



Plan a Colonial Day at Your School

OKLAHOMA HISTORY CENTER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



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There are many steps involved in producing a Colonial Day at your school. The following are suggestions, activities, and links to resources for you to adapt for your classroom.

PREPARE your students with these primary source lesson plans and activities about colonial life. Students should understand who colonists were, what motivated them to come to the New World, the class system, the complicated relationships they had with both the British monarchy and American Indians, and the origins and consequences of chattel slavery in the colonies.

- [“Empire and Identity in the American Colonies: British Colonial Leaders, Colonists, and Native Americans,” National Endowment for the Humanities](#)
- [“Colonial and Early America Lesson Plans,” Library of Congress](#)
- [“Teaching Hard History: American Slavery,” Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [“Social Classes in the Colonies,” Lumen](#)
- [“George Washington, Pioneer Farmer Teacher Development,” Oklahoma Historical Society](#)
- [“Timeline of George Washington’s Life in Agriculture,” Oklahoma Historical Society](#)

PLAY colonial games like marbles, hopscotch, spelling bees, sack races, tug-of-war, jackstraws (pick-up sticks), whirligig, and ninepins. You can also construct hoop and stick games or games. These are all available in the Oklahoma History Center’s free [Colonial Games and Music](#) trunk.

MAKE traditional 17th- and 18th -century crafts like corn husk dolls and yarn dolls for younger students, or simple quilting, embroidery, or cross-stitch projects for older students.

EAT colonial staples and have students learn about how food was grown and processed. Students can make butter, can vegetables, shell peas, or shuck corn.

RESERVE a free hands-on history traveling trunk from the Oklahoma History Center full of historical items, clothing, books, and curriculum

- [Colonial Life traveling trunk](#)
- [Continental Soldier traveling trunk](#)
- [Colonial Agriculture traveling trunk](#)

EXPERIENCE live demonstrations from museum educators, community guests, and experts. Students can learn about traditional crafts like soap making, spinning, and candle making through hands-on presentations. The History Center offers Colonial Dance, Continental Soldier, and 1830s Beadwork Artist living history presentations at your school!

ASK for help from parents, volunteers, school administrators, museum educators, and community members.

RESOURCES

I. Algonquian Chief Watercolor by John White, Governor of Roanoke [Image and text from Encyclopedia Virginia](#)



English artist John White's original watercolor of a single Indian *veroance*, or chief, shows him holding a bow and looking to his right with one arm akimbo. The drawing carries the inscription, "The manner of their attire and painting them selves when they goe to their generall huntings, or at their Solemne feasts." (Some spelling has been modernized.) This figure was based on White's firsthand encounters with the Indians he met in the Outer Banks region of present-day North Carolina in 1585, and the image is one of a series of seventy-five watercolor drawings that were assembled into an album currently owned by the British Museum.


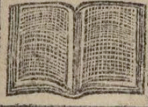




The posture of the figure mirrors the manner in which powerful European aristocrats and leaders were painted at that time. This portrayal of the Algonquian chief became the iconic image for nearly all North American Indians encountered early on by Europeans. Variations on this figure were subsequently created by other artists, including Theodor de Bry, who illustrated a 1590 edition of *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* by Thomas Hariot. An English mathematician, astronomer, linguist, and experimental scientist, Hariot accompanied White in his explorations while part of the failed colonizing expedition to Roanoke in 1585 to 1586. Hariot's text described the chief's attire, writing that the Indian's fringed apron was made of animal skin with a tail that hung down behind him. A

quiver of arrows was affixed to the tail. The Indian's hair, adorned with feathers, was shaved on one side to prevent it, according to Hariot, from getting tangled in the bow.

