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Stepping Into A Colonial Family, A Primary Student's Perspective of Colonial Crafts, Customs and Traditions

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Can we make our Colonial History come alive for our students? Can we have them share in some of the crafts, customs and traditions of our New England forefathers? Our New Haven Public Schools' curriculum includes studies of both Colonial New Haven and Connecticut at the primary level. It is only to be texts, names, dates and associated facts or is it to be translated into activities that will develop an appreciation of what it was like about one hundred fifty to three hundred fifty years ago? I believe that through hands-on activities that are related to colonial living coordinated with visits to the Pardee Morris House, Yale University Art Gallery, Grove Street Cemetery and the New Haven Historical Society, students will internalize an 'experience' that will make concrete what is presented as an abstraction. Particularly for primary students in an urban environment this approach is a definite need!

The Colonial Period is part of New Haven's Social Studies curriculum. It is a period in our history that is wonderfully alive in our area. Eighteen years in the New Haven School System's classroom teaching grades three through six have given me a chance to develop a multidisciplinary approach to this area of study. My last three years as an itinerant instructor of the talented and gifted students as well as a desire to develop a hands-on segment for a unit that would seek to thoroughly immerse the youth of New Haven in the study of our New England heritage. I work with both whole classes and small groups of direct service children. Yearly I'm asked if my enrichment activities for whole class include activities and ideas that would develop an appreciation of the Colonial period. I hope this unit enriches and allows for the development of individual curricula. In addition I feel that the unit has afforded me an excellent opportunity to create and evaluate a learning experience that seeks total involvement of the students. This unit will serve as the basis for many small group exercises. When called upon this year for colonial material I will present the unit to interested classroom teachers and in collaboration develop whole day programs or schedule shorter weekly class presentations.

The research has been focused on the crafts, education and home life of the colonial period. The information is presented to refresh, add to and, hopefully, serve as incentive for further study. The plans may require some changes for individual situations. There are projects and supplies that may not be readily available. To some degree I am prepared to implement and present all of the activities suggested. Furthermore an all important segment of the presentation are the trips to one or more of the suggested sites; most can be scheduled for visits during the year.

The Colonial School

One very supportive mother who teamed with me to aid, guide and direct her son through a school year once advised me that she often reminded her son that all, by law, she really had to do for him was provide an education. All the extras, a television, his own room and clothes that were in fashion were just that extra! As unique as this stand might seem it is, in fact, the truth. This particular parent reflected the attitude in our colonial ancestors. Less than twenty years after the settlement of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1620 and the New Haven Colony in 1630 similar laws required communities of fifty households to provide instruction in reading and writing for their children in a school. If the settlement had more than one hundred families the community was instructed to provide a grammar school, one that would prepare the student for a college at which he would study to become a member of the ministry. Ministers of the period often preached that unless we educated our youth the church and government would cease to exist. Actually at this point in our history it is important to realize that the three R's were reading, 'riting and religion. Such emphasis is responsible for the founding of Harvard University in 1636, a mere sixteen after the landing by the Puritans at Boston. New Haven's Yale University followed much later in 1701.

The emphasis on education from the very beginnings of the colonies led to many varied classroom settings. As one might surmise some of the earliest education had to be done in the home. Early 'blackboards' have been found in some houses. They were actually boards that were covered with a combination of egg white and ash to blacken them. This was necessary in rural districts where the community was widespread. In some cases in-home education gave rise to the dame schools. These were homes to which neighborhood children went to be instructed by a housewife. She would teach the catechism and the Lord's Prayer. Some of the schools might include instruction in reading and writing. This would usually start with the teaching of the alphabet using the time honored hornbook. Lessons were often rhyming to aid in their memorization.

Youth of the period had considerably less time for schooling. The agrarian nature of the society demanded that the young men stay home and tend to the chores associated with the farm homestead. Schooling, in many cases, was limited to the winter months when there was less work to be done outside. In some areas of New England, school would start in late November and last about sixteen weeks or until the beginning of March. Young women were likewise schooled when there was less work to be done, but admittedly their education was done on a more limited scale.

