

This Lake Alive!

An Interdisciplinary Handbook for Teaching and Learning about the Lake Champlain Basin

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Language Arts

Glossary

5th Grade, 1994, School Street School, Milton, Vermont

Basin - A basin is where the tributaries flow into a larger body of water. If it weren't for the basin, we wouldn't have a lake. The Lake Champlain Basin is 8,234 square miles.

Breakwater - A breakwater is built to make a long rocky line that separates rough from calm water so that it protects the harbor from big waves.

Champ - Champ is the Lake Champlain monster. He lives in Lake Champlain and he is big and long.

Crown Point State Historic Site - There are two forts at the Crown Point State Historic Site. They are Fort Crown Point and Fort St. Frederic. The remains of both forts are at the site and also a museum.

Ferry - A ferry is a large boat that carries cars, trucks, campers and people. There are three ferry crossings on Lake Champlain.

Fossil - A fossil is a rock that has been under the ground or underwater for a long time, it can be from a plant or an animal. There are lots of fossils in Lake Champlain.

Horse Ferry - A horse ferry is a ferry that is powered by horses. There is a wreck of a horse ferry that is near Burlington harbor.

Island - Islands are bodies of land surrounded by water. There are 72 islands on Lake Champlain. There are all kinds of sizes, too.

Lighthouse - A lighthouse is built on shore to warn boats about big rocks and other dangers. A famous lighthouse on Lake Champlain is the Colchester Lighthouse, which is now at the Shelburne Museum.

Philadelphia I - The first *Philadelphia* was a boat that was used during the American Revolution and sunk in 1776. It was discovered in 1935 near Valcour Island and is now at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C.

Philadelphia II - The *Philadelphia* sunk during the Battle of Valcour Island 1776. The Lake Champlain Maritime Museum built a replica of the original in 1991 and now students can board the *Philadelphia II* at the museum.

Refuge - A place to help animals and protect wildlife. Milton has a wildlife refuge at the Sandbar State Park.

Rock Dunder - A rock point of Shelburne Bay. It has two granite boulders on it. The rock has been there for a lot of years. The Abenakis call it Odziodzo.

Sailboat - A boat that has a big sail. In the 1700s they were the main way that people traveled on Lake Champlain.

S.S. Ticonderoga - The *Ticonderoga* is a steam boat that rode on Lake Champlain. It is now standing at the Shelburne Museum.

Sturgeon - A big fish, the biggest in Lake Champlain. Sturgeons weigh a lot. They are almost extinct in Lake Champlain.

Tributary - A tributary is a stream that flows into a lake or a bigger stream. The Lamoille River is the tributary that flows through Milton, into Lake Champlain.

Whalebones - Whalebones were found in Lake Champlain. They were beluga bones. Right now there is a whale skeleton at Perkins Geology Museum.

Zebra Mussels - Small mussels that cling onto hard surfaces. They are the size of a thumb nail. They were not part of the lake until ships from Europe dumped ballast water into our region. They are dangerous to the ecology of Lake Champlain.



Introduction

No matter what the content of your Lake Champlain study is, language arts opportunities abound. There are endless ways for students to process what they are learning:

- creative stories
- factual reports
- lists of facts
- essays
- position papers
- newspaper articles
- scripts for radio or TV shows
- stories for younger children
- big books
- biographies
- folktales
- science logs
- poems
- songs
- plays
- speeches
- scientific observations
- interviews
- letters
- journal entries
- lab reports

Whatever vehicle you choose, let me add a philosophical note. Take time to let them process what they are learning, whether in formal writing, journal entries or discussion. Often, in an interdisciplinary study, when so much meaningful material gets generated, we don't stop and let the material sink in. We establish the historical chronology, rush to study wetlands, explore aquatic weeds and rush to prepare them for a quiz on the zebra mussel. More and more, I find myself braking my pace to insure that we have



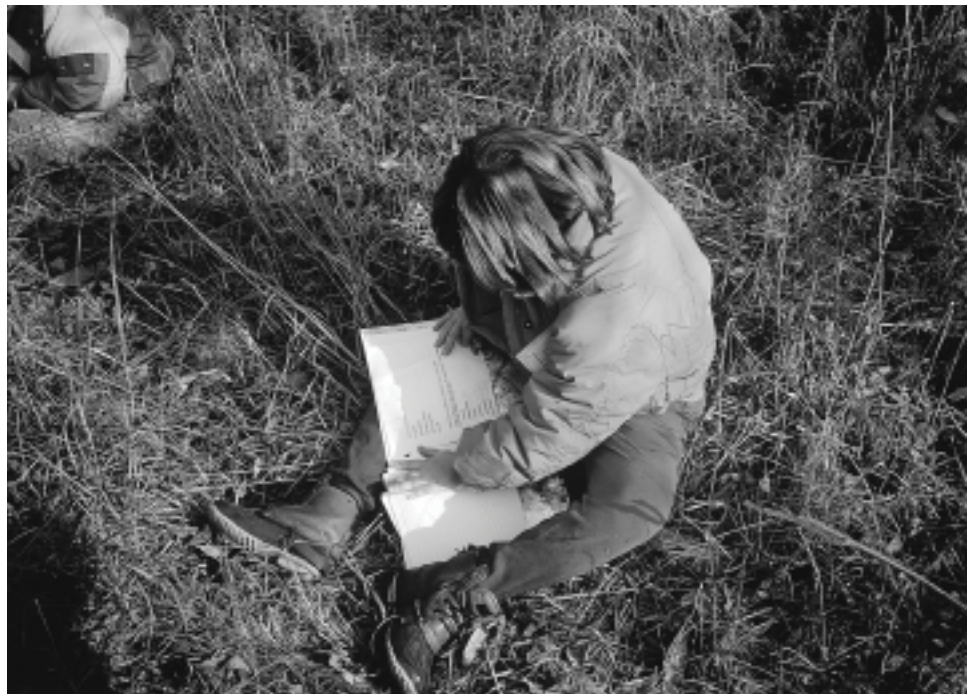


the communal feeling of “Yes, we know this.” The process of learners communicating what they know to another person or to the class is central to a healthy, holistic language arts component to your lake study.

