American Literature 1

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TheCenterforLearning

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Editor
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Cover Design
Amy Giannell, B.S.

Manufactured in the United States of America.
Printed on recycled paper.

This series is a revision of the 2001 editions of American literature and honors American literature units created by Thomas Beach, Gilmary Beagle, Frances Ebbers, Daniel Ebert, Patricia Forrest, Brigid O'Donoghue, Judith Perkins, and Jessica Yucas.

ISBN 978-1-56077-963-6

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Introduction

American literature teachers face a big challenge. There is so much of it that is so good! The first main issue is what to leave out. The second is what to do with what is left so that students find each piece to be an intriguing or exciting arena of investigation and creative learning. The four units in this American literature series make no attempt to include everything. Instead, the lessons focus on selected literary works that are frequently anthologized or are readily available online and engage students in active learning experiences. The goal is to make the most of each piece of literature in terms of understanding, appreciation, analysis, contemporary connections, and personal insights.

The lessons are intended for use with high school American literature students. Procedures are followed by suggested extensions. Many are for honors and advanced placement level classes and emphasize skills necessary for success in AP language arts exams. Others focus on interdisciplinary connections.

Book 1 establishes a central theme of the series, the idea that there are multiple voices to be heard. There were people here before the first settlers from Spain and England; Native American lore is full of fascinating myths and legends that reflect ancient cultures in harmony with natural cycles. White men's voices seem to dominate the literary scene as they did society in colonial and revolutionary times, but slaves and women also had voices, albeit hushed, which deserve to be heard.

The first three lessons focus on the Native American oral tradition and give special attention to Cherokee and Navajo legends. Subsequent lessons focus on colonial and revolutionary period writings, which are dominated by nonfiction—journals, letters, histories, sermons, autobiographies, and political documents. They also examine the nature of Puritanism and poems from Anne Bradstreet. The final lessons in this unit deal with the beginnings of the flowering of imaginative writing and focus on Washington Irving and Edgar Allan Poe.

Teacher Notes

You may want to precede your approach to American literature with a focus on diversity in the United States. This can start with the basic fact of geographical variations: seacoast towns, forested mountains, rivers and lakes, desert areas, differences in life in places as far apart as northern Minnesota and south Texas. A multimedia presentation on our ethnic diversity can also help to draw students in so that they recognize themselves and the heritages from which they come in the coursework they are about to undertake. Aim to be as all-inclusive as possible. It can also be useful to have students trace their own family roots, which may reach back as far as arrival on the *Mayflower* or be as recent as the past year.

The Internet is a valuable tool to enhance your lessons with a rich variety of images, audio materials, and documents. Students can see Navajo rugs and baskets; they can ponder the stern visages in colonial and revolutionary portraiture; they can listen to eerie tales from Edgar Allan Poe.

The lessons in this unit all align with language arts standards and place particular emphasis on use of textual evidence, identification of themes, and analysis of choices regarding setting, point of view, and structure. Visit The Center for Learning's Web site (http://www.centerforlearning.org) to download a summary of the standards addressed in each lesson.

You will probably want to include major works in your study of American literature. Particularly useful in connection with this unit are Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, and, especially for multidisciplinary approaches, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*. You may also want to include an occasional movie. Students usually enjoy the 1996 movie adaptation of *The Crucible*. You may also want to show selected sections of the television miniseries *Roots*.

The lesson extensions sometimes aim to forge connections between literature and history, which students often tend to see as disparate topics. Many of the extensions are intended for honors and advanced placement students and aim to widen reading experiences, hone analytical skills, and foster effective writing.

Answers to handouts will vary unless otherwise indicated. Students may need additional paper to complete some handouts.

Lesson 1

Legends from the People Who Were Here First

Objectives

- To understand similarities and differences among Native American tribes
- To encounter a variety of Native American legends and myths

Notes to the Teacher

When the first settlers arrived in the New World during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, they were not entering an uninhabited continent. Diverse Native American tribes lived in every area of the country, including woodlands, plains, and deserts. The colonists learned some things about life in the New World from the indigenous people, but they did not view them as equals. The prevailing attitude was that the land was there for white people to claim; Native Americans were seen as nuisances to be pushed aside or even eradicated. This is one of the scandals at the foundation of what we now call the United States.

While there were many differences among the tribes, there were and are also some powerful similarities. One is an ideal of harmony with nature; this differs from the Western European view of nature as something to be tamed and put to practical use. While Native Americans saw reality and life in cyclical terms, the colonists tended to a linear view of beginnings and endings. Native Americans were typically polytheistic, while the colonists were mostly attached to Christian denominations.

Today Native Americans are recognized as equal citizens of the United States. Their voices are an important part of our history and literary heritage. In this lesson, students acquire a general understanding of the diversity of the indigenous people. They also work in small groups to study and present information about selected myths and legends.

You may or may not have students of Native American descent in your classroom. Regardless, it is a good idea to avoid common mistakes such as referring to Indians in the past tense, as if they no longer existed, and using negative phrases such as "Indian giver." The goal is respect and appreciation for indigenous cultures.

Procedure

1. Point out that when the first settlers came to the east coast of what is now the United States, they were invading a place where other people had already lived for many centuries. Ask students what they know about the indigenous people. (Students probably know that the tribes were mostly hunters, gatherers, and farmers. They did not share the European concept of land ownership. The arrival of the whites brought both persecution and diseases, and the Native American population dwindled dramatically by the end of the nineteenth century but has since had a resurgence. Some students may associate reservations with casinos.)
2. Use a large wall map of the United State or project an image from the Internet, and ask students to imagine the country as the colonists first arrived—no cities, no state divisions, no roads or train tracks.
3. Distribute **Handout 1**, and ask students to complete it individually. Follow with group discussion. (Answers can vary widely. For example, someone living in the Southwest would be accustomed to being able to see a long distance, while those living in woodlands would have to peer around trees. Diets would vary depending on availability of fruits, seafood, and animals such as deer, bison, and turkeys. Clothing depends on available materials and on climate, as does housing.)
4. Divide the class into small groups, and distribute **Handout 2**. Have each small group research one of the legends and prepare to report information to the rest of the class.

Suggested Responses

1. The Iroquois were and are centered in New York State. Wildlife of all sorts was abundant; hunting and fishing were the primary sources of food. Seasonal changes would have been dramatic. The story attempts to explain why the bear lacks the flamboyant tale of the fox; it is fanciful and shows a sense of humor. The animals are anthropomorphized.
2. The Seminoles were and are centered in the Florida Everglades, lush with wild vegetation and animals of all sorts. They did not experience the harsh winters of the Iroquois. The story focuses on the Milky Way and is religious in nature. The people believed in an afterlife for the virtuous; the story urges people to live good lives.
3. The Sioux were and to some extent still are Plains Indians who lived a fairly nomadic existence following herds of buffalo. The legend may remind some readers of the Bible story of Lot's wife. It tries to explain the origin of a rock that looks curiously like a human figure. It also shows how an object can become a focus of reverence and superstition.

4. The Apache were and are a tribe of the Southwest. The story of how people acquired fire is a part of nearly all mythologies and comes in many forms. This one involves fireflies and fox, who gets no perks at all for bringing fire to humans, who were incapable of getting fire for themselves.
5. The Hopi were and are Native Americans of the Southwest and are believed to be descendants of the original Pueblo dwellers. This legend resembles other fairy tales from around the world. The worlds of animals and humans are closely entwined. The dangerous curiosity of a woman has archetypal significance. The legend leaves one feeling that it is not so bad to be an owl.

