knitted. As a mending basket was never empty, neither was a knitting basket. Socks wore out rather quickly, so it was not only important to have several pair if possible, but also to keep the existing ones mended. Sometimes, worn heels and toes were replaced in socks rather than knitting a new pair. Caps and socks were both worn to bed in the cold winter months. Every member of the family needed them. Soft shawls and blanket throws were used regularly during the winter months. Mittens were necessities for children and adults doing the daily chores which brought them into the bitter cold outdoors.

All the household operations which the wife, as manager, performed with the help of hired girls, neighbors on occasion, and daughters, were expected in time to be completely learned by the young girls. They, in turn, would mature to be wives and managers, thus perpetuating the family cycle. The chores which men and boys performed were generally outside the house proper. They built and furnished their homes. The men worked the land, they tended the livestock, and they practiced their individual specialties within the community. They assisted the women with the heavy work inside the house. They handled the affairs of their families and helped in the decision making of the community. Their sons were expected to learn from them and become future household heads.

Seasonal Household Tasks

Because colonial society was agrarian, many specific tasks were performed annually as the seasons changed. Men and boys worked outdoors, with the many commitments of farming. Almost all tasks which were done inside the house or were specifically concerned with cooking were under the management of the wife and the other women and girls. Tasks which were either preliminary to the women's work or were basically too heavy were set up by the men and boys. Some of the rote, laborious tasks were made more tolerable by the companionship of the people involved and by the games and competitions in which they engaged during the work. Sometimes, at the conclusion of a task, there might be some little celebration or the opportunity to sample the "fruits of their labors" which would surely give them a sense of satisfaction.

Spring

For farmers, spring was the beginning of the year. It was time once again, to resume the cycles of farm life. The dreary winter months were behind, the food supplies were almost depleted and the house was dirty and soot covered from being constantly inhabited. There was almost a sense of urgency to begin anew. Seeds were sown, animals gave birth, nature came alive, the house and the landscape were improved for another year. It was a time of much work, and planning for the coming year.

Spring cleaning was a major undertaking in a colonial home. The house sustained heavy use during the winter when the family remained indoors and in close quarters. The fire, which had been burning constantly for months, would leave layers of soot and fine ashes on everything. Floors would have been abused by much tracking of mud and sand from the outdoors. Sweeping alone couldn't reach the imbedded dirt. Much of the laundering had to be postponed until the warmer weather so heavy fabrics would be able to dry outdoors.

Many women would remove all furnishings from the rooms to the outside so they could thoroughly scrub walls, ceilings and floors. Some would white wash, which was cleaning with water to which lime, soap and fine sand for abrasion had been added. Once the inside was sanitized, the furnishings were then cleaned or laundered and placed back into position. The whole process could last from several days to weeks.

Sheep shearing, another important task, was the starting point for the long process of making wool fabrics for clothing or bedding. If a family was fortunate enough to own sheep, this was the first step of many which were done at intervals over the course of the year. When the weather became warm enough, the sheep were washed. They were then sheared within a few days. The fleece was carefully separated so the matted and tangled sections were set aside to be spun into coarse yarns. The lighter, whiter fleece was put into bundles to be dyed. Dyes were made from a great variety of natural findings. Barks, berries, flowers, leaves, herbs and even insects provided a wide variety of colors. After dying, the fleece was carded, placing the fibers in the same direction. At this point, the wool was ready to be spun into yarn which could be woven or knitted into clothing or blankets.

Maple sugaring was a task mainly done by the men and boys. They would leave for several days to stay at the sugar camp, out in the woods. This was done between mid March and mid April. The sap of the maple trees, flows upward in the sunshine and down with the evening frost. A tap or spout was put into the tree and a bucket was placed beneath it. The sap was collected and boiled in large kettles, then skimmed and strained. This process of boiling, skimming and straining was repeated many times until the syrup became clear. Many grades of sugars from dark course blocks to light syrups were obtained for the family to use throughout the

year. The hard wood fires, sustaining the boiling kettles, burned continuously until the work was completed. This would become a time of celebration, with the women and girls joining the men and boys for games and tasting the sweet sugars.

Summer

Because of the fair weather and longer days, summer was considered the season to get things done. The men and boys spent long hours in the fields. Women and girls did much cooking, gardening, and food preservation.

Drying herbs and fruit began almost as soon as they would mature so as to have plenty for the rest of the year. Of course, fresh herbs and fruit were wonderful treats of the summer. Herbs were usually simply bundled and tied, then hung from the rafters in the kitchen or the attic. Herbs were used in cooking, to make teas, for dyes and were also believed to have many medicinal benefits. It was quite an educational process for the woman to learn the many and varied uses of the herbs. Fruit was sliced and spread in single layers to dry. It was then strung onto twine and hung near the hearth. It might have also been stored in cloth bags to be reconstituted at any time during the year. Apples grew abundantly. Apple pies and other treats could be readily prepared from the dried fruit at any time of the year. Many other native fruits were dried in similar fashion to be used throughout the year.