My “See Ya Later, Lake” entry:

“We are writing in our thinkbooks for the last time on Lake Champlain. It feels sort of like a Senior Prom. It’s a little sad and nostalgic...a little proud and exhilarating. See ya later, lake. Adam said today what a neat week it has been with all the project presentations and how we had learned so much from each other. Another student said about the presentations: ‘You know you’re going to understand and the kid speaks your language and it’s things you’re interested in.’ Tammy, who did the research on ‘Champ’s Chips’ came up and said the I-search was the best part of the whole unit. I think so too. Not because of just what they learned but because of how they felt. They all were so PROUD!”

ABD Teaching Journal





Activity: A Capital Idea!

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

An interdisciplinary study can be used to teach “old-fashioned” grammar rules using worksheets!

STUDENT ACTIVITY

After reviewing common and proper nouns with the class, distribute this handout for practice or quiz.

Common and Proper Nouns

Rules: Proper nouns are always capitalized, e.g. the *Philadelphia*. Common nouns are not usually capitalized, unless they are at the beginning of a sentence or part of a title or proper name, e.g. I swam in the river, the Lamoille River.

Rewrite the following passage, in your best handwriting, with correct punctuation.

i think lake champlain is such a great place i could search all over the united states of america and never find such a lovely lake there are three ferry crossings the one that runs in the winter goes from grand isle to cumberland head in new york from the ferry you can see some islands, including valcour island, where benedict arnold escaped from the british



Activity: A String of Words

Other Ideas

- Use different-colored paper for adjectives and adverbs.
- Create a word bank on the computer of all parts of speech.
- Use the collection of adjectives to write a poem. Give a word (e.g. water) and ask for adjectives; continue with other words. Assemble them as a poem, rewrite on the overhead or blackboard and have students read the poem in unison. Give students time to practice sound effects and tape the reading!

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Your lake study can be used to distinguish parts of speech. Choose an activity (cluster, brainstorm, book search) to generate a list of Lake Champlain words or use word banks from this book.

Precut different colors of paper in small (3" x 5") pieces.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

As a class or in small groups, have students sort or identify parts of speech. When students find a proper noun, write it on (orange) and hang on the "clothesline."

Examples:

- Crown Point
- Ethan Allen
- Richelieu River

When students find a common noun, write it on a (yellow) piece of paper and hang on the clothesline.

Examples:

- boat
- wave
- fort
- weed
- fossil

It will become a colorful and lengthy grammar lesson in your room.





Activity: **Spelling**

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Many of you may already run a spelling program that is integrated into the content of the subjects you are studying. I have included a sample of my spelling program that is completed each week. The content of the passage (or in this case, poem) is based on the science or social studies we are learning. Some questions are completed in class because they are rather extensive or require class materials. Other questions can be done easily at home for homework. Family involvement in language questions such as (6), (7) and (9) of the handout is encouraged.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Work is handed out on Monday and completed by Friday. Students complete work in class or as assignments. A pretest is given on Monday, progress test on Wednesday and final on Friday. Some students may have only five words to learn.

STUDENT HANDOUT - "Spelling V"

Spelling V

*This week, we are going to the Maritime Museum,
Pictures, artifacts and boats, you'll see them.
You'll learn about schooners, sloops and bateaux,
The tale of our history, you'll know.
We'll row the **Philadelphia**, but not into Arnold's Bay
Then we'll go to Crown Point Historic Site, yeah!
Where the remains of two forts remain in decay.
Then more artifacts and the world's best slide show.
Then head north to McDonald's, but not too slow.*

On a separate piece of paper:

1. Copy over the whole passage correctly, in your best handwriting.
2. Write the ten key words five times each, in your best cursive.
3. Many of the events we will study this week take place in the 1700s. What century is that? List the words eleventh through twentieth.
4. The names of specific boats are proper nouns. Find the names of eight specific boats that were on Lake Champlain. Identify what kind of boat each is.
5. The words “remain” and “remains” appear in the passage. Use the dictionary and find the two meanings of these words. Explain the use of these two words in this passage.
6. Words that are spelled the same and have different meanings are called homonyms. On your own, find three pairs of homonyms. Example: can and can.
7. Start a list of words that rhyme with Champlain. Find at least ten.
8. After our map work on Wednesday, list 10 towns that we will travel through on our way to Vergennes.
9. Write down 10 of your contributions to the Champlain alphabet. Start with the first letter of your last name. E.g. I would start with D; dugout, ecology, fish, galley, hatchery—(you may only skip a letter twice, unless it's z!).
10. Complete and decorate your thank you note to Tim Titus or Laurie Eddy by the end of L.A. class on Thursday and put in spelling box.



Activity: Writing Journals

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

The journal entries discussed in this activity are different from the thinkbook entries described in *Getting Wet*. Journal entries can be written for just about any purpose. They are helpful to put the learner “into” the material.

Many journals are based on “pretend you are...”

- a soldier stationed at Fort St. Frederic in 1734,
- a heron looking for a place to nest,
- an island in the middle of Lake Champlain,
- a girl searching for berries in the 1500s,
- a drop of water in the Winooski River...in East Montpelier,
- a cannon on board the *Philadelphia*,
- a mouse at Crown Point,
- a soldier with Arnold’s fleet during the escape from Valcour Island.

Some journal entries are formal assignments that serve as the major assessment of a unit of study. Other journal entries can be written in the thinkbook as a quick response to a reading or discussion. Journals are excellent to use to process a field trip: ask the student to become an entity at the place where you visited. Students can also write journal entries that become a dialogue with another student with a similar (or different) perspective.