5. Ask students to hypothesize about general characteristics of Native American legends and myths. (The stories frequently feature animals and sometimes teach lessons about how to live. They share many similarities with folk tales from around the world.)

Interdisciplinary Connections

1. Have students select one Native American tribe and research the people's history, customs, and present-day existence. Instruct students to report their findings in a formal paper or a multimedia presentation.
2. Ask students to research what is known about the Anasazi, the work of archaeologists among Anasazi ruins, and theories about what happened to the ancient ones. Have students present their findings to the class.
3. Assign students to read *Storyteller* by Leslie Marmon Silko or *The Way to Rainy Mountain* by N. Scott Momaday. Have students report on what the book shows about American Indian life.

 Name:

Geography and Culture

Directions: There are profound connections between where people live and how they live. Imagine that it is the year 1600, and you are among a group of indigenous people living in the following locations. Fill in the columns with information.

Location	Impact on Daily Life	Impact on Life View
1. Mountain in what is now North Carolina		
2. Area now described as the Florida Everglades		
3. Great Plains in what is now South Dakota		
4. Southwest area now called New Mexico		

A Sampler of Native American Myths and Legends

Directions: Native American myths and legends come from the oral tradition; they were passed on as stories from generation to generation. Many of them have now been recorded in writing so that we can read them as a source to understand the cultures of America's indigenous people. Learn about the following stories, summarize them, and analyze what they reveal about values and beliefs.

Myth/Legend	Summary	Values/Beliefs
1. Iroquois: "How Bear Lost His Tail"		
2. Seminole: "The Milky Way"		

 Name:

Myth/Legend	Summary	Values/Beliefs
3. Sioux: "Legend of Standing Rock"		
4. Apache: "Origin of Fire"		
5. Hopi: "The Child Who Turned into an Owl"		

Lesson 2

The Cherokee Tradition

Objectives

- To learn about the history and culture of the Cherokee Indians
- To study a variety of traditional Cherokee legends and myths

Notes to the Teacher

There is archaeological evidence that the Cherokee Indians lived in the southern Appalachian mountains for more than ten thousand years before the arrival of the first European explorers and colonists. North Carolina was their center, and they formed a highly organized culture based on both hunting and agriculture. Game was plentiful; the terrain was and is spectacular.

Historians today see the Trail of Tears (1838–39) ordered by President Andrew Jackson as an unnecessary miscarriage of justice. In North Carolina, the Cherokee generally got along well with the white settlers and adopted various practices and conveniences from them. Intermarriage was fairly common, and the two groups traded readily with each other. The Indians used legal channels to fight the order to relocate to Oklahoma but lost the battle.

Today the Cherokee nation is the second largest American Indian tribe in the United States and has two centers. One is in Cherokee, North Carolina; its roots are the Indians who managed to avoid the Trail of Tears and those who somehow returned. The other is in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Your students may recognize the name of that city if they read *Where the Red Fern Grows* in middle school.

In this lesson, students first reflect on the Cherokees' original habitat and ways it would have affected the people and their culture. They then discuss an assortment of Cherokee legends and myths. For procedure 4, you will need art materials.

Procedure

1. Use the Internet to show students photographs of North Carolina's mountain region. (Many sites are available.) Point out that this was the habitat of an important American Indian group, the Cherokees, who established permanent villages and developed a sophisticated culture. Ask students how the land where they lived would have affected the people's lives. (There was good land for farming, as well as

abundant game for food; deerskins could have been used for clothing; there were lakes and rivers for fishing. The mountainous area may have slowed the encroachment of white settlers.)

2. Point out that people's legends and myths can seem simple, but they reveal essential beliefs and attitudes, often in profound ways. Scholars examine traditional stories to discover archetypes, universal symbols that transcend differences in space and time. Archetypes are sometimes described as super-symbols. Explain that the class will now explore in depth five Cherokee legends.
3. Distribute **Handout 3**, and have small groups read the stories and answer the questions. Discuss responses.

Suggested Responses

"The Cherokee Creation Story"

1. This myth reflects an effort to explain how people and animals came to live on earth. Perhaps the people were aware of the great ocean to the east.
2. Like Genesis, the story presents stages in creation, but no deity plays a controlling role. The people envisioned a flat earth, just as Europeans once did.
3. The mountainous surroundings are explained, and animals are plentiful.
4. One important value is the beauty of Earth; we also see the daily cycle of the sun. The story reflects a fundamental human query: how did we get here?

"Two Wolves"

1. The two wolves are our opposite tendencies toward positive and negative urges.
2. The story encourages the grandson and the reader to nurture positive, constructive qualities, not to dwell in anger, greed, or resentment.
3. The story insists that we are responsible for what we become and that it is best to choose a life based on kindness and truth.

"The Story of Cherokee Rose"

1. This is a love story and a legend of the source of a flower. There are many versions of this secret and forbidden love; not all of them turn out happily, as this one does.
2. The values are romantic love and family loyalty.
3. One story associated with the Trail of Tears is that the weeping of the women along the way sowed the Cherokee rose across the country.

"Why the Mole Lives Underground"

1. The story deals with why moles prefer to live underground, not out in the bright sunshine. It reflects an interest in animal behavior.
2. People, it seems, fall in love for mysterious reasons. They are also easily roused to jealousy.

"Hunting the Great Bear"

1. The lazy, fat fourth brother is a humorous element.
2. The story explains constellations and seasonal change.
3. William Faulkner's "The Bear" is a kind of retelling of this archetype of a great and mysterious hunt.

4. Have small groups collaborate to present one of the legends in the form of a book intended for children. Remind students that children's books are characterized by colorful illustrations and minimal words. The vocabulary has to be simple, accessible to a child about six or seven years old.
5. When groups have finished, allow time for them to share their work. You may want to make arrangements for storytelling visits to children's classrooms in your area.

Advanced Placement Extension

Direct students to use the Internet to read an assortment of Cherokee legends. Then ask students to select three that deal with related topics and write essays in which they discuss what the legends show about the people's interests, beliefs, and values.

Selected Cherokee Legends

Directions: Use the Internet to find the following Cherokee legends. Read them carefully, and answer the questions.

"The Cherokee Creation Story"

1. What does the myth attempt to do?

2. Do you see any parallels with the creation story in the Book of Genesis?

3. How does the legend reflect the traditional Cherokee habitat?

4. What values does the legend express?

"Two Wolves"

1. What are the wolves?

2. What is the purpose of the story?

3. What philosophy of life does the legend convey?

"The Story of Cherokee Rose"

1. Have you ever read other versions of this story?

2. What values does the story emphasize?

3. Find a way the legend links to another one about the Trail of Tears.

"Why the Mole Lives Underground"

1. What does the story try to explain?

2. What does the story say about human nature?

"Hunting the Great Bear"

1. Do you see any humor in this legend?

2. What does the story try to explain?

3. In what way is the great bear an archetype?

Lesson 3

The Dine: The Navajo Tradition

Objectives

- To learn about the history and culture of the Navajo Indians
- To read and discuss a variety of Navajo legends and myths

Notes to the Teacher

The Navajo have always been a tribe of the West. They migrated into Utah and Arizona from Canada and settled near the pueblo dwellers, whose way of life they gradually assimilated. Their first contacts with Europeans were with the Spanish, and the numerous conflicts that arose often linked the Navajos with the Apaches. When Mexico ceded the Southwest to the United States, Navajo lands were included and have been the topic of numerous disputes.