In more centralized communities among the first buildings to be raised was the meeting house. On the days that this building was not being used for community or religious meetings, it is safe to assume that it became school. Once the community began to grow and thrive they would erect a proper church and at that time the original meeting building may well have been given over entirely to the education of youth. Our conventional idea of the red schoolhouse with the bell to call children to study may well have been the same bell that once called the townspeople to worship.

Many communities had to build their own schools. These buildings were apt to be crude, one room affairs generally made of logs; however, some were occasionally built of stone. The furnishings of the early one room school left much to be desired. Desks were along the walls; they consisted of boards resting on lumber that had been driven into the crevices between the logs or stones. The floors were usually dirt and younger students sat on benches nearer the teacher in the center of the room. It was not uncommon for the more active students to raise clouds of dust when the teacher wasn't looking. The teacher was usually situated near the fireplace which could be either in the center or end of the room. Desks as we know them didn't become standard until the mid 1800's.

At rough hewn desks the students tended to their lessons. Though these lessons focused on reading and writing, published texts were not in use until well into the 1800's. The first widely used text, the McGuffey reader, didn't make its appearance until 1836. The book depended upon to aid in instruction in the colonies from the earliest dame schools to the introduction of the McGuffey reader was the hornbook. The hornbook wasn't a book at all, but a thin generally wooden paddleshaped object upon which a printed piece of paper was glued. The text on the 'book would contain the alphabet, in both upper and lower cases, protected by a thin transparent piece of horn. The horn not only protected the paper but served as a surface on which the students could trace the letters. Paper was expensive and the young children traced, used blackboards or erasable slates to learn to make their letters. The handle of the hornbook was often drilled so that it could be hung from a cord and easily carried. These books were held up, read from, actually shouted from, then dropped by one's side and the lesson orally repeated again. Oral recitation and memorization were the principle methods of instruction. Young women might learn the same information at home making a sampler.

Writing was the second requisite taught in the colonial schools. It often wasn't until the youth was twelve that he would be allowed to make his quill pen, and yes, he had to carry his 'pen' knife to do it. Lead pencils were exactly that—rods of lead that were generally used to line the copy books these children used for their lessons. The lead might be cast into arrowheads or various shapes and used to line the books; these objects were called plummetts. Many items were needed by the young writing master. They might include wax, for his seal; a ruler, to make the lines with the plummet; sand, to help dry the ink; ink, which had to be made from powdered ink or boiled from tree bark and sap; and quills, perhaps from the family goose. Penmanship became the most important skill a teacher could impart to his students. Every community held in high esteem their writing master. Intricate penmanship became known as knotting. We can call to mind John Hancock's signature which reflected this emphasis. Teaching was done by drill and repetition. The disciplines required obedience and frequently the birch or willow rod served as the encouragement to keep the student on task.

Parents of the children supported the schools and teachers. The communities regulated fees according to the family's ability to afford education for their children. During the colonial period in some New England communities all children were expected to attend school. Sometimes land was set aside and any income derived from it would help defray the educational expenses. Lotteries were also a method commonly used to raise funds. The South was so rural that schools were few and far between. Occasionally neighbors erected schools on land that had been overused. These were dubbed 'old field' schools. Teachers would travel from one area to another during a year offering instruction. George Washington gained much of his early education from this type of school.

Lesson 1

Objective Students will be able to describe similarities and differences between the Colonial school experience and their own.

Activity In order to give the students as much of the feeling of an Early American school experience as possible a teacher may elect to devote an entire day to this lesson. Paper was scarce and only certain lessons demanded it. There were no pencils. Chalk and slates were used in many lessons. Quill pens and ink were used for the penmanship lessons. John Hancock's signature is an example of what was considered an excellent hand. The use of intricate designs

and patterns were considered part of the skill of handwriting. The students should be reminded to be obedient for it was considered the basis of learning. They could only speak when they were spoken to and the teacher had the rod to aid in administering discipline. A class should be prepared for this special day.