Carol Livingston has her students work on journals before, during and after a trip to Crown Point State Historic Site. Although you may not be able to visit Crown Point, this process is offered as a model of an extensive “pretend you are” journal assignment. The comprehensive objectives and questions serve as a model for this kind of writing.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

After reviewing some basic historical information about the Crown Point State Historic Site (see *Field Trips*, p. 285), explain the journal writing assignment to the class. Give them the handout, “Welcome to Fort St. Frederic and His Majesty’s Fort at Crown Point.” Students will complete first drafts



The assessment piece for this assignment is included in the Assessment chapter.



Other Ideas

• *Journals can also be used as a learning log or for recording specific science observations. Sue Hardin from the Frederick Tuttle Middle School in South Burlington writes:*

“Our students write a journal entry daily in their science class, so that trips to the brook to test water or collect benthic creatures are ‘written up’ in their journals.

On our first visit to the brook, we also have the students sit down (six feet away from anyone else) and describe the place using their senses—what they see, hear, smell, feel about the experience. Students can later transform this journal entry into a poem or return to the same spot at a different season and follow the same procedure.”

• *Another science-related writing activity for outdoor environmental observations is to have students select one square foot of ground and describe everything they find there. They can also sketch one thing they see.*

of the journal prior to the trip (at least two entries) and work on entries and gather more information at the site, from displays, museum staff, slide show and the forts!

Give students a handout that they can use at the site that includes:

1. a chart to record:

- housing
- tools
- work
- travel
- food
- leisure
- cooking

2. space for student, with a partner to generate ON SITE a “typical day”

3. a timeline for students to record events of their soldiers’ times at the fort, including personal and historical events.

After the field trip, students will complete final journal entries in the classroom. They use original drafts, notes from the trip, memories and impressions, classroom resources and discussions to complete final drafts.

Final drafts can be displayed on a timeline with illustrations, read aloud or performed. Students can stage a play where they “discover” diaries or read aloud “around the campfire.”

STUDENT HANDOUT - “Welcome to Fort St. Frederic and His Majesty’s Fort at Crown Point”

Soldier’s Journal, Samuel LaCarre, Entry #1

by Nora Sumner-Kopf, Grade 7, Camel’s Hump Middle School, Richmond, Vermont

Last night we had our first frost. It killed almost all of our squash and beans. I’d like to request to go fishing today to get food. I’m afraid of the lake freezing. The fort is almost finished and I’m getting impatient. It’s hard work—hauling all those stones. The barracks are finished but they do not retain much heat. My two little flannel blankets aren’t enough for these cold nights. The wind is blowing and making whitecaps on the lake. As I sit here I shiver. Fort St. Frederic really catches the wind off the lake. I’m having second thoughts about fishing because it’s too cold. I’d rather stand over a warm fire to help bake the bread.

Welcome to Fort St. Frederic and His Majesty's Fort at Crown Point

You are a French soldier in the French Army stationed at Fort St. Frederic during the years 1734 to 1759

OR

you are a British soldier stationed at Fort Crown Point during the years 1759 to 1784. As this soldier, you are to write a series of journal entries (AT LEAST THREE) in which you describe your daily life as a French or British soldier.

YOUR JOURNAL ENTRIES SHOULD ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

1. What date are you writing the entry and what place at the fort are you writing from?
2. What does the lake and the surrounding land look like? What is the plant and animal life? Describe the setting and environment.
3. What do you see, hear, smell, taste and feel as you “live” here?
4. How do you travel? Where?
5. What do you eat and how do you prepare food?
6. Where do you live? With whom? What are the furnishings? Describe the specific location of where you will live in the fort.
7. How do you spend your time? What do you do for work? What tools do you use? What do you do to relax?
8. What is on your mind? What are your concerns? your hopes? fears? What else is going on in the world that you might be thinking about?
9. What have your experiences been while stationed at the fort?



Activity: Writing Legends

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Legends have always been important to this region. They are still used to entertain, to educate, to explain and to articulate a community's belief in what is right and wrong.

There are a number of collections of Abenaki and Iroquois legends, the most notable of which are collected by Joseph Bruchac. There are also storytellers in the region able to visit classrooms.

If you are exploring legends with your class, spend a lot of time reading different legends aloud. Only this will impart the flavor and practice of this tradition. Better yet, learn to tell the stories aloud, yourselves!

When students have heard a lot of legends from the region, spend some time identifying some common elements of all the legends. Your list may be different from mine. We identified the following elements:

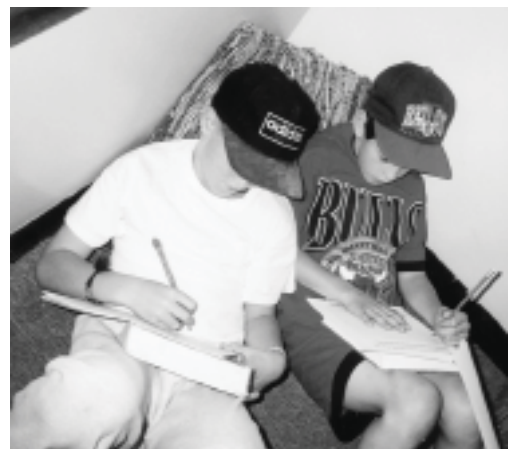
- animals
- a long time ago
- a lesson or explanation of the way things are
- on the lake

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Brainstorm some story ideas and ask your students, singly or in pairs (or as a whole class) to write a legend.

If you are collecting and grading these legends and have decided on the parts of a legend, you can assign points to the parts of a legend you agree need to be included. (See *Assessment*, p. 337.)

Give students the opportunity to read their legends aloud. That's what legends are for!



Other Ideas

- *Make a library of the legends to have available in class.*
- *Share with a class of younger students.*
- *Have an evening "in a long house" of stories and legends.*



Activity: Writing Tall Tales

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Perhaps legends and tall tales are the two story genres that have survived the longest in this region. Walk out on the ice in February and spend time with some folks telling fishing stories and you are bound to hear tales of “the one that got away.”