The Southwest habitat of the Navajo was very different from the woodlands in the East. Dramatic rock formations, desert flora and fauna, and the ability to see a great distance contrasted with dense forests. The Navajo were hunters and farmers, as well as pottery makers and weavers, famous for their rugs.

The Navajo refer to themselves as *Dine*, meaning "the people." Today they comprise the largest American Indian tribe. A series of novels by Tony Hillerman centers on American Indian police officers Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee and conveys a keen understanding of Navajo culture and philosophy of life.

In this lesson, students first examine the habitat and art of the Navajo. They then research and discuss Navajo legends and mythology. These do not appear as a group of discrete stories, but rather are connected in a complex creation story which the Navajo have not been quick to reveal to foreigners unlikely to fully understand the traditions and beliefs of the Dine. The interdisciplinary connection involves students in research about other indigenous groups around the world. Students note similarities that transcend time and place.

Procedure

1. Use the Internet to show students photographs of the American Southwest. Many sites are available and show dramatic rock formations and characteristic features like piñon pines, cacti, and sagebrush. You may want to include images of pueblos and hogans. Point out that American Indian tribes such as the Anasazi and later the Navajo, Apache, and Hopi lived in this area before Europeans arrived. Ask students

to brainstorm how the environment would have impacted human culture. (There is none of the eeriness of the forest here; people could see a long way in bright daylight. Rain for growing crops was probably a serious concern. Game animals might be sparse or far away. The people would need ways to preserve food. There would be a need for ways to stay comfortable during the hot summer months.)

2. Use the Internet to show students images of Navajo pottery, baskets, rugs, and jewelry. Ask students to brainstorm observations. (There are a lot of geometric shapes and repeated patterns. The pieces demonstrate fine workmanship.)
3. Point out that the Navajo Indians, today the largest tribe, migrated from what is now Canada to settle in the Southwest. Their myths and legends reflect their understanding of their own origins and of what life is.
4. Distribute **Handout 4**, and have small groups complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. The Dine believe that they passed through a series of underworlds before they got to this one. Perhaps this describes a process of growing into full consciousness and is a version of our story of human evolution.
2. The Holy Ones are ancient spirits who protect the people and must not be offended. They are powerful figures representing tribal traditions.
3. Grandmother Spider is one of the Holy Ones and a prominent figure in Navajo legends. She taught the Indian women how to weave.
4. The doors face east to welcome morning sunlight. Bedroom windows also face east so that sunlight is the first thing people see when they awaken and so that they can greet the sun. The sun is not a god, but rather represents the presence of divinity.
5. The Navajo see life as cyclical, so death is a part of life, not the end of it. They believe in spirits and in a spirit world; it is important for the dead person's spirit to make it quickly to the other side, not to hang around the living and cause trouble. Navajos are reluctant to see or touch the dead, and burials are held quickly, usually the day after death. There is mourning, but not loud enough to call the spirit back.
6. The prayer stresses the importance of living in serenity, beauty, and harmony with all things. It is self-destructive to spend time in resentment, hatred, or any kind of unhappiness. To walk in beauty is to walk in the spirit of the Holy Ones.

Interdisciplinary Connection

Define the term *indigenous people*. (Indigenous people are those who traditionally made their home for many generations in a place later taken over by conquerors of another technologically superior group. In some cases, as with the Arawak Indians of the West Indies, this resulted in extinction or near extinction, primarily due to the introduction of diseases for which the native peoples had no immunity.) Divide the class into small groups, distribute **Handout 5**, and assign each group to research and report on one of the indigenous groups. After the groups have finished their reports, ask students what indigenous people seem to have in common. (They learned over many generations to live in harmony with the world around them and developed traditional cultures not prone to change and vulnerable to would-be conquerors and imperialists who were more technologically advanced. In all cases, the indigenous cultures seem to have qualities missing in and desperately needed by the people who marginalized them: a colorful and nonmaterialistic culture; loyalty to old traditions; harmony with the natural world and natural cycles.)

The Navajo Way

Directions: Use the Internet to research the Navajo creation story and various tribal customs. Then answer the following questions.

1. What are the Navajo underworlds?

2. Who are the Holy Ones?

3. Who is Grandmother Spider?

4. In what direction do hogan doors face? Why?

5. What are the traditional Navajo funeral practices? What do they suggest about the culture?

6. A Navajo prayer from the blessing way does not mention God but begins with the phrase "In beauty I walk" and stresses the importance of surrounding oneself in beauty. Use the Internet to read and reflect on the prayer. What does it show about the people?

 Name:

Indigenous People around the World

Directions: Find information about the following cultures, and fill in the chart.

People	History	Cultural Patterns
1. Maori of New Zealand		
2. Maya of Guatemala		
3. Aborigines of Australia		

 Name:

People	History	Cultural Patterns
4. Chamorros of Guam		
5. Inuits of the Northwest Territories		
6. Polynesians of Hawaii		

Lesson 4

Nonfiction: John Smith and the Colony in Virginia

Objectives

- To recognize the prevalence of nonfiction in colonial writing
- To analyze a primary source passage from the writings of Captain John Smith

Notes to the Teacher

The early colonists in the Virginia tidewater did not have an easy time of it. Disease was rampant, there were many men and few women, and the indigenous people were wary of the newcomers. The reason for the success of the effort to colonize was practical; the tidewater area proved ideal for growing tobacco. The most important writings we have from this place and time are those of Captain John Smith, who described the daily working and struggles of the colonists. Nonfiction was the characteristic genre of the time.

There is some debate about the character of John Smith. Some describe him as a flamboyant braggart and question his absolute accuracy; others praise the accuracy of his insight into the needs and potential of Virginia. The most famous story about him is the one that tells of his dramatic rescue from certain death by Pocahontas, a daughter of Chief Powhatan, the powerful leader of the Native Americans in the area.

In this lesson, students first reflect on the experience of being an early colonist in eastern Virginia. They learn about the life of Captain John Smith, and they read and analyze an excerpt from his writings. Finally, they view and discuss some of his drawings based on the history of Virginia.

Procedure

1. Ask students to imagine themselves among the first colonists to arrive in what would become Jamestown, Virginia, in May 1607. Ask them to freewrite for ten minutes about what they might think and feel in this situation. (It would probably be a great relief to stand on dry land, and the colonists probably had a craving for fresh food and water. They desperately needed shelter; the humid climate was not particularly healthful; the mosquitoes were probably fierce. The view inland showed wilderness nothing like what the colonists had known back home in England; it probably looked frightening.)

2. Ask students what kind of writing they think was produced during the colonial period. Lead them to see that there was little time or inclination for recreational writing; people kept journals, recorded factual events, and wrote letters.
3. Distribute **Handout 6**, and ask students to read the information and complete the writing. Follow with class discussion about the kind of man Captain John Smith seems to have been. (Smith was clearly a man of action—an adventurer and a fighter. He emerges as a larger-than-life figure, not a bit timid, not the sort of person that others can easily control.)
4. Explain that Smith wrote extensively about his experiences in the New World and included all kinds of material, including information about regional plants and animals. He described the indigenous people and even included some examples of their language. In addition, he told about the colonists' challenges as they tried to make a success of their venture in Virginia.
5. Distribute **Handout 7**, and ask students to read the excerpt silently. Ask them why some of the spelling differs from what we use today. (The English language is constantly changing; Smith wrote this about four centuries ago, so it reflects the usage of his day as well as his own limitations regarding spelling and sentence structure.)
6. Point out that this passage comes immediately after the description of the way Pocahontas, Chief Powhatan's daughter, saved Smith from being clubbed to death by his Indian captors. Ask small groups to answer the questions on the handout.