Harvesting flax began in early July. The seeds were planted in the early spring and were usually tended by the children. The children's smaller feet and fingers allowed them to do the weeding without damaging the fragile plants. The men and boys, however, cut the mature stalks and placed them in the sun to dry. Once dried, the seeds were removed to be saved for the next planting. The flax was broken to remove the hard parts of the stalks and separate the fine fibers. The fibers were then hackled, which was pulling through iron teeth, and bundled. The women would then wash the fibers many times to bleach them. Once dried, the women and girls could begin the spinning process. Spinning was usually postponed to colder months when the women had to remain inside the house.

Autumn

Autumn was the season for harvesting, the time when the long hours of summer work would yield its rewards. Many of the season's activities were focused upon the particular crop being harvested. This was the peak time of the agrarian cycle.

Corn husking could involve an entire community. Corn had become the primary staple crop of New Englanders. The crop was usually the largest of the harvest season.

Corn was used for many purposes. Besides its most obvious use, the grain, many crafts and tools were created from the husks, stalks and cobs. When the corn harvesting was completed, again, it was often a time of celebration.

Goose stripping was another of the tasks of the autumn. Goose feathers were collected to stuff bedding. Sometimes the small soft feathers were plucked from the live goose, which was very difficult as the bird would be fighting mad. Sometimes the goose was killed first. When all the feathers were removed the down was stripped from the lower part of the quills for quilts and soft bedding. The quills were set aside to be used for pens. At the conclusion of this event the family was often rewarded with a delicious roast goose dinner.

Smoking and preserving meats was accomplished before the long winter months. The food was secured for

indoor winter storage and there were also fewer animals that would require feeding and care. This was often a delicate balancing game. When an animal was slaughtered, it provided a huge variety of meat products. All parts of the animal were used. Typically, there was no waste.

Gathering natural foods from the woods went on throughout spring, summer and autumn. Berries, nuts, edible vegetation, etc. were preserved and stored in readiness for winter. This was the time of year when food was most abundant. Therefore, this became the time of thanksgiving. The colonists felt rewarded for their hard labor and the grace of God, leading them to better lives which they sought in the new world.

Winter

Indoor work, especially for the women and girls, was the order of the day in the winter months. Men and boys worked outdoors during the short daylight hours mainly doing repairs and other farm maintenance. Keeping warm, around the central chimney and the huge kitchen hearth, was in itself an on going task until the spring.

Tending the fire required expertise. All members of the family seemed to, in some way be involved with the task of keeping the winter hearth continuously burning. Appropriate tools had to be selected for the various placing of logs, coals and ashes.

Wood had to be appropriately selected, cut, seasoned and stacked. Kindling had to be gathered and stored. Furnishings were often huddled around the fireplace so people could be near enough to stay warm. Sometimes, people slept dangerously close. Proximity always created hazards. House fires were a serious concern for loss of property, injury, or death.

Sewing, spinning, mending, knitting and other types of needlework kept the women and girls busy. Since much to this type of work kept the women stationary, much could be accomplished during the winter months. There was virtually no end to this work. It went on continuously. Their fingers were never idle. The women taught the girls when they were very young. A young woman was expected to be expert at needlework in order to be a good wife. There are numerous types of needlecrafts, which were so complex and time consuming, they have nearly become lost arts.

Although the winter season was much less labor intensive, it was not idle. It was the time when family members prepared to repeat the cycles which were essential to their agrarian life style. Tools and utensils were made or repaired. Clothing was constructed or mended. Furnishings were cared for. Plans were made, during these shortest, darkest days, for the beginning of another year, in the spring.

Lesson Plan #1

The Colonial Kitchen and Food Preparation

The student will recognize:

1. the kitchen was the most used and occupied room in the house.
2. order and safety around the hearth was imperative.
3. many individuals had to share the same space for their daily activities, and there were more people inside during the winter months.
4. behavior, movement and noise had to be respectful of others sharing the same room.
5. furnishings were often rearranged during the course of the day depending upon the activities.
6. a great variety of tools and utensils, which are not obsolete, were needed to prepare food.
7. different foods and recipes were prepared during varying times of the year.
8. many foods were preserved for later use.
9. most food prepared had to be consumed on the same day as there was no refrigeration.
10. standards for cleanliness were less than we expect today but routine orderliness was more important.

Methods of Instruction

- Discussions with many illustrations of kitchens, furnishings and tools.
- Examples of kitchen utensils with accompanying demonstrations. Students should handle the utensils and imagine they are using them.
- Create a kitchen map.
- List activities that would be done in a kitchen.