The process of teaching tall tales is similar to that used to teach legends or any other form of writing:

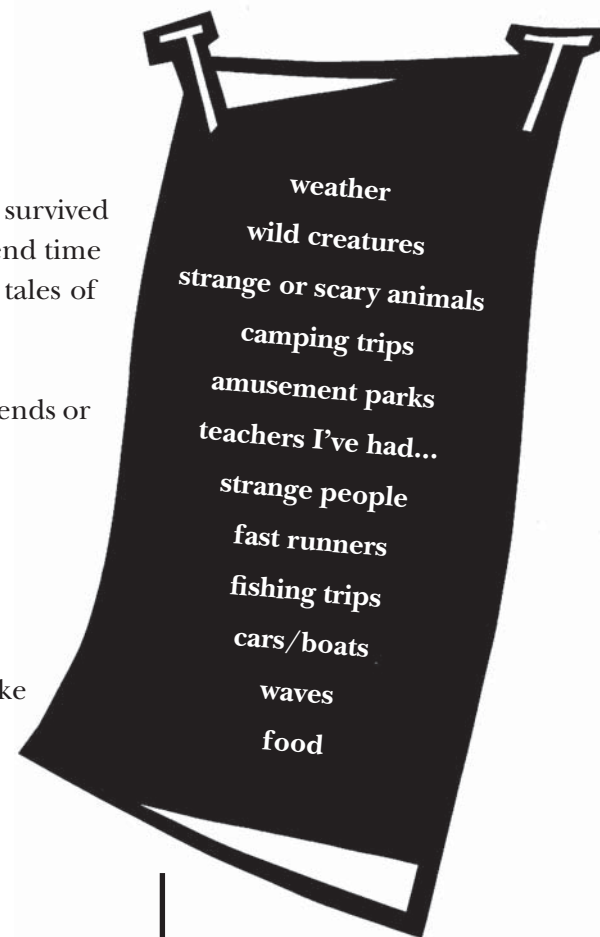
- enjoy them
- practice them
- identify parts of a tall tale
- write them

For me, the trick with writing tall tales is how to help the writer make sense. Fifth graders understand exaggeration as license to stop making sense and often write stories that are jumbled, not tall. Thus, once again, the process of writing becomes an exercise in thinking and well worth our time.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Share a “basic tale” on the overhead and have the class embellish it with exaggerated information.

Generate a list of “long tall topics” and a list of great words that will stretch a tale. Post lists during writing time.



Other Ideas

- When tall tales are complete, have students devise a way to copy them over on a “tall” piece of paper. You could offer some rolls of butcher block paper or suggest making a background of a large shape on construction paper and mount the story on a large creature or thing. Tall fishing tales can be mounted on large fish, monster stories on large monsters and logging stories on huge trees.





Activity: Aqua News—All the News That’s Fit to Float

Do you believe in Champ?

That is what I asked 6th graders in the School Street School in Milton, Vermont. It was hard to believe, but I think that many students wanted to keep an open mind.

What I found was 31% said they believed in Champ, 31% said no, they did not believe in Champ, and 38% said maybe Champ is out there.

*by Paul Berry, Grade 5,
School Street School, Milton, Vermont*

TEACHER NOTES and INFO

Producing a student newspaper is an excellent way for students to share what they are learning. There are levels of commitment to this kind of writing. Bill Ladabouche, at School Street School in Milton, runs his classroom as a newspaper room all year long and they use the paper to process the standard curriculum as well as many critical current events. If your class is set up as a newspaper room, you will have an editorial board, proofreaders, artists, a layout crew, etc.

A more manageable option is to use the writings as “assignments,” do the proofreading yourself and choose a small group of students to help with the layout. There are lots of different ways to organize this! The activity below describes the “one-shot” approach.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Publish an issue (or ongoing issues) related to your lake study.

1. Brainstorm with your students some of the components of a newspaper:

- news articles
- comics
- sports articles
- food articles
- headlines
- human interest
- entertainment
- comics
- weather
- advice column
- editorials
- ads

2. Brainstorm possible topics for each of these components:

- articles about our field trips
- news about water quality
- advice on preventing the spread of zebra mussels



- ads for fishing equipment
 - interview with retired ferry boat captain
 - “Dear Champ” advice column
 - “Basin Bites” food column
 - tips for boater safety
 - articles about islands
 - 10 important facts about the Lake Champlain Basin
 - advertisements for lakeshore property, water craft, fishing equipment, aqua habitat, tourist services, ecologically-sound lake usage products
 - cartoons about a “green” lake-side dweller
3. Develop a timeline with your students for completing the newspaper.
 4. Assign articles.
 5. Begin writing!

Our Trip to the Wetlands

by Jamie Lewandowski, Grade 5, School Street School, Milton, Vermont

Wednesday the 25th of September the Demarest/Dupont Team went to the Sandbar Wildlife Refuge! They went to study and learn new things about the wetlands. Ms. Demarest led the children on a hunt for animal prints and they found signs of Moose, Beaver, Deer and Blue Heron. As they went on a nature walk, they found a beaver lodge, duck and bird houses. Wetlands are home to many different types of animals, mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and amphibians.

On our class trip we found a deformed frog and it had one missing leg. The other leg was normal. Our teacher said that something happened to the leg, like maybe an animal bit it or something. Two days later we found out that there were a lot of deformed frogs around Lake Champlain. It was in the newspaper. Trevor Felix brought in an article from USA Today about deformed frogs in Minnesota. Scientists have had a hard time finding wetlands in Minnesota without deformed frogs. “It scares me,” said Judy Helgen, a research scientist. T.J. Geraw said that he feels sad about the frogs. “I feel bad for them,” he said.

The children discovered there are many different types of wetlands and this one was called a marsh. It was very wet and they fell into the mud a lot. Ms. Dupont helped the children dissect a cattail and they found the base of the stem is made up of little tiny holes. This carries oxygen to the cattail. They tasted the stem and found it tasted sweet. A lot was learned.