Suggested Responses

1. John Smith depicted the Indians as barbarians and savages. He found Powhatan intimidating. There is little sense that he saw them as human beings like himself.
2. He used the words *barbarian* and *savage*; he also saw them in a way as children, revealing his attitude of superiority and condescension.
3. Powhatan wanted guns and a grindstone. He clearly recognized the technological superiority of the colonists.
4. Smith indicates that only God could have inspired the Indians with compassion. You may want to point out the irony here, in light of later events such as the Trail of Tears.
5. The Indians feared the noise of the big guns and were easily satisfied with trinkets; the indigenous people seem to have been naïve and, in a way, innocent.
6. Some of the men thought that the whole settlement was a mistake.

7. Smith's response shows his stern strength, as he simply took over and succeeded.
8. Pocahontas started to bring much needed supplies to the people in Jamestown. We can only guess at her motivation—probably compassion, a desire for a good relationship between the new arrivals and the indigenous people, and curiosity. Students probably know from popular media that she later married another colonist, John Rolfe, and traveled with him to England.
9. a. "Providence" suggests "caring based on divine help and knowledge of the future."
   b. A pinnace is a ship.
   c. "No better than [then] they should be," a folk phrase, means "really bad."
   d. "Layd them by the heeles" suggests "knocked them to the floor," defeated them.
   e. Provisions are supplies; in this case, food.

7. Use the Internet to display John Smith's illustrations from *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* which appear near the beginning of the section about Virginia. The University of North Carolina's Web site *Documenting the American South* (http://docsouth.unc.edu) is one possible source; the drawings appear about twenty pages into the text. Conduct a discussion based on the following questions.
   - What do the images of the Indians stress? (Compared to the English colonists, the indigenous people are nearly naked and wear ornaments from animals; they are armed, but with primitive weapons. Smith seems to portray them almost as if they were animals.)
   - Does anything about Smith's portrait of himself convey a sense of humor? (Compared to the Indians, and especially compared to Powhatan, Smith seems almost ridiculously tiny.)
   - What does the map reveal about Smith? (It shows his desire to understand exactly where things were in Virginia.)

Advanced Placement Extension

Assign small groups to peruse *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles* and to select passages to present to the class for examination of both content and style of writing, including word choices. Monitor the groups to make sure they choose different passages. This activity involves students in a focus on diction and syntax that is central in both Advanced Placement language arts exams.

 Name:

The Life of Captain John Smith

Directions: Review the description of major events during the life of Captain John Smith, the first magistrate of the Colony of Virginia. Then write a description of the kind of person he seems to have been.

John Smith was born in 1580 in northern England. As a teenager, he left home to travel to France, where he became involved in the efforts to free Holland from Spanish control. After that, he worked on a merchant ship in the Mediterranean. Then he became involved in Austria's war against Turkey. In 1602, he was wounded, captured, and sold as a slave. Eventually, he escaped, traveled through Europe and northern Africa, and returned to England.

In England, he became interested in the idea of colonizing an area of the New World for profit. He and others set sail for Virginia, where they landed in 1607 and founded the first permanent English settlement in what would later become the United States. He was in a leadership position from the very beginning. Later that year he was ambushed and captured by the Native Americans of the region, who were led by a powerful chief named Powhatan.

Smith was held by the Indians for about four weeks; what actually happened seems a little unclear, but he later maintained that his life was saved by Pocahontas, a daughter of Powhatan. He left on good terms with the Indians and returned to the colony, which he found filled with unrest. He departed for a while to explore the Chesapeake Bay.

When he returned, he was elected to be president of the local council. The next year, in 1609, he was accidentally injured and returned to England for medical care. About five years later, he traveled to the New World to see Maine and Massachusetts Bay, but he never returned to Virginia. After that, he was refused permission to go again to the colonies. He seems to have spent most of his time writing about his experiences. He died in 1631.

Captain John Smith—Reading Between the Lines

Directions: John Smith wrote *The Generall Historie of Virginia, New-England, and the Summer Isles*, which includes all kinds of information about explorers, the land itself, the indigenous people, and the experiences of the early Jamestown colonists. Read the following excerpt, which deals with his experiences after being captured by Powhatan, a powerful Indian chief. Then answer the questions.

From Book 3, Chapter 2

Two dayes after, Powhatan having disguised himselfe in the most fearefull manner he could, caused Capt. Smith to be brought forth to a great house in the woods, and there upon a mat by the fire to be left alone. Not long after from behinde a mat that divided the house, was made the most dolefullest noyse he ever heard; then Powhatan more like a devill then a man with some two hundred more as blacke as himselfe, came unto him and told him now they were friends, and presently he should goe to James towne, to send him two great gunnes, and a gryndstone, for which he would give him the Country of Capahowosick, and for ever esteeme him as his sonne Nantaquoud. So to James towne with 12 guides Powhatan sent him. That night they quarterd in the woods, he still expecting (as he had done all this long time of his imprisonment) every houre to be put to one death or other: for all their feasting. But almightie God (by his divine providence) had mollified the hearts of those sterne Barbarians with compassion. The next morning betimes they came to the Fort, where Smith having used the Salvages with what kindnesse he could, he shewed Rawhunt, Powhatans trusty servant two demi-Culverings & a millstone to carry Powhatan: they found them somewhat too heavie; but when they did see him discharge them, being loaded with stones, among the boughs of a great tree loaded with Isickles, the yce and branches came so tumbling downe, that the poore Salvages ran away halfe dead with feare. But at last we regained some conference with them, and gave them such toyes; and sent to Powhatan, his women, and children such presents, as gave them in generall full content. Now in James Towne they were all in combustion, the strongest preparing once more to run away with the Pinnace; which with the hazzard of his life, with Sakre falcon and musket shot, Smith forced now the third time to stay or sinke. Some no better then they should be, had plotted with the President, the next day to have put him to death by the Leviticall law, for the lives of Robinson and Emry, pretending the fault was his that had led them to their ends: but he quickly tooke such order with such Lawyers, that he layd them by the heeles till he sent some of them prisoners for England. Now ever once in foure or five dayes, Pocahontas with her attendants, brought him so much provision, that saved many of their lives, that els for all this had starved with hunger.

1. What seems to have been John Smith's attitude toward Powhatan?

2. What specific word choices convey that attitude?

3. What did Powhatan want in exchange for Smith? What does this show about the chief?

4. How does Smith explain the apparent change in the Indians' attitude toward him?

5. How did Powhatan's warriors contrast with the Englishmen in Jamestown?

6. Why were some of the men in Jamestown disgruntled?

7. What does Smith's response to the trouble show about him?

8. What did Pocahontas start to do? Why?

9. Define the following words and phrases from context.
   a. providence
   b. pinnace
   c. no better then they should be
   d. layd them by the heeles
   e. provision

Lesson 5

Nonfiction: Writings from the Massachusetts Bay Colony

Objectives

- To understand the background of the foundation of the Massachusetts Bay Colony
- To analyze primary source documents for insights into the people and the place

Notes to the Teacher

The Massachusetts Bay Colony was the second British settlement in the New World. As in Virginia, most of the writings were nonfiction—journals, histories, and letters. These documents reveal a great deal about the people and the opportunities and hardships they experienced. The majority of the colonists were Separatists, dissenters from the Church of England. They experienced brutal persecution in England, went first to the Netherlands, and decided to make a life for themselves in the New World. They sailed on the famous *Mayflower* and established a settlement in which religious freedom was not a value. The people desired to make their own Separatist views the norm.

