

Lesson Plan 14 - Frontier Forts in Western Virginia

Objective(s) for the Lesson

- SS.0.08.05.01 Cite reasons for exploration, transportation routes and discoveries by major explorers and explain the sequence of events and incentives for Virginia's expansion west to the Ohio River.
- SS.0.08.05.02 Compare and contrast the motives, incentives and settlement patterns of the French and English explorers and settlers on the western frontier.
- SS.0.08.05.08 Interpret facts about West Virginia and other areas from various types of charts, graphs, maps, pictures, models, timelines, and primary sources and summarize what you have learned.
- SS.0.08.05.14 Point out and locate places of historical importance in West Virginia that can be visited by tourists.

Time Frame

300 minutes

Title(s) and Page Number(s) in the *West Virginia Encyclopedia* which provide content background for the teacher

Fort Ashby	p. 258
Fort Boreman	p. 258
Fort Edwards	p. 258
Fort Henry	p. 259
Fort Lee	p. 259
Fort Savannah	p. 259
Fort Pleasant	p. 260
Fort Randolph	p. 260
Fort Seybert	p. 260
Fort Upper Tract	p. 261
Pricketts Fort	p. 587
Tackett's Fort	p. 698

Title(s) and Page Number(s) in the *West Virginia Encyclopedia* which provide instructional opportunities for the students

(optional)

Same as above; supplemental fort information found on p. 904 of index.

Materials Needed

- 3-4 foam display boards per class
- 3/8 x 4 inch craft sticks (box of 1000)
- 5/8 x 4 inch craft sticks (2-4 boxes of 750)
- 3/8 x 2 inch craft sticks (saves time from cutting longer craft sticks)
- Small gauge wire, glue, cutters/scissors

Landscape materials (felt, pipe cleaners, foam, magic markers, etc.)
Newspapers (to protect floor, desks)
Graph paper, rulers, small plastic garbage bags (store group building materials)

Procedures/Strategies

- Day 1: Computer lab research: students receive handout “Frontier Forts in West(ern) Virginia.” Students use internet sources to research answers to handout questions.
- Day 2: Discuss previous day’s research results. Distribute handout that explains fort design project. * Divide class into groups of 6-8 students and have each group select a fort captain(s). Groups can discuss ideas for fort design.
- Day 3: Distribute graph paper to all members in each group. Each group must decide upon a specific and scaled fort design and calculate needed materials. Each group member must submit a copy of the group design. Captains obtain needed building supplies and evaluation rubric from teacher.
- Day 4: Fort construction; fort captains oversee construction assignments. Duties are recorded and submitted to teacher (handout). Students are given a time frame for project completion.

Assessment

Fort design plan
Fort project rubric
Individual contribution to model
Fort project summary

*The fort design project scenario (name of fort, date, and people) can be adapted to any area of western Virginia by using the *West Virginia Encyclopedia* to find a fort that was located in your town, county or region.

Supporting Resources

Frontier Forts in West Virginia by Stephen McBride, Kim McBride, and Greg Adamson
West Virginia: The History of an American State by Vicki Wood

West Virginia Cultural Center website: www.wvculture.org
• “Virginia Frontier Defenses 1719-1795” by Roy Bird
• History Center: “Forts, Stockades and Blockhouses”

Frontier Forts in West Virginia

Use these references (and any additional ones that you find) to answer the following questions.

www.teachersfirst.com/lessons/forts/
www.prickettsfort.org

1. What was one function of a frontier fort?
2. What materials were used to construct forts?
3. What kinds of buildings were found in forts?
4. Who might stay in a fort?
5. Where is Pricketts Fort?
6. When was Pricketts Fort built?
7. How many families could stay in Pricketts Fort?
8. What were the dimensions of Pricketts Fort?
9. Define “stockade” and “blockhouse.”
10. What was the purpose of a bastion in regard to fort design?

Sketch: a palisade fort wall
a horizontal fort wall
a blockhouse

Frontier Forts in West Virginia

Fort Design Project

The date is April 1788. Col. George Clendenin and a band of thirty rangers arrive near the mouth of the Elk River and build a fort, the first permanent settlement with the present boundary of Charleston. This is the land that George had purchased in 1787. Accompanying George are his brothers William, captain of the Rangers, and Alexander. The establishment of Clendenin's Fort gives some protection from Indian attacks to the local settlers.

The class assignment is to design a fort that meets the following criteria:

- a bastion fort with either a palisades or horizontal stockade with a gate
- two blockhouses and four cabins
- a storehouse
- a water supply
- a dry moat around the fort
- a cooking area
- best possible protection for occupants (placement of fort in relation to river and tree line)

Colonel George Clendenin and Captain William Clendenin will supervise the building of the fort.

Step 1: Commanders and Rangers must collaborate and decide upon the design of the fort. Each class member must then submit a scaled and labeled fort plan to the Governor of Virginia (the teacher).

Step 2: Fort construction duties will be assigned to each Ranger. Several Rangers may work on the same part of the fort. A fort must be built quickly so Rangers are expected to work efficiently.

Step 3: Each Ranger's compensation (grade) is based on the following: individually drawn fort plan, fort model that meets criteria, and individual contribution to model.

Fort Construction Individual Duties

Class Period: _____

Fort walls:

One blockhouse:

One blockhouse:

Storehouse:

Moat:

Cooking area:

Landscape:

Other:

Fort Design Group Evaluation

(determines best fort(s) if teacher chooses to have a project competition)

Fort Colonel:

Fort Captain:

Rating system:

- 0 doesn't meet criteria
- 2 minimal effort
- 4 good effort
- 5 very good effort

Bastion fort with either a palisades or horizontal stockade _____

A gate _____

Two blockhouses _____

Four cabins _____

Storehouse _____

Dry moat _____

Water supply _____

Cooking area _____

Provides best possible protection for occupants _____

Realistic design _____

Creative use of materials _____

Neatness _____

Total score _____

Fort Project Evaluation Rubric

Period: _____

Group Captains:

Group Names	Fort Plan				Construction duty completed					Neatness			Project summary	Total Pts. 50
	0	5	8	10	0	5	10	15	20	0	5	10	0-10	

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

Fort Project Summary

Fort Construction Questions

1. What changes did your group make to your original fort blueprint?
2. In hindsight, what fort structures were overbuilt (too many craft sticks used) and what structures were under built (not to scale or not sturdy enough)?
3. What is the most creative part of your fort?
4. What were two things you could have done to make your fort construction more efficient (save supplies and time)?

Group Dynamics Questions

1. How did your group make decisions as you were designing and constructing your fort?
2. Do you feel that everyone in your group did their part to complete the project?
3. In regard to group work, how might you motivate a group member who isn't contributing to the project?
4. What are two factors needed to achieve success with a group project?