II. John Smith's Map of Virginia, 1624

Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/99446115/>



<i>Words of Four Syllables.</i>			
Ac-com-pa-ny	Accompany		A In Adam's fall, We sinned all.
Be-nev-o-lence	Benevolence		B Thy life to mend, This Book attend.
Ce-re-mo-ny	Ceremony		C The Cat doth play, And after slay.
Dis-con-tent-ed	Discontented		D A Dog will bite, A thief at night.
Ev-er-last-ing	Everlasting		E An Eagle's flight, Is out of sight.
Fi-del-i-ty	Fidelity		F The idle Fool Is whipt at school.
Glo-ri-fy-ing	Glorifying		
Hu-mil-i-ty	Humility		
In-firm-i-ty	Infirmity		
<i>Words of Five Syllables.</i>			
Ad-mi-ra-ti-on	Admiration		
Ben-e-fi-ci-al	Beneficial		
Con-so-la-ti-on	Consolation		
De-cla-ra-ti-on	Declaration		
Ex-hor-ta-ti-on	Exhortation		
For-ni-ca-ti-on	Fornication		
Gen-e-ra-ti-on	Generation		
Ha-bi-ta-ti-on	Habitation		
In-vi-ta-ti-on	Invitation		

IV. Slave Advertisement: "To be sold, on board the ship Bance Island ... negroes, just arrived from the Windward & Rice Coast"

[Newspaper advertisement from the 1780s for the sale of slaves at Ashley Ferry \(South Carolina\), Library of Congress](#)

TO BE SOLD, on board the
Ship *Bance-Island*, on tuesday the 6th
of *May* next, at *Ashley-Ferry*; a choice
cargo of about 250 fine healthy



NEGROES,



just arrived from the
Windward & Rice Coast.
—The utmost care has
already been taken, and
shall be continued, to keep them free from
the least danger of being infected with the
SMALL-POX, no boat having been on
board, and all other communication with
people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Austin, Laurens, & Appleby.

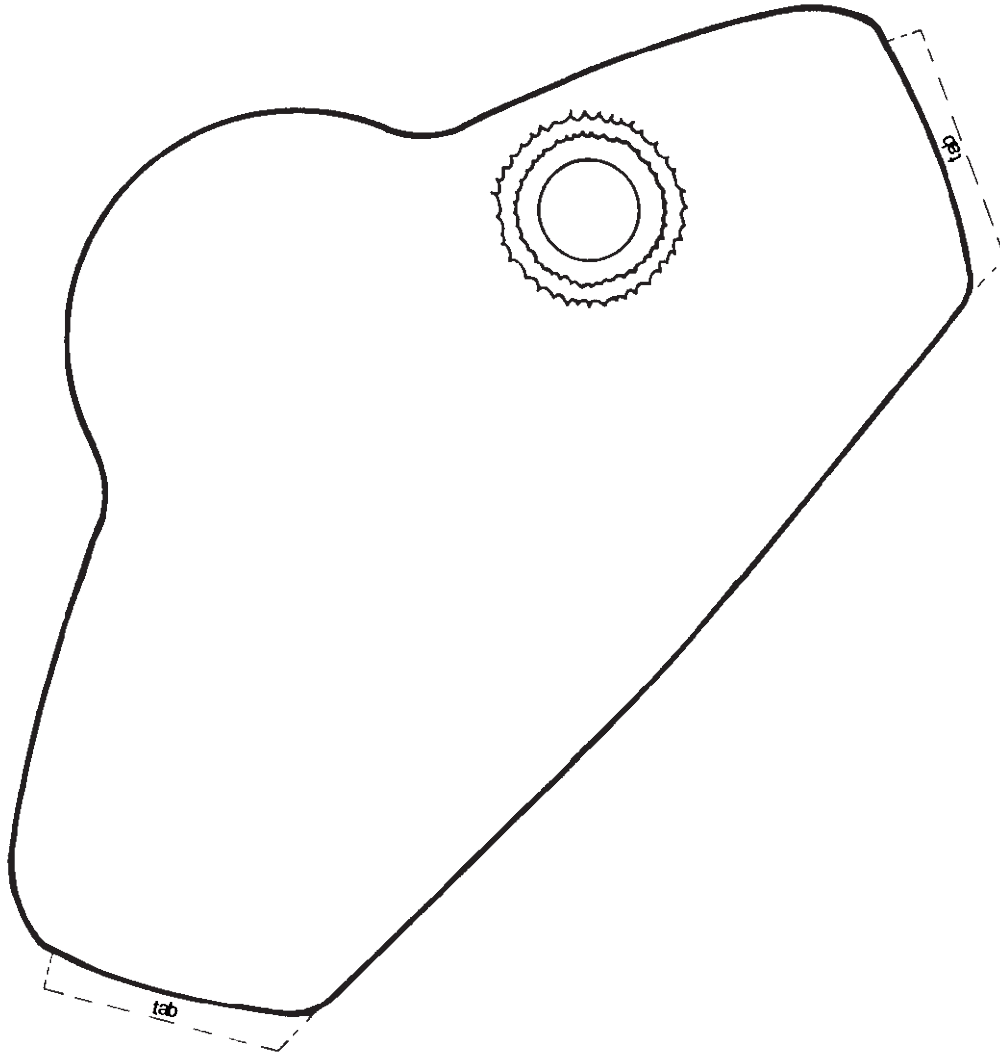
N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the
SMALL-POX in their own Country.