Students usually have some acquaintance with the Pilgrims in Massachusetts. Dramatizations of the first Thanksgiving are annual events at many elementary schools, and popularized images of Puritan men, women, and children proliferate during the holiday season.

In this lesson, students first learn background information about the colony. They then read and analyze a variety of excerpts from primary source documents of the period. One source, *The History of Plymouth Plantation,* was written by William Bradford, a longtime governor of the colony. Bradford's work can be disconcerting because of unconventional spelling and sentence structure, so students often need help to appreciate it. It is clear that he cared about the people and that he was both a thinker and a man of action. His deep-seated Calvinism is evident in his conviction that everyday events are manifestations of the will of God. The lesson involves students in the kind of document-based study characteristic of the AP U.S. History and Language and Composition exams. For the first procedure, you will need images connected with the *Mayflower*.

Procedure

1. Share images connected with the *Mayflower*. Ask students what they think it was like to travel across the ocean to the New World in 1620. (The trip probably started as a great adventure but was bound to become frightening in time; there would have been a lack of healthful food and water and perhaps a lot of seasickness.)
2. Explain that Massachusetts Bay was the second British colony in America. (The first one was Virginia.) The colonists were Separatists, dissenters from the dominant Church of England who opposed the pomp and pageantry of the official church. They are often referred to as Puritans. We can learn a little about them by studying their writings, most of them journals, letters, and attempts to record the history of the colony. Point out that the people wrote in the English of their time, and their language reflects the extent to which they were or were not educated.
3. Distribute **Handout 8**, and have small groups complete the activity. Follow with whole class discussion.

Suggested Responses

Document 1

William Bradford describes the dire straits of the Pilgrims from the *Mayflower* during the months after their arrival. About half of the people died, and most of the rest were very sick, including vomiting and diarrhea. Bradford emphasizes the heroic and diligent efforts of the few healthy ones to care for the sick. Landing in December, they did not find a lot of available food, and they were already sick with scurvy, which results from a vitamin deficiency. The first months in Massachusetts were truly miserable. The document reveals values of compassion and neighborly concern. Bradford was clearly grateful for the few that made it possible for the colony to survive.

Document 2

There seems to have been mutual suspicion between the local Indians and the new would-be settlers, but also curiosity and no actual animosity. The information about Samoset and Squanto shows that some indigenous people were in active communication with English sailors and colonists. In Massachusetts, at least for a time, the colonists and the Indians seem to have worked out a mutual agreement.

Document 3

This describes the first Thanksgiving, which would have been about a year after the landing of the *Mayflower*. There was a successful harvest, as well as plentiful wildfowl and deer. The Puritans and Indians had a splendid feast together. Edward Winslow mentions recreation, which seems to have included some kind of shooting competition. He also reflects an attitude of religious devotion.

Document 4

A rich land with plenty of food and freedom for all is described. William Hilton obviously did not arrive in December! He found that those who were ill had recovered their health. He was clearly enthusiastic about the possibilities of life in this new colony. You may want to point out that he was later joined by his family and he went on to settle in what is now New Hampshire.

4. Distribute **Handout 9**, and have students complete it individually. Follow with open-ended discussion.

Interdisciplinary Connection

Have students read the Mayflower Compact, research its history, and examine the list of names of the men who signed it. Assign students to write an essay explaining how it laid a foundation to establish what would eventually become an independent nation founded on the principles established in the Declaration of Independence.

The Early Puritan Settlers, in Their Own Words

Directions: Carefully read the following documents, and indicate what they reveal about the Massachusetts Bay Colony and the first settlers.

Document 1

The *Mayflower* did not reach the New World until late November—not the best time to land in Massachusetts and have no homes to provide warmth and shelter. This is what Governor William Bradford wrote about those first months in his *History of Plymouth Plantation*.

> But that which was most sadd and lamentable was that, in 2. or 3. moneths time halfe of their company dyed, espetialy in Jan: and February, being the depth of winter and wanting houses and other comforts, being infected with the scurvie and other diseases, which this long vioage and their inacomodate condition had brought upon them; so, as ther dyed some times 2. or 3. of a day, in the foresaid time; that of 100. and odd persons, scarce 50. remained. And of these in time of most distres, there was but 6. or 7. sound persons, who, to their great comendations be it spoken, spared no pains, night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their owne health, fetched them woode, made them fires, drest them meat, made their beads, washed their lothsome cloathes, cloathed and uncloathed them; in a word, did all the homly and necessarie offices for them which dainty and queasie stomacks cannot endure to hear named. . . .

Document 2

Governor Bradford also wrote in his *History of Plymouth Plantation* about the Pilgrims' contact with Native Americans.

> All this while the Indians came skulking about them, and would some times show them selves aloofe of, but when any approached near them, they would rune away; and once they stoale away their tools wher they had been at worke, and were gone to diner. But about the 16. of March a certaine Indian came bouldly amongst them, and spoke to them in broken English, which they could well understand, but marvelled at it. At length they understood by discourse with him, that he was not of these parts, but belonged to the easterne parts, wher some English-ships came to fhish, with whom he was aquainted, and could name sundrie of them by their names, amongst whom he had gott his language. He became proftable to them in aquainting them with many things concerning the state of the cuntry in the east-parts wher he lived, which was afterwards profitable unto them; as also of the people hear, of their names, number, and strength; of their situation and distance from this place, and who was cheefe amongst them. His name was Samaset; he tould them also of another Indian whos name was Squanto, a native of this place, who had been in England and could speake better English than him selfe.

Document 3

Edward Winslow arrived in Plymouth on the *Mayflower* and wrote this description of the first Thanksgiving.

> Our harvest being gotten in, our Governour sent foure men on fowling, that so we might after a more speciall manner rejoyce together, after we had gathered the fruit of our labours; they foure in one day killed as much fowle, as with a little helpe beside, served the Company almost a weeke, at which time amongst other Recreations, we exercised our Armes, many of the Indians coming amongst us, and amongst the rest their greatest King Massasoyt, with some ninetie men, whom for three dayes we entertained and feasted, and they went out and killed five Deere, which they brought to the Plantation and bestowed on our Governour, and upon the Captaine, and others. And although it be not alwayes so plentifull, as it was at this time with us, yet by the goodnesse of God, we are so farre from want, that we often wish you partakers of our plentie.

Document 4

William Hilton arrived in Plymouth in 1621 and wrote the following in a letter home to his family.

> At our arrival at New Plymouth, in New England, we found all our friends and planters in good health, though they were left sick and weak, with very small means; the Indians round about us peaceable and friendly; the country very pleasant and temperate, yielding naturally, of itself, great store of fruits, as vines of divers sorts, in great abundance. There is likewise walnuts, chestnuts, small nuts and plums, with much variety of flowers, roots and herbs, no less pleasant than wholesome and profitable. No place hath more gooseberries and strawberries, nor better. Timer of all sorts you have in England doth cover the land, that affords beasts of divers sorts, and great flocks of turkeys, quails, pigeons and partridges; many great lakes abounding with fish, fowl, beavers, and otters. The sea affords us great plenty of all excellent sorts of sea-fish, as the rivers and isles doth variety of wild fowl of most useful sorts. Mines we find, to our thinking; but neither the goodness nor quality we know. Better grain cannot be than the Indian corn, if we will plant it upon as good ground as a man need desire. We are all freeholders; the rent-day doth not trouble us; and all those good blessings we have, of which and what we list in their seasons for taking. Our company are, for the most part, very religious, honest people; the word of God sincerely taught us ever Sabbath. . . .