Procedure Upon arrival the students may find their desks in a new order. Desks were at first arranged around the walls of a room. With benches in the front of the room for those expected to recite. The Pledge of Allegiance may be recited along with the singing of a patriotic song.

Now the day might begin with a writing lesson done on the slates. Depending on the grade level this might well be a lesson similar to what they are used to. The difference being that they erase the slate and continue on.

A poetry lesson that presented both short poems to be memorized and a short one or two to be copied on the slates could follow. Students in different sections of the room could stand at different intervals and recite different stanzas or be compared with each other, consideration being given to emphasis and expression, on the same section.

At this point perhaps a game of "Hide the Thimble" would relax and refresh the class. You could always play "King George Says."

The students may be instructed how to make quill pens or simply have them handed out along with the ink which they are to use. If they are to make a quill pen they may use just a scissors. The first step is to cut the tip off. Now the hollow shaft may be cut lengthwise about a half inch. One side may be cut away and the other shaped into a point. This may be considered a craft or art period. Writing with ink should prove interesting. We are no longer familiar with the smearing of wet ink and the blotting that is necessary. Be prepared to cut new points and have cloths ready to wipe the pens.

The children can be given a list of vocabulary words that might reflect the crafts of the time. They can copy these. They might also develop a special elaborate signature.

It should now be time to for lunch and recess.

The afternoon may start off with arithmetic. The teacher may ask questions, the students immediately put their answer on the slate and hold it up. YOU could stress that this be done without a sound. Rote drills of the addition or multiplication fact dependent upon the grade level could also be incorporated into the lesson. Word problems could be read, it should be an exciting class.

Now after that lesson it is time to see if the morning's poetry is still fresh in their minds. Again we may drill and recite the morning's assignments. Reading of passages put on the board may be done individually or in unison. The students may add their own endings or answer questions on their slates.

The day may close with a spelling bee.

EXTENSION

The children may wish to write a story about the differences of the 'typical' school days. They may illustrate their favorite activity.

The New England Craftsmen

The settlement of New England demanded the learning of new skills. Few came prepared for the multifarious demands of the New World. Many found it a unique time that allowed for the development of their natural aptitudes. Some were willing to pay the more skilled of the community to make items for them. Indeed there were those who arrived who were themselves or family members hoping that the new occupation would provide them with a livelihood. British Mercantilism coerced the New Englanders into developing their own skills; to be opportunistic and to take advantage of what resources they had. The New England colonies had few export products, hence no credit or hard cash from England. A bartering and trading economy emerged! A “handson” society, in which a system of apprentice, journeymen, and master craftsman developed and thrived. Skills were developed through repetition and time on task. Pride in one’s ability increased with one’s skill development. New Englanders become more and more independent and eventually free.

Mother England sought to put herself before her colonies. The colonies were to trade only with her. For anything imported they were expected to pay cash or have credit from their exports. New England had a predicament; no exports and no hard money or credit to pay for the imports they wanted. Colonists felt that they were equally good Englishmen and found infuriating the limitations placed upon them simply because they were now considered colonists. An interesting values reversal took place, smuggling becoming an accepted practice. In fact the populace not only condoned smuggling but held in high esteem their civic leaders who practiced it. To clarify, smuggling referred to the practice of breaking the English laws that limited the colonies to trade only with England. Goods were smuggled into ports in other countries. A large part of this illegal trade became the infamous slave trade triangle. The colonies were successful in attaining the cash that England demanded. Usually, however, the coin was either Spanish doubloons or Dutch dollars. The dollar eventually being chosen as the term to describe our modern day currency. The British were aware of the colonists’ tactics and in order to drain the cash further levied a tax on tea. This tax precipitated the Boston Tea Party.