Demonstration (include student helpers)

Prepare recipes common to the colonial period. Describe how they would have used the colonial equipment and cooking methods. If cooking is required in the preparation it will have to be done with a contemporary range and/or oven.

Foods to be prepared and sampled:

- Cornbread (prepared during or before the class)

- Cranberry Sauce (prepared during or before the class)
- Apple Cider (purchased)

Project - Dried Apple Ring

Demonstrate how to slice apples for drying. Thread slices of previously dried apples onto twine.

Take Home Packet

- A map of a colonial kitchen.
- A diagram of a hearth with tools, cooking utensils and related items.
- Illustrations of kitchen utensils - names and uses to be filled in.
- Recipes for Cornbread and Cranberry Sauce.
- Directions for drying apples and recipes for their use.
- Related vocabulary words - to be defined.

Lesson #2

Colonial Clothing and Textiles

The student will recognize:

1. fabrics came from natural sources.
2. fabrics had to be either made or purchased from England.
3. many steps from a sheep to a woolen fabric.
4. many steps from planting flax to linen.
5. people had few items of clothing.
6. a variety of sewing tools were needed to make clothes.
7. clothing construction was very slow; a person usually only got one or two new garment each year.
8. worn clothing was often taken apart and reassembled, using only the good material, for smaller garments.
9. clothing was regularly mended to extend its life.
10. all garments were not cleaned routinely; some garments were actually worn to protect others

(aprons, scarves).

11. sewing was done mostly by women and girls.
12. men sewed leather for farm tools.
13. some men were weavers.
14. Children's clothing was usually handed down from older siblings.

Methods of Instruction

- Discussion with diagrams of the steps and tools of making wool and linen textiles.
- Examples of wool and linen in various stages of production. Students should handle and imagine wearing such fabrics. How would they feel?
- Illustrations of outfits worn by men, women, boys, girls and babies.
- Examples of various garments. Students should handle and try on if possible.

Project - Small Bag with Cord Tie

Materials needed: Rectangular pieces of linen or linen type fabric, needles, thread, scissors and yarn.

Procedure: 1. Fold down about 1/2" on one long side of rectangle. 2. Use a running stitch to keep the fold in place. 3. Fold rectangle in half. 4. Stitch one side and bottom of the bag. The folded edge is the top of the bag. 5. Use an appropriate length of twisted or plain yarn to make a cord. 6. Attach cord, with a few stitches, to the side seam of the bag. Tie around bag to close.

Take Home Packet

- Diagram of sheep to wool. Fabric sample attached.
- Diagram of flax to linen. Fabric sample attached.
- Illustrations of a boy and a girl in everyday dress - to be colored.
- Related vocabulary words - to be defined.

Lesson #3

Colonial Games and Pastimes

The student will recognize:

1. colonial children had much less play time.
2. games were often created while work was being done.
3. many games were the same for adults and children.
4. if game pieces were needed they were either found in nature or made by the players.
5. games were often played when the completion of a major task was celebrated.
6. girls learned to sew and do other needlecrafts at a very early age; if they enjoyed it, it might become a favored activity.
7. boys learned to use a pen knife at a very early age; if they enjoyed it, it might become a favored activity.
8. some games and/or rhymes were used as tools for teaching.
9. dolls were very simple, made of fabric or wood.
10. children enjoyed many crafts, using natural findings.

Methods of Instruction

- Show students a large variety of items children used to play games. (wood hoops, sticks, wood balls, tops, pegs, string, rope, stones, beans, cobs, etc.)
- Brainstorm ideas of games that could be played using these items.
- Explain some of the games: the game of graces, hoop and stick- races, over hurdles, and around obstacles, top competitions, pick up sticks, tug of war.
- Display a variety of crafts colonial children enjoyed making from natural findings: Corn husk dolls and wreaths, wheat weaving, home made paper books for drawing, paper fans.
- Practice some word or arithmetic games: spelling bees, multiplication tables; sometimes a prize was awarded and it was passed on to the new winner every day.
- Recite some educational rhymes.
- Set up stations for small groups of children to play games or make simple crafts.

Demonstration – Checkers and Board (include student helpers)

Weave a checker board using 12 strips of dark paper and 12 strips of light paper. Secure on a sheet of brown craft paper or grocery bag. Cut 12 slices of yellow corn cob and 12 slices of Indian corn cob for the checkers.

Project – From Craft Stations

Paper book: made with two sheets newsprint paper, brown paper cover, folded in half and stitched with heavy thread.

Wheat weaving: made with 8 to 12 straws, which are moistened, folded and tied into a simple geometric ornament.

Take Home Packet

- Directions for a variety of games.
- Directions to make various game pieces.
- Directions for a few simple crafts.
- Related vocabulary words – to be defined.

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