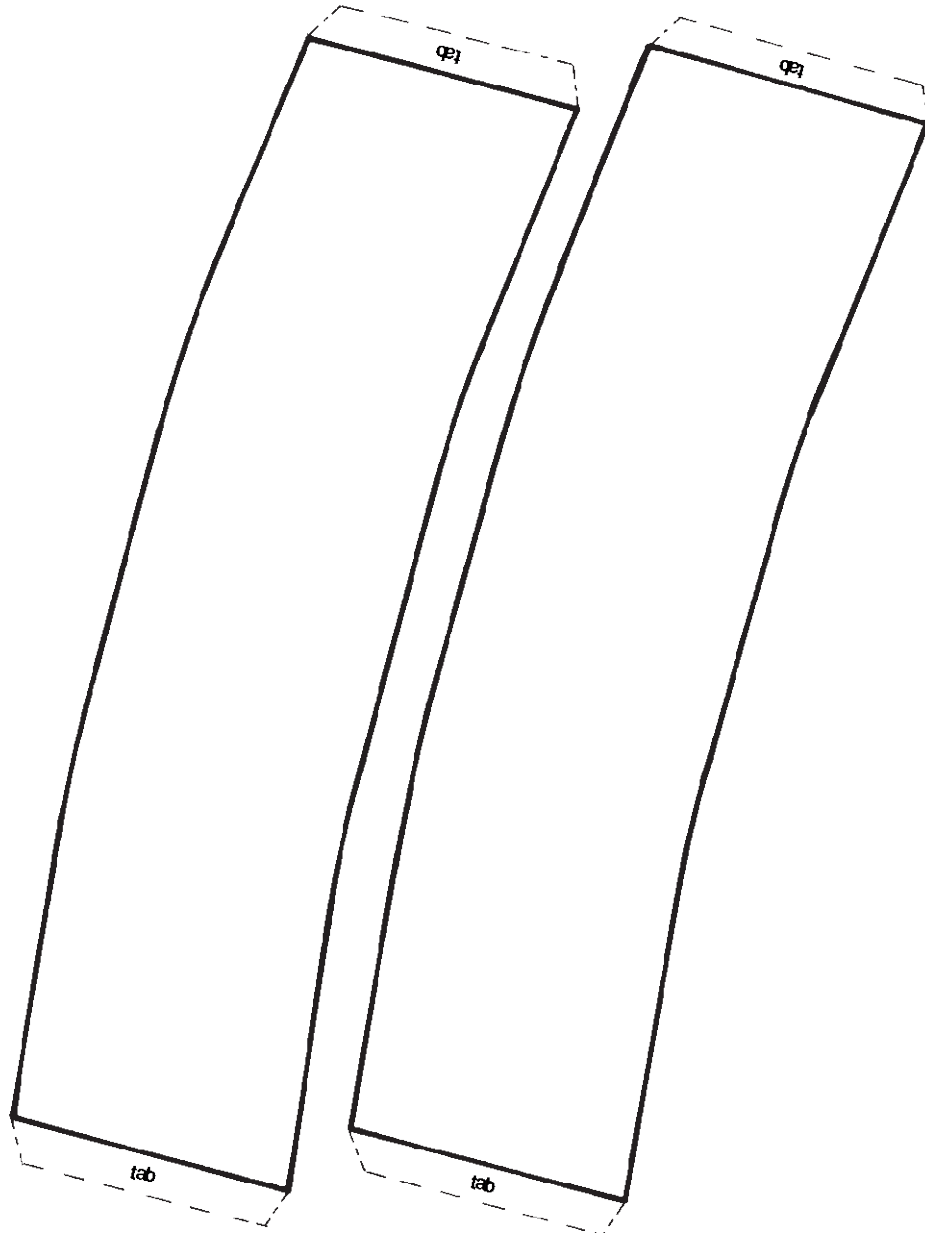
ACTIVITIES

I. Make a Three-Cornered Hat

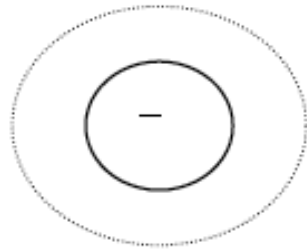
Activity from Teacher Created Resources, Inc.

Directions: Cut out the three pieces of the three-cornered hat. Staple the three sides together to fit, using the tabs.

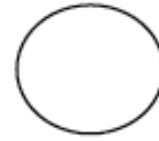




II. Make a Girl's Mob Cap



MOB CAPS



Ø 15" diameter

Supplies

- One yard of cheap muslin, 44 to 45 inches wide, for every four caps (you can also use old sheets)
- A pattern cut out of cardboard or heavy cardstock
 - One 18-inch circle
 - One 15-inch circle
- Satin ribbon, 1/8 inch wide
- Large-eyed sewing needles

Directions

1. Cut an 18" diameter circle of fabric
2. Draw a pencil line around the centered 15" pattern
3. Pink, zigzag, hem, or apply lace to the edge of the cap
4. Stitch with ribbon 1" to 1 1/2" apart