The economic status of the South was very different. The Southern colonies had the items that the British wanted; cotton, tobacco, rice, indigo, pine tar, and turpentine among them. They received just about a third of the market value of these products; however, this was enough to allow the landowners in the south to purchase from England and the smugglers what they needed. The craftsman wasn’t in demand in the south to the degree he was in the north. Outside of the larger southern cities there was little call for specialists. If in fact hired to help on a plantation the owner would have a slave assist the artisan and in doing so learn the skill. Needless to say the craftsman wouldn’t be needed again.

The youngest son of an English immigrant who was skilled in the dyeing trade serves well to illustrate the importance and development of the artisan in the New England colonies. Benjamin Franklin’s father Josiah, had in fact been apprenticed to his father Thomas in England. Josiah Franklin found upon arrival in this country he was unable to make a living at dyeing. This posed but a momentary barrier to the senior Franklin who disregarded family tradition and managed to become a successful tallow chandlery candle maker and soap boiler. Ben had been sent at age eight to a grammar school; he had exhibited early reading skills and was thought to have a chance to become a scholar, perhaps a minister. Family burdens forced his father to remove him from school. Ben started to help his father but made known that he didn’t care to be a Chandler and would be interested in a life at sea. Ben’s brothers had all become apprentices in different trades and now Josiah felt it was Ben’s turn. Josiah didn’t feel the sea was a viable alternative and in the course of the next years sought to show Ben as many different trade apprentice opportunities as possible. Finally at the age of

twelve Ben's predisposition for reading led him to accept as the best of the evils indenture as an apprentice to a brother who was a printer. The term of his indenture was to be nine years. In his last year only was he to receive a journeyman's wages. Five years into his indenture Ben ingeniously contrived to escape his brother's control and on his own travel and settle in Philadelphia where he became a journeyman printer.

Benjamin Franklin was an extraordinary person yet his family's indenture was not an outoftheordinary scenario for the time. There was a need for labor in America. A master accepted apprentices on a contractual basis in hopes of keeping them on. The contract was called an indenture. The normal term of an indenture was from five to seven years. The youth was to conduct himself in a mature fashion, obey his master and keep the secrets of the trade. In addition to the trade the master might also teach the youth to read and write as well as balance the accounts of the business. At the end of the term of indenture the apprentice, dependent upon his trade, might be required to produce some exemplary work, an apprentice piece. Then upon completion to his indenture he was given a new outfit and as well had proof of his skill. Once a journeyman there was work aplenty and within a reasonable time the young man could set himself up as a master.

Josiah Franklin, Ben recalled, took him to see printers, cutlers, bricklayers, joiners and many other trades in hopes to dissuade him from going to sea and coax him into becoming an honorable craftsman. These were but some of the trades of the time. Many of our children in our schools, regardless of economic background cannot state what their parent does for a living. Often a student will say where they work but not what they do. If children are not made aware of the many choices that are ahead of them they may well not accept the challenge to learn and discover a place for themselves. Our labor is hidden from our children. Craftsmen were more visible during the colonial period. Today many workers don't produce a tangible product and the products that are produced are not sold directly by the producer.

Early trades were usually centered around the home or in towns and were individually done or were enterprises that involved group work. Some of the early trades included:

Blacksmith —a key artisan in any community; few had his ability; cow to horseshoes to hinges to axe heads.

Cooper —everything was kept or transported in barrels, fish and meats salted, cider, molasses and gunpowder stored.

Housewright —the forefather of our contractors he framed the house out of boards he shaped and assembled.

Sawyers —aided the housewright and made the smaller timbers used in the floors and walls.

Joiner —did exactly that; joined the wood, made drawers and simple furniture; not quite as skilled as a cabinet maker.

Miller —ground the corn, wheat, oats or other grain to the specifications to the farmers.

Tanner —made the leather from the hides; tanning was the name given to this process.

Weaver —usually a home craft done by the women of the household. Wool cotton and flax were most commonly woven.

Fuller —the fuller cleaned the homespun woolen cloth; one item used was the fuller's earth, a clay that would remove the oils.