Activity: **Traditional Glossary**

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Creating glossaries is an excellent way for students to explore vocabulary and to learn more about a content area. Students always surprise me with their insights about what is pertinent to the topic.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Use the word bank from this book or one you have created. Have students choose a word they would like to contribute to a class glossary. I usually post a class list of names and enter the students' words as they choose. This way there are no repeats and I get to check in with each student's choice. Review with the class how a glossary definition for Lake Champlain is different from a dictionary meaning. A glossary definition must include the relevance of the word to the lake.

Have students write a glossary contribution as an assignment, then proof it and write a final draft.

Students can type their words in the computer and the glossary can be posted as a class project. (See "Glossary," p. 230.)





Activity: Glossary (3-D)

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

This is a more creative, three-dimensional version of a traditional glossary.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

1. Give students a long list of lake words. It could be a broad scope of words or a list pertaining to one aspect of your lake study (or you can develop a word bank of important lake words from day one of your lake study).
2. Students work in small groups; each group has a copy of the list you generated, one large piece of newsprint and four blank pieces of paper (8½" x 11", or your choice).
3. Students pick four words on the list, make a cluster for each word on the large paper, and brainstorm all the associations with that word. As part of this activity, students must write a short glossary meaning (pertaining to Lake Champlain) and include it.

Example:

bateau - *large rowboat used in colonial times to transport troops and equipment.*

4. Students choose one of the words or one group of words, and using the four pieces of paper, make something to represent what they know or could learn about that word. They could:

- draw four pictures,
- make a small book with 16 pages,
- build something (e.g. model of boat),
- make a mobile.





Activity: Know Your ABC's

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Use the spelling assignment (see “Spelling V,” p. 236), to generate a large collection of Lake Champlain words. Have a small group gather all the words from each student. Make a booklet with each letter of the alphabet on one page. (Total 26 pages!)

Example: P *Philadelphia*
Phoenix
pumpkin seed (fish)
pollution
plankton
phosphorous
People of the Dawn
perch
pike



Words can also be collected on the computer; students can type in their own words, avoiding repetitions. Let this activity sit for a while in a visible spot and more words will appear on the list. Parents can contribute!

Precut large letters in oak tag (8½” x 11”) for each letter in the alphabet.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Each student gets one oak tag letter and one list of words. Fifth graders usually want the letter their first name begins with, so sometimes this process takes longer than you expect! The task is to put all the words on the corresponding letter in some artistic and legible manner and decorate it (one side). I request that no white space be left on the letters so that the colors are bold and bright, but still legible. I laminate and display the letters for Open House.

A number of other things can be done with these alphabets. You can make a book, posters or an illustrated “big book” for small children.





Activity: Crossword Puzzle

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

Using the word banks from the different content chapters of this book, students can generate their own crossword puzzles. If you have never done one before, play with it a bit before you start. I had one of those experiences where I thought it was a lot simpler than it was—but the students finally figured it out! Decide on what category you are going to work in, e.g. ecology, place names, nautical archeology.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Each student (or team) needs a grid on which to place the words. The placement of the words is critical and must be done first. Advise students to make a note of what their clues might be but not to assign numbers (“3 across” etc.) until all their words have been placed on the grid. Set a minimum of words that they will need. Remind them that the words need to be ones that their audience is familiar with. If they are making one for the school newspaper or their parents, they might want to be more general. But if they want to make them for their classmates, all of whom by now are experts on Lake Champlain, they can make them more challenging.

Review with students that words cannot rest on top of each other and should not float on the page (see handout).

After the words are placed, students may number them, creating two separate categories, across and down. They are then ready to copy over the final draft of the clues. These must be written in two separate columns, across and down.

STUDENT HANDOUT - “Make Your Own Crossword Puzzle”

Other Ideas

- *A crossword puzzle would also be an excellent final exam at the culmination of your unit.*

Make Your Own Crossword Puzzle

Use this grid to make your own Lake Champlain crossword puzzle.

Your words may only be written across and down and may not rest on top of, or next to, each other.

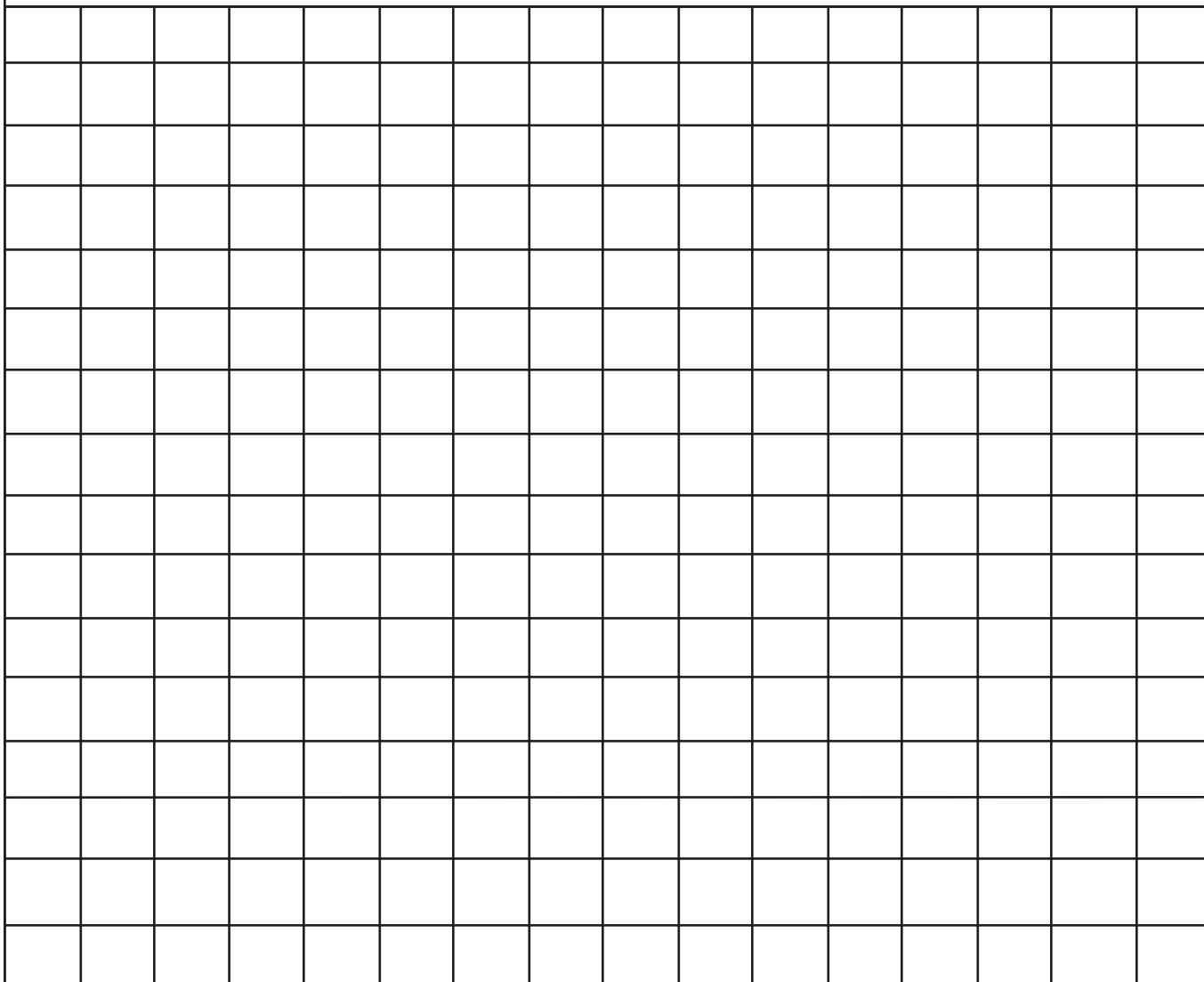
NOT O.K.