III. Make a Whirligig

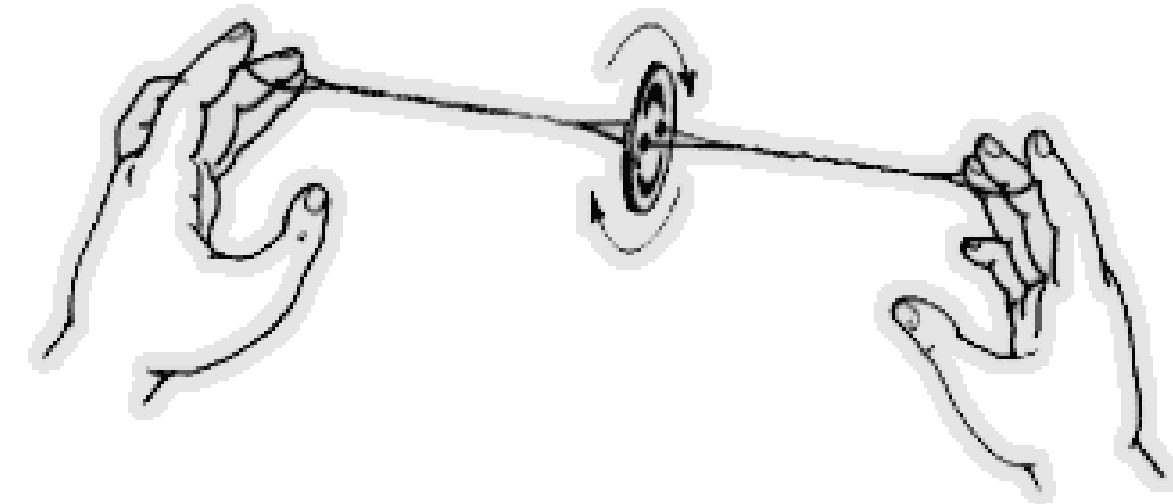
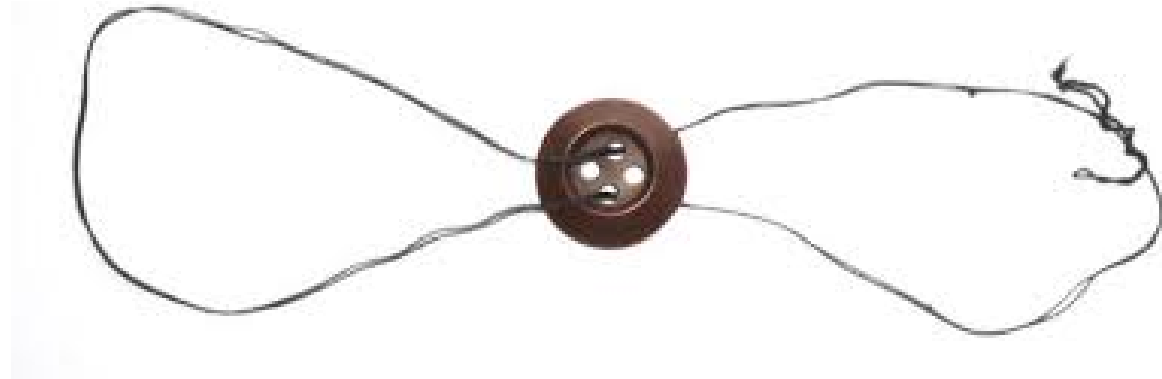
(Activity and images courtesy of Mount Clare Museum House)

Supplies

- 1 large button with 2 or 4 holes, or a piece of cardboard/cardstock cut in a large circle
- 2.5 feet of string, yarn, or thin ribbon
- Scissors

Directions

1. If you are using a large button, skip to step 3. If you are using cardboard or cardstock, cut out a 4-inch circle. The circle can be decorated using crayons or colored pencils
2. Punch 2 small holes in the circle, about $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch from the center
3. Thread the string into the holes and tie the ends together
4. Pull the string until the button/circle is in the middle



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND ACTIVITY LINKS

Colonial Recipes

["Recipes," Scholastic](#)

Interactive Colonial Game

["A Room in Time' Interactive Colonial Game," Scholastic](#)

"H. S. I.: Historical Scene Investigation" Interactive Primary Source Game

- [Antonio, a Slave](#)
- [Jamestown](#)
- [Bacon's Rebellion](#)
- [The Boston Massacre](#)
- [Lexington and Concord](#)

Our Favorite Colonial History Organizations and Resources

- ["Early American History Education Programs," Oklahoma Foundation for Excellence](#)
- ["Teacher Resources," Colonial Williamsburg](#)
- ["Teaching with Mount Vernon," George Washington's Mount Vernon](#)

Online Primary Sources

- ["Colonial and Early America Primary Source Sets," Library of Congress](#)
- ["Colonization and Settlement, 1585–1763," Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#)
- ["Toolbox Library: Primary Resources in US History and Literature," National Humanities Center](#)

Lesson Plans

- ["Life in Colonial America Stations," Brown Bag Teacher](#)
- ["Colonial House for Teachers," PBS](#)
- ["Colonial America," Scholastic](#)
- ["Divining America: Religion in American History," National Humanities Center](#)
- ["Powerful 13 Colonies Primary Sources for Students," The Clever Teacher](#)
- ["Social Classes in Colonial America," edHelper.com](#)

Activities

- ["Colonial America: A Dear America Activity," Scholastic](#)
- ["Teaching With Dear America," Scholastic](#)