Chandler —at first a housewife’s chore was candle making. Later when made with whale spermaceti it was done in shops.

Tinker or Whitesmith —made their own tinding iron in a tin bath and concerned himself with everyday household items.

Barber and Wigmaker —the barber not only cut hair but did minor surgery, the hair became wigs the fashion of the time.

Baker —once a town had an inn it usually could support a bakery, the bakers dozen started because bakers short weighted many.

Apothecary —much like a doctor, he visited the sick and mixed the remedies he handed out.

Hatter —everyone wore a hat—woolen, felt or the most sought after beaver; you could be a ‘mad hatter’ because of the mercury used.

Hornsmith —used animal horn, softened it, flattened it into sheets, clarified it and made tortoise shell combs, buttons, hornbooks.

Locksmith —as possessions accumulated security became more important. Locks changed little until Linus Yale changed them.

Gunsmith —as today then nearly everyone owned a gun, they were handmade without any interchangeable parts.

Pewterer —this metal although made of lead and tin was used extensively for spoons, dishes, teapots, etc.

Coppersmith —copper began to be used here in Connecticut and New England with its discovery in the mid-1700’s.

Silversmith —New Englanders turned their silver coin into plate thus the term coin silver, money couldn’t be identified.

Limner —literally means liner. This term was used to describe the early painters whose skills were as varied as the land.

Brazier —built foundries and made bells sometimes from copper and tin, bronze, or brass which is copper and zinc.

Lesson 1

OBJECTIVE *Students will produce an original design punched in tin and relate their use of the material to that of the whitesmith.*

ACTIVITY *The whitesmith or tinsmith used his materials to make boxes, cylinders and cone*

shapes. The most commonly reproduced tin work involves candle holders in which designs were punched on all sides. This allowed enough light to shine out but prevented the outside breezes from extinguishing the flame. There were also pie cooling cabinets with sides and fronts of punched patterned tin attached to wooden frames that allowed fresh out of the oven confections to cool without being surrounded by flying insects or for that matter young eager hands. Students can design a panel, or what might have been a side of one of these containers.

PROCEDURE *Tin sheathing is available in most hardware stores, it is to be cut up into 5x7 pieces. The students can tack it down to a slightly larger piece of wood. Then using a hammer and nail or a punch can create their own design in the soft metal.*

Lesson 2

OBJECTIVE *Students will create an etched pattern in plaster and be able to state the relationship between scrimshaw and the etched pattern.*

ACTIVITY *The whale industry flourished in New England. The sailors in the spare time used the teeth of the sperm whale to etch pictures on. These scenes depicted the whale hunt or their ship or an event that was of importance to them. Another avenue that this lesson might lead to might be the study of whales and other aquatic mammals? What are the produce we get from them? Why are whales protected? What historical facts made Connecticut choose a whale for the state's animal?*

PROCEDURE

The preparation of the plaster can be done before hand or be part of the lesson. The plaster should be dropped in tablespoon quantities on to foil or wax paper when it begins to set. Once hardened, about an hour later, it will be ready to etch. The etching can be done with a sharp pencil, a pen, or a compass point. The final design can be wiped with shoe polish to bring out the design.

The Home—Two Hundred Years of Change

The room was about twenty-eight feet by twenty-two, a classroom's size. It had just been erected and the housewrights, sawyers and joiners had just left. The house had been well built, logs hewn and joined with mortise and tenon set on a stone sill. Clapboards had been nailed over the upright posts and studs. The walls had been filled with nogging, rolls of clay and straw, to insulate and keep the cold out. The windows were diamond shaped pieces of glass set in lead. Most other homes still had oiled paper windows. Dinner was finished and at the hearth flames were low, but the new stone fireplace would be much safer than the clay, earth and wood one it replaced. In the attic by the chimney was the smoke room that would soon hold hams, bacon and sausages. The attic, children's sleeping and storage area would have a wonderful aroma soon. The trestle table, stools and long bench called a settle had just been used for the first time. Like some benches of