 Name:

Looking Back at the Mayflower Colonists

Directions: Indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements, and prepare to discuss your views.

Agree Disagree 1. If I could go back in time for a week or so, I would like to spend that time in Massachusetts Bay during the late summer of 1621.

Agree Disagree 2. I admire the bravery of the seventeenth-century people who dared to travel across the Atlantic Ocean to start a new life.

Agree Disagree 3. The mutual concern and willingness to help out that were characteristic of the Puritan colonists still exist in the United States today.

Agree Disagree 4. If I were a Separatist in the Netherlands early in the 1600s, I would have been excited about the plan to travel to the New World.

Agree Disagree 5. The Puritans' sense of superiority to the indigenous people would inevitably lead to conflict.

Agree Disagree 6. It was okay for the men to take all those chances, but the women and children should have stayed in Europe until houses were built in the New World.

Agree Disagree 7. Without faith in God, the early Massachusetts colony could not have survived.

Agree Disagree 8. We owe a lot to those long-ago settlers on the Atlantic coast of what is now the United States.

Lesson 6

The Muse in America: Anne Bradstreet

Objectives

- To recognize the beginnings of imaginative writing in the New World
- To reflect on universal sentiments in "To My Dear and Loving Husband"
- To analyze the process of thought development in "Upon the Burning of Our House"

Notes to the Teacher

Anne Bradstreet is an exception to the idea that colonial writing consists of journals, letters, histories, and sermons. She was born to a relatively successful family in England and had opportunities to read widely, unlike most women of her time. She married at age sixteen and soon emigrated to the New World, where she and her husband first settled in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1630. She was a devout Puritan, the mother of eight children, and a gifted poet. Her work draws us to realize that the Puritans were not just dour people focused on religion. They were, in many ways, like us.

She did not publish her own work. Without her knowledge, her brother-in-law had her collection of poems, *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*, published in London in 1650. This evoked some criticism of a woman squandering time on writing poems when there was so much work to do, but it also means that we have some of her work today.

The two of her poems most often used with high school students today are "To My Dear and Loving Husband" and "Upon the Burning of Our House." They are included in many textbooks and are readily available on the Internet. Both reflect her religious convictions. You may want to point out to students that writers' works always reflect their basic beliefs; readers do not have to agree in order to understand. Both poems address topics that are as relevant today as they were in seventeenth-century Massachusetts. For procedure 4, you may want to show an image of a burning house. Many sites on the Internet provide possibilities. The Advanced Placement extension at the end of the lesson invites students to examine a poem by Edward Taylor.

Procedure

1. Ask students why there is so little truly creative writing from the colonial period. (The colonists were busy trying to establish a new society; they had to work hard just to survive, let alone to prosper.) Why would some people in this situation take time to write poems? (Creative people usually say that they create because they have to; something inside makes them want to write, paint, or make music.)
2. Briefly introduce the life of Anne Bradstreet. Ask students to read "To My Dear and Loving Husband." If it is not in your students' textbook, it is readily available on the Internet.
3. Distribute **Handout 10**, and ask small groups to answer the questions.

   ### Suggested Responses

   1. The speaker seems to be Anne Bradstreet herself, and she is addressing her husband, Simon.
   2. This is a love poem; the speaker is commenting on the faithful love she and her husband share.
   3. The poem is written in couplets; the rhythm is iambic pentameter. Note that the poem is not a sonnet; it has only twelve lines.
   4. This is pure guesswork—a birthday or holiday, the birth of a baby, the death of someone else's spouse, etc.
   5. The lines reflect the author's Puritan perspective. They emphasize living a righteous life and the hope of being among the saved after death.
   6. The language is so natural that the poem could be used today at anniversary celebrations and on other occasions. Note that, with minor changes, the speaker could be a man.

4. Explain that the first fire department in America was started by Benjamin Franklin in the 1730s. The colonists' homes were made of wood, and both heating and light were provided by fire. House fires were far from uncommon. They remain a big concern today, which is why most people keep smoke detectors in their homes. If you wish, use the Internet to have students view and respond to an image of a house fire. Explain that Anne Bradstreet's house did burn down in 1666, and she wrote a poem about it. Ask students to read "Upon the Burning of Our House," which is readily available in many texts and on the Internet.

5. Distribute **Handout 11**, and ask students to complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. The only individual person mentioned is the speaker; perhaps she was alone in the house, which caught fire late at night. There seem to have been a number of people shouting outside the house. The cause is not specific. The fire took place in Massachusetts during the summer of 1666. The speaker escaped the fire, but the house burned to the ground.
2. The speaker's first response was fear of the danger posed by the fire.
3. She says that she sought consolation in her religious beliefs.
4. It seems that the house was not rebuilt, and she frequently went past the ruins that were left.
5. She experienced nostalgic memories of living in the house. Anne Bradstreet was in her mid-fifties at the time, so there would have been many memories of her past family life.
6. Anne Bradstreet seems to express the theme of the Bible story about Job—the idea that the Lord gives and takes away, and people must bow to the divine will. She also believed in a life after death better than the one we have on earth.

6. Ask students to imagine awaking in the middle of the night to discover that the home is on fire. What would they try to take with them on the way out? What feelings would they have? To what extent would their responses resemble those of Anne Bradstreet? Allow time for freewriting, and collect the pieces as tickets out of class.

Advanced Placement Extension

Explain that Anne Bradstreet was not the only poet of her time. In fact, there may have been many other individuals who wrote poems that we simply do not have today. Edward Taylor was a Puritan minister, a husband, a father, and a poet who lived in an outlying area in Massachusetts. Distribute **Handout 12**, and have students read the poem. Explain that the earliest American writers used decidedly British styles of writing. Taylor's poems reflect the metaphysical style, which tended to use complicated and extended metaphors and similes. Have small groups discuss the questions. This analysis is especially beneficial for students planning to take the Advanced Placement Examination in Literature and Composition, which includes poems and not infrequently uses works from metaphysical poets.

Suggested Responses

1. We usually associate the terms *ebb* and *flow* with the sea, but the poem is dominated by fire, not water, imagery. The commonality is the rhythmic patterns of life.
2. The first stanza deals with the past, the second with the present, and the third with hopes for the future.
3. a. Today we use the term *tinder box* as a metaphor for a situation likely to erupt in violence. Historically, a tinder box was a small container holding items helpful to light a fire.

   b. A *censer* is a container used to start a long-lasting fire to burn incense. Censers are often associated with religious rituals.

   c. *Ignis fatuus* is an illusion of fire, often because of phosphorescence in a swampy area.

   d. *Bellows* are used to keep a fire going by pushing air into it and blowing ashes away.

   Edwards uses the terms to describe his religious faith and work as a minister. He longs to continue to spread the "fire" of God's word and believes that he needs divine aid to be able to continue to do it.
4. The poem is certainly a prayer for divine assistance. The main tools are imagery and metaphors. The rhyme pattern and meter are much more complicated than those seen in Anne Bradstreet's poems.

