

Provisions for Carolina: Comparing lists

BY PAULINE S. JOHNSON

Students will discover clues about life in the colonies by examining lists of needed commodities by John Lawson from 1709 and a broadside used by the Virginia Company from 1622. In a higher-level-thinking activity, they will examine the lists and infer what might have changed in the nearly 90 years between the two lists and in what ways the colonies had not changed in that time.

Learning outcomes

Students will:

- gain experience reading and analyzing primary source documents
- engage in critical thinking
- understand historical factors related to European settlement of Carolina
- compare and contrast differing sets of ideas
- draw comparisons across historical eras
- interrogate historical data

Teacher preparation

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Computer with internet access for each group of students *or* one computer with an LCD projector
- Whiteboard, smart board, or blackboard *or* chart paper
- Paper and pencils

TIME REQUIRED FOR LESSON

½ hour to one class period

Activities

1. Bell-ringer question: If you were planning to move to a new country, what would you plan to take with you? Allow several minutes for a few students to share their ideas.
2. Put the students into groups of three or four. Each group should have a computer (or two).
3. Have each group access both “The present state of Carolina¹” and “Supplies for Virginia colonists, 1622²” on their computers.
4. Have the students look at “Supplies for Virginia colonists, 1622?” and “The present state of Carolina” section called “Necessaries for Carolina.” Ask the class: When was each written? [1622; 1709] Who wrote each of them? [*the first is a ‘broadside’ — what they would consider a poster — most do not have authors; John Lawson*] Discuss with the class why these facts are important. [*background on Lawson is on the “Present state of Carolina” page in the sidebar*]
5. Have the groups examine these lists and discuss what they reveal about life in the colonies. Allow the students to have at least ten minutes to talk in their groups.
6. Ask each group to list ten examples from the lists that tell us about colonial America. They should include the item(s).
7. As you write the attributes of colonial life on a board or chart paper, ask each group to share three of their examples. When you have included all the groups, ask if any group has any other examples that were not mentioned that they think should be included.
8. During discussion the teacher should clear up any misunderstandings or misconceptions that the students have about this period.
9. Have the students look at all the class discoveries that have been listed on the board or chart paper and copy at least ten of them.
10. This activity will involve higher levels of thinking. Some students may struggle with the abstract thinking. Ask the students now to review the lists and think about how “The Inconveniences...” differs from the Lawson list. Has anything changed in colonial America from 1622 to 1709 that is apparent from the nature of the two lists? [*Lawson’s list does not include food; Lawson’s list also includes a few frivolous items — wigs, for example; this does tell us that food is being grown in the colonies and that society has progressed enough that wigs and fancier clothing can show status, there is a need for ways to make a home and property more comfortable — window glass, pottery, riding equipment. Lawson suggests that artisans should bring their specialized equipment and tools. This also suggests a more developed economy in the colonies.*]
How are they the same even though they were written 87 years apart?
[*There is an emphasis on tools, cloth, and weapons. We can see that manufactured goods are not being made in the colonies — they still need to be acquired from England. We can also see that agriculture is very important as is the need for guns, either for protection or hunting.*]
Finish this section with a class discussion about the students’ ideas.
11. Homework: Have students write a “day-in-the-life” of an early colonist using the examples of colonial life that they copied and discussed. This may be in the form of a diary or letter and should be written in the voice of the colonist. Students are to include several of the items that were included in the lists.

Assessment

- Student groups should choose examples from the list that express their understanding of life in the colonies. The class discussion will allow the teacher to gauge the comprehension of the students. Include student participation in your assessment.
- The “day-in-the-life” should be assessed by the following: It should be written in the form of a letter or diary, language should be appropriate, and it should include examples of the items that were included in the lists, along with an explanation of how those items would have been used. You may choose to check grammar and spelling, but some of your students may be aware that spelling was not standardized at this time.

National Standards

In addition to meeting objectives of the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, this lesson plan addresses the following national standards.

NATIONAL HISTORY STANDARDS

Era 2: Colonization and Settlement (1585-1763)

Standard 1: Why the Americas attracted Europeans, why they brought enslaved Africans to their colonies, and how Europeans struggled for control of North America and the Caribbean

HISTORICAL THINKING STANDARDS FOR GRADES 5-12

Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

A. Identify the author or source of the historical document or narrative and assess its credibility.

I. Draw upon the visual, literary, and musical sources

Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation

A. Compare and contrast differing sets of ideas.

B. Consider multiple perspectives.

C. Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation, including the importance of the individual, the influence of ideas.

D. Draw comparisons across eras and regions in order to define enduring issues.

Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities

A. Formulate historical questions.

B. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources.

C. Interrogate historical data.

On the web

The present state of Carolina [people, climate]

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/1515>

Excerpt from John Lawson's 1709 *A New Voyage to Carolina* describing (and mostly praising) the European and native inhabitants, weather, and natural resources of Carolina, as well as what settlers should bring with them from Europe. Includes historical commentary.

Supplies for Virginia colonists, 1622

<http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/5338>

A 1622 broadside listing recommended supplies for British colonists to bring to Virginia.

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Notes

1. See <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/1515>.
2. See <http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pages/5338>.

About the author

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I am currently the Director of a Teaching American History Grant for Buncombe County Schools, Asheville City Schools, and Madison County Schools. I have taught history and English in the seventh and eighth grades for over twenty-six years at Reynolds Middle School in Asheville, North Carolina. I am currently doing adjunct work for Mars Hill College and Western Carolina University. I have a Masters Degree from Western Carolina University and am Nationally Board Certified in Early Adolescence/Social Studies-History. I am certified to teach K-12 and I also have Academically-Intellectually Gifted certification.