the era, its top was movable; it tilted to an upright position conserving space. The bed didn't fold like some of the period did, but rested in a corner using the walls and a single leg for support. The bed would seem abnormally short today because of the habit of sleeping in a half-sitting position on large feather pillows. In colder weather the courting couple would bundle together on the bed while the rest of the family occupied the hearth. Blank floors replaced dirt ones and spanned a shallow earth cellar that along with the attic would soon be full of drying cider. The only possessions that had been brought into the house had been the family's chest. The chest held all that was dear, remembrances, special linens and personal items. There were no closets and all other clothes hung from a few pegs along the wall. The single family home of the mid and late sixteenth century wasn't much more than this: yet it was a great step up from the bark covered dugouts that had held the first Plymouth settlers that first winter.

The early and middle part of the seventeenth century saw the addition of a second floor to most new construction. The chimney was now centrally located and there were three to five rooms upstairs and down. Each room might have a fireplace to heat it, the largest one located in the kitchen and used for cooking. The South, some kitchen hearths were so large a person could stand in them, in New England, they never reached such a grand scale. The house may have also had added to it a rear room under a continuation of the roof. This area might be the weaving area in a home. This extension was later incorporated into the basic house design and became known as the salt box house. There are two Yale-owned buildings that are on the Green that reflect this era. It is worthwhile to have students compare the great stone edifices and towering ever-present construction with these structures and draw their own opinions about times, places and life styles.

This was a period of expansion and the Indians were at times troublesome. Houses on the outskirts of a settlement might be made of solid squared timbers and have shutters that bolted from the inside. This type of dwelling was called a garrison house and for the most part was secure. In Milford the Indians were intimidating enough that around a reasonably large part of town the residents constructed a stockade. A docent leading a tour retold a story of the frustrated Indians who resorted to chanting, "White men all same like pigs." Evidently they didn't agree with Ben Franklin's adage that "Good fences make good neighbors."

In the mid-seventeenth century, especially in the hundred-year-old economic centers, families of wealth and position built Georgian style homes. This style is credited to Sir Christopher Wren who is considered in part to have designed the College of William and Mary, the second oldest college in the United States founded in 1693. Within a short time the style was being repeated throughout the colonies. With no more than an architectural book the builder constructed homes that reflected this style. Houses had tripped roofs that allowed for a third floor. They were at least two rooms deep with windows placed symmetrically to allow for ample light. Entrance walls and great staircases were now in vogue. First floor rooms were now paneled although toward the end of the period wallpaper made its debut. The chimney became chimneys and were at the ends of the structures. Floors were now carpeted, the wealthy covering the floors with oriental carpets.

Furniture too, had evolved; the chest that had held all one's important belongings and the crude stools and table had been undergoing a metamorphosis. To the chest, drawers had been added. Then in order to increase the utility of the piece the chest became all drawers. Hence, the chest of drawers! Chests were placed on top of one another forming the chest on chest. Highboys were chests that had long graceful legs, a style that was called Queen Anne. The fashions that arose during the reigns of the British sovereigns influenced American furniture. Locks and fine hand-made pulls indicated the increased emphasis on personal belongings and privacy. Chairs now for the first time were being upholstered with fine fabric, but the loose cushion was not yet in style. Thomas Chippendale published a text in 1754 that was to set the style for the

rest of the century.

Some aspects of colonial life had not undergone such drastic changes. Both in the Colonies and England a flame had to be kept lit. It wasn't until well into the eighteenth century that matches made their appearance. Every family had its tinder box flint and steel. Woven bits of worn linen were good tinder. Paper was too valuable to use. The fireplace that was used for both heat and cooking also provided some light in addition to the meager amount provided by the small windows. Early Connecticut settlers found that Pitch Pine was not only a source of pine tar but also burned brightly. They would keep a torch of it burning for additional light. Pitch Pine became known as candle wood. No doubt Lake Candlewood was named because of the amount of this resource in the area. The pine odor must have been pleasant.