S
IGNEOUS
CHAMPLAIN

O.K.

S
E
D S
IGNEOUS
M A
WHALE
N
T

Write your across and down clues on a separate piece of paper. Number your words after they are placed on the grid.





Notes on Reading

It would be lovely if I could offer, at this point, a long list of children's literature to use in your study of Lake Champlain. The collection I know about does not cover a wide range of topics, so I have taught a unit based on books about settlement of this region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although not all of the books suggested are specifically about life in the Champlain Valley, they describe an experience set in a similar place and time (e.g. *SIGN OF THE BEAVER*, one of the best depictions of the exchange between Native Americans and Europeans, is set in Maine).

Because there is not enough literature to maintain my literature program during a two-month study, we break loose after our settler unit and read books by Roald Dahl! I mention this because I think we worry that everything has to be connected in an interdisciplinary study. Although this intensity does bear fruit, my experience has been that students (and teachers!) appreciate this kind of break.

If you are set up for a literature-based social studies learning program in which students choose their own books, this unit will work easily. If you are not, you might want to read together as a class *GREEN MOUNTAIN HERO*, which is the tale of Ann Story and her family, who settled in Vermont prior to the Revolution. It provides an excellent look at daily life in the Champlain Valley, as well as a look at the events leading up to the Revolution (Ann was named "Mother of the Green Mountain Boys"). Parts or all of this book can be read aloud.

If your students are used to choosing their own books, here are some suggested titles and some activities to accompany the reading:

- *Green Mountain Hero* by *Edgar Jackson*
- *Sign of the Beaver* by *Elizabeth George Speare*
- *Fawn* by *Robert Newton Peck* (*out of print, but worth hunting for*)
- *The Courage of Sarah Noble* by *Sarah Dalgiesh*
- *The Light in the Forest* by *Conrad Richter*
- *Calico Captive* by *Elizabeth George Speare*





- *The Ice Trail* by *Anne Eliot Crompton* (also hard to find)
- *Cave of Falling Water* by *Janice Ovecka* (only one third of this book deals with this time period)

You may also want to use nonfiction books to explore this time period. There are many excellent ones, but I am not as familiar with them, as I do this unit with historical fiction.

The January 1995 issue of *Book Links*, an American Library Association publication, includes an extensive annotated bibliography on colonial times.

Some recommended titles are:

- *Slumps, Grunts and Snickerdoodles: What Colonial America Ate and Why* by *Lila Perl*
- *Struggle for a Continent: The French and Indian Wars: 1690–1760* by *Albert Marrin*
- *Going to School in 1776* by *John Loeper*
- *Colonial American Medicine* by *Susan Neiburg Terkel*
- *Colonial Craftsmen: The Beginnings of American Industry* by *Edwin Tunis*
- *Giants in the Land* by *Diana Apelbaum* (about giant white pines felled for His Majesty's ships)
- *Hiawatha: Messenger of Peace* by *Dennis Fradin*

There are many resources available for teachers on how to design a holistic reading program and I will not try to provide a comprehensive look at that here. Key elements of a successful reading program seem to be:

- the opportunity for students to develop the ability to choose books that they like and that they can read successfully,
- a system by which you and the student can communicate about and validate the reading experience,
- a multitude of ways in which the student can express what she or he is learning through reading,
- parent support of and involvement with the reading program,
- reading time at school,
- class discussions and small discussion groups that are based on how “real” people talk about books.



The reading experience can be processed via:

- reading journals, which can include lists, short answers, responses, notes to characters in books or to classmates, speculation, rewrites of the story, sequences, questions and reflections,
- projects,
- skits,
- reading letters and essays about specific topics or questions,
- oral presentations.



The year that this book was being completed, my teammate and I taught Lake Champlain history, nautical archeology and ecology in the spring. I designed an accompanying reading unit called “Children and the Earth.” Each student read a book by Jean Craighead George. Many people are familiar with her famous

books *JULIE OF THE WOLVES* and *MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN*, but she has numerous other titles with a wide range of reading levels. Her adventure and ecological mysteries all address some aspect of a child’s relationship to the earth. The books prompt lots of investigation and discussion. Each student chose a topic related to his or her book and wrote a science paper on topics such as: birds and their territory, desert plants, carnivorous plants, the Everglades and how birds communicate.