"To My Dear and Loving Husband"

Directions: Carefully read Anne Bradstreet's poem, and answer the following questions.

1. Who is the speaker in the poem, and to whom is the speaker writing?

2. What is the speaker's purpose?

3. Describe the poem's rhythm and rhyme patterns.

4. What occasion might have prompted the writer to create this poem?

5. What is the meaning of the last two lines?

6. Could this poem be used in any situations today?

"Upon the Burning of Our House"

Directions: If you have ever witnessed a very large fire, you know that it is a terrifying experience—noisy, often smelly, and threatening to everything and everyone near it. The Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet had this experience and later wrote about it. Read her poem, and reflect on the following points.

1. If you were a newspaper reporter writing a story about the fire, you would consider six basic questions. Try to answer them.

   Who?

   What?

   Where?

   When?

   Why?

   How?

2. What were the poet's first feelings when she awoke to find the house on fire?

3. Where did she first find comfort?

4. Why did the speaker frequently think about the fire that happened in the past?

5. What images went through her mind when she looked at the ruins?

6. What do the concluding stanzas reveal about her philosophy of life?

A Look at Edward Taylor

Directions: As you read the following poem by Puritan poet Edward Taylor (1642–1729), pay careful attention to the images and figures of speech.

The Ebb and Flow

When first Thou on me, Lord, wrought'st thy sweet print,
My heart was made thy tinder-box,
My 'ffections were thy tinder in't,
Where fell thy sparks by drops.
Those holy sparks of heavenly fire that came
Did ever catch and often out would flame.

But now my heart is made thy censer trim,
Full of thy golden altar's fire,
To offer up sweet incense in
Unto thyself entire:
I find my tinder scarce thy sparks can feel
That drop from out thy holy flint and steel.

Hence doubts out bud for fear thy fire in me
'S a mocking *ignis fatuus*;
Or lest Thine altar's fire out be,
It's hid in ashes thus.
Yet when the bellows of thy spirit blow
Away mine ashes, then thy fire doth glow.

—Edward Taylor

1. How does the title seem to conflict with the content?

2. How is the poem organized?

3. How would you define the following terms? What role do they play in the poem?
   a. tinder box
   b. censer
   c. ignis fatuus
   d. bellows

4. What do you see as the poem's main purpose? What means does the author use to achieve that purpose?

Lesson 7

Puritan Beliefs and Practices

Objectives

- To understand the lifestyle and basic beliefs of the Puritan settlers in Massachusetts
- To reflect on ways Puritanism helped to shape what it means to be an American

Notes to the Teacher

The Puritans were essentially Calvinists. They repudiated the lavish practices of the Church of England and aimed to purify religion, to cleanse it of abuses and excesses. There is no one systematic statement of what it means to be a Puritan, but sermons and historical events provide a vivid sense of what the Massachusetts settlers believed and did not believe. They were vividly aware of God as a judge, and they took life seriously. They wanted church and state to be not separate, but one entity. They believed in family, hard work, and a kind of communal covenant with God. In addition, they strove vigorously for material success. Ironically, these people driven to the New World by religious intolerance did not favor tolerance in their new surroundings.

For many people today, the Puritans' concept of predestination is the most difficult aspect to understand. Puritans did not believe that a person could earn salvation by living a good life; however, the capacity to live a good life could be seen as a signal that a person was among the saved. God chose the elect minority, and the rest were damned.

Some scholars hold that a decisive moment in the history of Puritanism in the New World occurred in the witch scare that culminated in the notorious Salem trials in 1692. Rigidity, fear, and greed led to mass hysteria and the execution of people based on flimsy evidence and hearsay, much of it offered by children. Once the hysteria died down and common sense prevailed, many people were no longer eager to have a society in which church and state were one.

In this lesson, students begin with Internet research about Puritanism. Many helpful sites are available; you may want to advise the class to look for information on Web sites associated with colleges and universities. If your students have studied primary source materials from the early colonies, they will be able to relate them to the statements on the handout. The lesson concludes with a discussion about the extent to which Puritan roots

are still visible in American culture today. If you have copies of Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, you may want to follow the lesson with a reading and discussion of the play.

Procedure

1. Distribute **Handout 13**. Have students use the Internet to find information as they complete the handout. (Note: It can be helpful to have students work with partners or in groups of three.)

Suggested Responses

1. The Puritans believed that people were born evil, corrupted with original sin. No one could be trusted not to succumb to this essential evil; an attitude of suspicion was an inevitable result. Children would not be viewed as naturally innocent.
2. The Puritans were not confident that they themselves were saved, although they were hopeful about that. They believed in predestination, that only a select few were destined for salvation. Nothing any individual could do would affect whether or not he or she was saved. A natural consequence of this would be a deep fear of death.
3. Ironically, the Puritans were at least as intolerant as the culture that previously persecuted them. "Heretics" settled elsewhere in the colonies. There was no idealism about religious freedom or freedom of speech.
4. Sins were also crimes punished by civil authorities. Adultery and drunkenness, for example, were punished publicly.
5. Puritans loathed what they saw as the pomp of both the Church of England and the Catholic Church. The worship services were austere and dominated by preaching. People were expected to attend church every Sunday. Worship was a regular part of the life of every Puritan child's growing-up experience.
6. The Puritans did not enjoy this kind of confidence. Theirs was the kind of God emphasized in much of the Old Testament, and their attitude toward God was one of fear and reverence. Religion was not a matter of joyful celebration.
7. Puritan austerity did not extend to detachment from material things. Prosperity was a definite goal, and this resulted in competition for wealth.

8. Girls received little or no education and were expected to become homemakers. Boys who were not academically talented were expected to learn and practice a trade. Higher education was a goal for boys who showed academic ability. For this, the Puritans founded Harvard, a university that remains one of the most respected institutions of higher learning in the country today. In its early years, Harvard prepared young men for ministry.
9. Puritan women had substantial domestic responsibilities; they lived and worked in a sphere separate from that of men. The Bible story of the Garden of Eden led to men having a general suspicion about the frailties of women.
10. Puritans believed in hard work as the will of God and a way to prosperity. They deplored anything that seemed merely frivolous. This does not mean that they were incapable of enjoying themselves, as the story of the first Thanksgiving demonstrates.
11. The Puritans feared the wilderness and saw it as the domain of Satan. Their goal was to convert the wilderness into usable land for settlements and for farming. This attitude stemmed from the biblical association of wilderness with godlessness.
12. The Puritans feared traces of devil-worship and prosecuted people suspected of it. This practice reached its apex in 1692 during the notorious Salem witchcraft trials, which generated mass hysteria and resulted in executions of innocent people accused of being witches.

2. Ask students to highlight items on the handout that they believe still exert a strong influence, whether positive or negative, in the United States today. Follow with class discussion. Responses can vary widely. You may want to stress some of the following ideas and issues.
   - Today we have almost complete separation of church and state, and sometimes matters associated with religion are considered illegal in public contexts. Most Americans identify themselves as Christians, but have we become essentially an atheistic society?
   - People who advocate censorship believe that the government should intervene to protect the public, especially children, from evil influences in print and the media. To what extent is censorship a good practice?
   - Are the Puritans the root cause of the materialism that is a main force in society today?
   - Today women enjoy equal rights. At the same time, family stability is at an all-time low. Are these two facts related?