The most common light was the candle. Most settlers made their own from animal grease or tallow, that substance which congeals when it cools after the roast is cooked. The woman of the house made the candles either by dipping or the mold method. Unlike the pine the tallow didn't have an agreeable odor. These candles gave off a weak light and smoke. Disagreeable as they were, candles were the major source of light during the Colonial period.

Tallow was not only saved for candles but also for soap. The soap was the product of lye, made from wood ash and water, and tallow. It was a very harsh soap that resulted from the boiling of lye and tallow.

Perhaps the most demanding household task was making the family clothing. New England colonists had little money to afford the imported English loomed yard goods. To make the clothing, they had to weave the cloth. In order to weave the cloth, yarn had to be spun. In order to produce the yarn, raw materials had to be raised and prepared. Wool and flax were the sources of material to be spun. The preparation of linen yarn from the flax plant was a laborious process involving nearly twenty operations. Rippling, rerting, scutching and hackling were among the more unique terms employed to name the procedures. Linen was produced first in the colonies. Linen could be sown in May and harvested in June. Sheep, on the other hand, were not native to America and it took many years to increase their numbers to a point where there was an ample wool supply.

Lesson 1

OBJECTIVE *Students will be able to produce a woven hanging.*

ACTIVITY *Weaving is a demanding task. To understand what is today done automatically by machine, material should be unraveled to show the patterning; burlap, denim, or any remnant may be used. Questions may be asked about the threads that make the material. Where do they come from? How are they made? What could they be made of? Ask if any mothers make their own clothes? Lead the conversation to an appreciation of what the colonists must have done. Then explain what they are to do.*

PROCEDURE *On a precut piece of cardboard 18x24 that has a slit every 1/2 inch along the top and bottom make a warp. That is, thread colored yarn of the child's choice through the slits that are opposite one another on the top and bottom. Now the child can weave yarn, fabric or ribbon in and out of the warp. If possible, it would be worthwhile to have him incorporate some material or item that he has brought from home. When one side is completed the extra yarn at the ends may*

be connected to a stick or branch and hung.

Lesson 2

OBJECTIVE *Students will select and prioritize a list of items that are of importance to them. The limitation is that they all fit into a 'chest.'*

ACTIVITY *When the Colonists first arrived many had all they owned in a chest. What would you put into such a chest? What types of things are important to you? What types of articles might have been of importance to the early settlers? Why might there be differences? Explain them!*

PROCEDURE *Bring into class a cardboard collapsible box, chest size, explain that we are going to fill it. On the board or sheets of paper list the types of items they might put in. After the lists have been made ask the children to make personal lists of what they might include. You might contrast then the Pilgrims coming to this country to being on an island. What do you think they might have included? Compare this to their list.*

FOLLOWUP *Visit the Yale University Art Gallery's American Collection. Ask to be shown the early chests and to have an explanation of early furniture and its development.*

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The text examines the development of handcrafts. Wonderful illustrations, contains much more than just Early Colonial crafts.

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Excellent depiction of the life and times of the people and society during the revolutionary period. Easy and enjoyable reading.

Fisher, Margaret, and Mary Jane Fowler. *Colonial America* . Grand Rapids: The Fideler Company, 1967.

Large print text, many illustrations and simplified descriptions.

Franklin, Benjamin. *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* . Ed. Max Farrand. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1949.

This book gives an excellent historical perspective of Franklin's time.

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This is a consolidation of two late nineteenth century works. It covers most all areas of home and child life, puts us in touch with many early traditions.

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A howto text of ideas for models and dioramas. Well designed and easily implemented crafts and projects.

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Sloane, Eric. *The Little Red Schoolhouse* . New York: Doubleday & Co., 1972.

A well research and developed history of the schoolhouse in America.

Tunis, Edwin. *Colonial Craftsmen* . New York: World Publishing, 1972.

Tunis is the David McCauley of fifteen years ago, the text is detailed and well written and the illustrations are superb!

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