Below is a thinkbook response from Chris Sweeney, a fifth grader at School Street School. Chris read *THE TALKING EARTH* by Jean Craighead George.

“Billie Wind goes into the Everglades because she does not believe in the bad serpent, talking animals or little people that play tricks on bad children. While she was there, there was a fire that lasted all day.

Some good things happened though. She met an otter, a panther, and a turtle. My favorite part of the book is when she meets an otter. This is my favorite part because this is when she starts to believe in the little people.”



Activity: Wood is the Word: Log Cabin-Building

Other Ideas

- Choose teams to fill up the sides of the cabin. You will have repeats, but that's okay.
- Sometimes you get a great word that's not historically important. Have a list of these words to post and discuss, and depending on your vocabulary program, ask students to be responsible for knowing them.
- You could do the same activity using a boat and another historical period.

TEACHER NOTES and INFO

This is an activity where students can explore words associated with colonial times and build their vocabulary.

1. Build a log cabin frame using a cardboard box. Use the box as the walls and use two opposite flaps to construct a roof. Cover with brown construction paper.
2. Precut 2½" x 1" "logs" of brown construction paper.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Assign students the task of finding historically accurate vocabulary in their novels. "Good settler words," as we refer to them, are words that can help us understand daily life and make us think about things (and words) that were used at the time. Interesting class discussions take place about whether the word is a "good" settler word. An example of a "good" word is **spider pan**, which is a three-legged cast iron cooking pot used to cook food over a fire.

Trail might be considered a "good" word since trails had special importance then, even though they are used today. **Supper** probably wouldn't be chosen to help build the cabin. Every three to four days, have "cabin-building" with your class. Students contribute individually or as teams. Print words on paper with black marker and glue on the log cabin. Your cabin is built when the whole structure is covered with historically-accurate vocabulary words.

Beaver hat	Pinnacle	Rafters			
"Wattle & Doub"	Knitting	Wigwam		ax	
Ft. Crown Point	Clearing	Ethan Allen		cave	
Birch wood	Sleigh	Squirrel	Gun		
Blunderbust	Hunter	Abenaki		Barn door	
Bark Covered Huts	Red Coat	Creek		Deerskin	
Harvest	Pine Bed	Corn Cob	Pipe		
Tomahawk	Ethan Allen	"Yorkers"		Saddle bag	
Game	Featherbed	Schooner	Pewter	Bitawbagok	
Cottage	Quilt	Cornmeal	Flax	Tools	Wool blanket
Hemlock	Mattress	Spear	Wigwam	Fireside	Torch
Loghouse	Settlement	Venison	Trap	Mayflower	Gun
Forest	Fishing	Green Mountain Boys		Chest &	Settle
Cloak	Firewood	Snare	Indians		Skin drum
Stockade	Muzzle loader	hew logs			dugout canoe
Wilderness	Moccasins	Johnny Cakes			Ft. Ticonderoga



Activity:

Compare and Contrast

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

When you are well into the cabin-building, let students compare life today with life in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New England.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Review some of the “great” words they’ve learned that describe these historical times. What if you were to assign categories? Could students come up with words for each category?

- Clothes? (*homespun, calico, moccasins, leather britches, beaver cap, fur*)
- Transportation? (*walking, wagon, canoe, trails, waterway, dugout*)
- Food? (*cornmeal, porridge, deer, stew, campfire, spider pan, pemmican*)

What about words that describe our time? What are some great words?

- neon
- electric
- pizza
- jams (shorts, not with toast!)
- rollerblades
- high-rise
- super highway
- airplane

Put these words in categories.

Use a chart to compare and contrast.

	NOW	THEN
Clothes		
Transportation		
Food		
Other		

Rubies Pearls

Activity: Shades of the Past

YOU WILL NEED for each student:

- 2 large (about 8-inch diameter) circles cut from drawing paper
- one large circle cut from oak tag (same size)

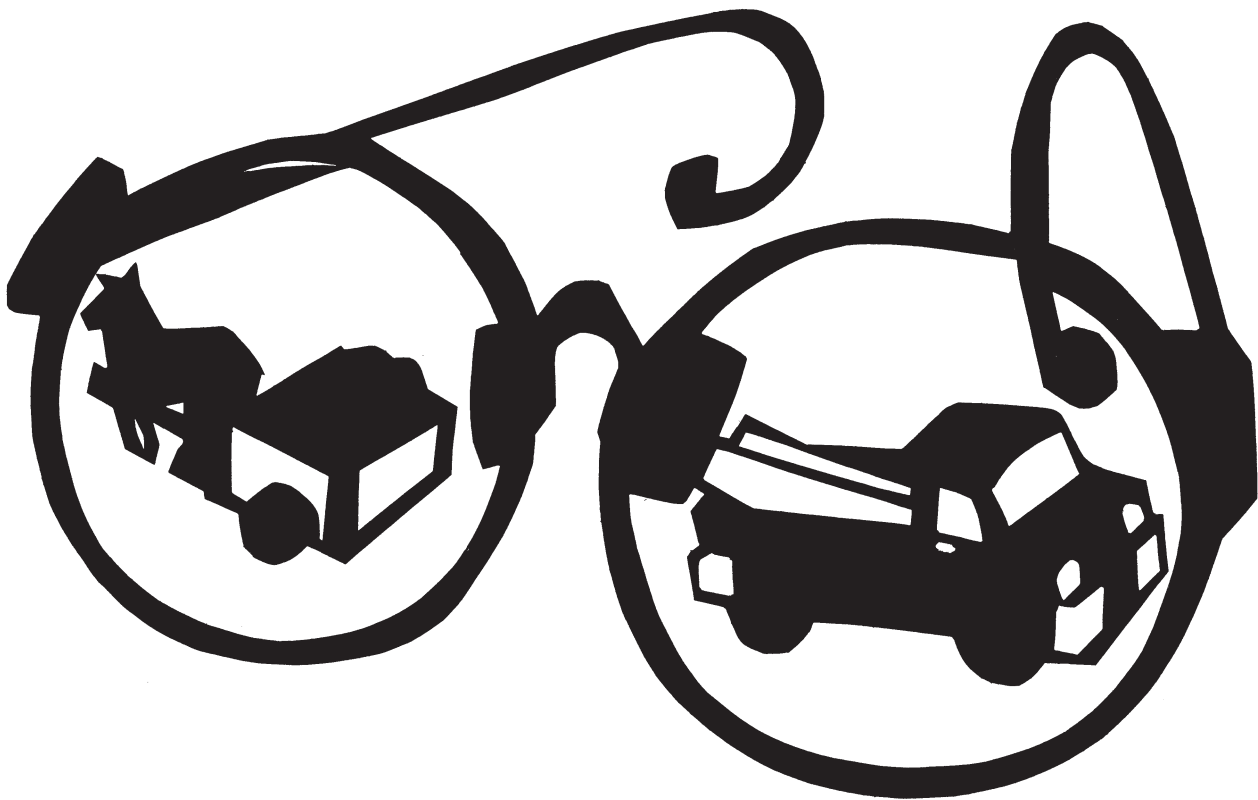
STUDENT ACTIVITY

Students make a NOW drawing on one drawing paper circle and a THEN drawing on the other. Mount the drawings on either side of the oak tag; punch one hole and hang them singly or as a mobile.

OTHER IDEAS

You could add ribbon, cut tissue paper, yarn, construction paper strips or a paper shape of an artifact related to the drawing.

“Now and Then Circles” could be fastened together as a pair of “shades” and displayed in the room.





Activity: Reading Aloud

TEACHER NOTES *and* INFO

There are two children's books about Champ to read aloud. One is *THE CHAMPLAIN MONSTER* by Jeff Danziger. A more recent book and my preference is *LITTLE CHAMP* by Jim Arnosky. Use it for those in-between moments and at the end of the day. Almost-grown teenagers succumb to the universal temptation of being read to and they love it!

Rubies Pearls

Activity: Leaf Monster Drawings

YOU WILL NEED:

- a large leaf (maple leaves are great) for each student
- drawing paper
- pencil and crayons or felt-tipped markers

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Trace the leaf on paper. The large shape can be any part of your Champ monster. You could trace the pattern twice and create wings. Make the large shape of the body, then the head, and then add wings, feet and tail. Add curvy lines to the outline of your monster. Make patterned designs in sections of the monster's body with lots of color!



Artwork by Mike Villemaire, Grade 5, School Street School, Milton, Vermont



Activity: Learn All About It

Other Ideas

- Create a station with news stories and “WWWWW” cards for students to complete independently.
- Write out worksheets with comprehension questions that correspond to specific articles.
- Establish a “lake watch” current events program in your room.
- There are always news stories about the lake. Identify five or six themes and have teams watch for different news items. Create a database of news stories. Don’t forget the sports section that often has lots of information on fish and wildlife.
- Use themes to identify a “wild-watch” current events program for the United States and/or the world. Are there threats to the environment, water quality, wildlife that students have identified in their lake study that are also happening in other parts of the world? Use newspapers or the Internet to gather information on these national or worldwide issues. If you want to keep going with this idea, telecommunicating with students in other areas of the world that are also learning about these issues gives students a great opportunity to learn and share data.

TEACHER NOTES and INFO

Newspaper articles collected by you or your students are a great way to build skills of reading comprehension and citizenship. I usually have a lot of articles on the wall and/or in a scrapbook. Sometimes I mount them on construction paper and hang them on the “clothesline.” Mounting them makes it a lot easier to pass articles around the room and reuse them.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Practice reading an article with students.

Many teachers use:

Who

What

When

Where

Why

to decipher news stories. It is a great method to interpret the main idea in a story and it helps them separate the facts from the commentary. News isn’t written for kids and they need help understanding most of it.

Practice “WWWWW” by placing a news story on the overhead and going through it together as a class.

When students are familiar with this process, let them each try their own articles. Since reading levels vary so much, I usually hand out articles myself and try to match the story to the student’s reading level and interest. I make little “cards” that students complete, attach and display to help other students interpret the news stories. Each student has one story and one card.

Who _____

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Why _____

Summarize the main idea of this news story. _____

Option: Create an illustration to go with this news story.

Who _____

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Why _____

Summarize the main idea of this news story. _____

Option: Create an illustration to go with this news story.

Who _____

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Why _____

Summarize the main idea of this news story. _____

Option: Create an illustration to go with this news story.

Who _____

What _____

When _____

Where _____

Why _____

Summarize the main idea of this news story. _____

Option: Create an illustration to go with this news story.



ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Sometimes I think we get carried away with designing such creative ways for students to process information that we forget how important it is for them to have time to just tell each other what they are learning (doing, feeling, planning). Being able to tell a story about what is happening to them is the very basis of the art of language (*pronounce “language arts”*). This is a very important part of the culmination of a large interdisciplinary experience, but it is also important in the day-to-day process of learning. It helps you assess where they are and where you need to get to. It sometimes can unearth a critical missing piece in your study and often develops a sense of camaraderie. Why did we ever stop Show-and-Tell in third grade?

“Today we had our first Reading Circle. Each kid was asked to bring in something to read aloud. It could be their own writing from their thinkbook, their interview, their tall tale. Or it could be something they’d found in the newspaper, or a source (we’re just beginning the I-search) or another student’s writing.

*Students made all different selections. It was a really sweet day. Chairs were in a circle and students listened hard to each other’s reading. Maureen (reading teacher) and I got good opportunities to give feedback. The kids got into it...telling each other: ‘It was really funny when...’
‘I really liked the way you described the waves...’
‘It was neat how you made it sound.’*

A reading circle. A peaceful end to a hectic week.”

ABD Teaching Journal