- Is the United States today a culture committed to hard work, or is it focused on leisure activities and fun? Is the Puritan ethic gone?
- To what extent do people today see the wilderness as something to be protected and saved? The areas around cities that were once forests and farmlands are now often covered with malls, housing developments, office buildings, and condominiums. Will the day come when there is very little wilderness left in the United States?

Advanced Placement Extension

Have students read Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown," which was written long after the Puritans dominated Massachusetts. Then assign students to write essays in which they discuss the story's perspectives on Puritanism in colonial Massachusetts.

The Nature of Puritanism

Directions: Use the Internet to research the beliefs, ethical codes, and worship of the Puritan colonists in Massachusetts. Then indicate whether each of the following statements is true, false, or somewhere in between, and note effects of the beliefs on the people and their society.

1. The Puritans believed that people are essentially good.

2. The Puritans believed that they alone were saved and everyone else would go to hell.

3. Having come to the New World because of religious persecution, the Puritans advocated a policy of tolerating religious differences.

4. The Puritans believed that the civil government was responsible for enforcing people's morality.

5. Puritan worship was characterized by organ music and congregational singing.

6. Puritans believed in a loving God who welcomed into heaven everyone who led a good life.

7. Puritans placed little value on money and possessions.

8. The Puritans were opposed to any education that did not have a practical purpose.

9. Puritan women enjoyed complete equality with men.

10. Puritans placed a high value on hard work.

11. Puritans enjoyed exploring the wilderness.

12. The Puritans tried people for witchcraft and executed those who were found guilty.

Lesson 8

"Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"

Objectives

- To recognize Puritan beliefs in Jonathan Edwards's sermon
- To analyze his use of figurative language

Notes to the Teacher

As the Puritan experiment in the New World moved into its second century, the religious focus of the early colonists seemed to be diminishing. Attention was focused on more earthly things, and within a few decades, the main issue would be not a covenant with God, but the possibility of independence from Great Britain.

Jonathan Edwards was born after the Salem witch trials and was the descendant of several generations of Puritan ministers. He attended Yale and was acquainted with the work of both John Locke and Sir Isaac Newton. In 1726, he was invited to become an assistant minister in Northampton, Massachusetts, where he became an important figure in the religious revival called the Great Awakening. Emphasizing direct, personal experience of God and insisting on the sinner's complete dependence upon divine mercy, evangelists used powerful oratory to move people to amend their lives.

Edwards delivered the famous sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" in 1741 at the height of his career; by 1750, his church dismissed him because of his radical Puritanism. He moved to what was then the frontier, ministered to Indians, and wrote treatises. He later was named president of what is now Princeton University but died in 1758 after only five weeks in the position.

Excerpts from "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" are usually included in American literature anthologies and textbooks and are also readily available online. The sermon vividly reflects Puritan beliefs. In this lesson, students read all or part of the sermon and reflect on its presentation of beliefs of Puritanism. Students then analyze examples of Edwards's uses of vivid figurative language and imagery.

Students respond in diverse ways to Jonathan Edwards, depending on their own backgrounds and beliefs. You may want to emphasize that they are reading his sermon not because you want them to accept his beliefs, but because it expresses aspects of Puritan thinking that impacted future generations. Edwards also demonstrates effective uses of language to support an argument. For the final procedure, you will need art materials.

Procedure

1. Explain that after incidents such as the Salem witch trials in 1692, religious fervor in New England seemed to wane. Preachers tried to counteract this by fiery sermons intended to win people back to devout practice of religion. The first half of the eighteenth century brought the Great Awakening, religious revivals during which fiery ministers drew great crowds. One of these ministers was Jonathan Edwards. Although his sermon "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" was delivered more than a century after the arrival of the *Mayflower*, it is often used today as the premier expression of traditional Puritan beliefs.
2. Ask students to read all or part of the sermon. Then use the following questions to generate discussion.
   - What was Edwards trying to do in the sermon? (frighten the congregation back into morality and devotion to God)
   - How do you think the congregation responded? (with wailing and near hysteria, according to historians)
   - Would this sermon be effective today? (Responses depend on personal beliefs about God, life, and an afterlife.)
   - What insights into colonial Puritanism does the sermon convey? (God was seen as all-powerful and demanding; people were expected to be both moral and pious. The sermon reflects a high level of education, which was a value.)
3. Distribute **Handout 14**, and ask students to complete the exercise. Follow with class discussion.

Suggested Responses

1. Edwards compares the sinner to a lead rock pulled by gravity into a fiery abyss. The individual's efforts to resist would be no more effective than gossamer would be to stop a falling boulder. The comparison stresses the powerlessness of humans to resist the inevitable divine will and their total dependence on mercy.
2. Here divine anger is compared to a powerful flood barely restrained by barriers and constantly rising in power and turbulence. Once those waters are released, people are powerless to resist, like tiny twigs, as if they were caught in a massive flood or a tsunami. Again, only divine mercy can provide help. The sense is that God is tired of waiting and being merciful.

3. God is like an archer with the arrow tightly drawn and pointed at each individual, ready to be shot home. Death can come at any time, including when it is least expected. This was certainly true for the congregation attending the sermon, who were constantly aware of the many dangers to their lives from illness, accidents, and violence.
4. In one of the most famous figures of speech in the sermon, the individual is like a spider suspended over the fires of hell. The comparison emphasizes the vileness of human nature and imminent danger of eternal damnation.

4. Ask students to create visual projects to depict passages from the sermon. Direct them to include both words and images to convey the force of Jonathan Edwards's message. Display results around the room, and allow time for students to view and comment on the results.

Advanced Placement Extension

Have students read Jonathan Edwards's sermon "How to Know If You Are a Real Christian." Then assign them to write an essay in which they compare and contrast both the theme and the literary style to those in "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."

Interdisciplinary Connection

Ask students to select a topic of great concern to people today and to write speeches in which they use imagery and figurative language to support one central point about that issue.

 Name:

Jonathan Edwards and Figurative Language

Directions: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" demonstrates the use of powerful imagery and figurative language to support a main point. Focus on the following excerpts. Explain what they mean and discuss the literary devices Jonathan Edwards used.

1. "Your wickedness makes you as it were heavy as lead, and to tend downwards with great weight and pressure towards hell; and if God should let you go, you would immediately sink and swiftly descend and plunge into the bottomless gulf, and your healthy constitution, and your own care and prudence, and best contrivance, and all your righteousness, would have no more influence to uphold you and keep you out of hell than a spider's web would have to stop a falling rock."

2. "The wrath of God is like great waters that are dammed for the present; they increase more and more, and rise higher and higher, till an outlet is given; and the longer the stream is stopped, the more rapid and mighty is its course, when once it is let loose. 'Tis true, that judgment against your evil work has not been executed hitherto; the floods of God's vengeance have been withheld; but your guilt in the mean time is constantly increasing, and you are every day treasuring up more wrath; the waters are continually rising, and waxing more and more mighty; and there is nothing but the mere pleasure of God that holds the waters back, that are unwilling to be stopped, and press hard to go forward."

3. "The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood."

4. "The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; his wrath towards you burns like fire; he looks upon you as worthy of nothing else, but to be cast into the fire; he is of purer eyes than to bear to have you in his sight; you are ten thousand times so abominable in his eyes, as the most hateful and venomous serpent is in ours."

Lesson 9

Missing Voices: The Fact of Slavery

Objectives

- To recognize that many people living in America during the colonial period had no or almost no voice in the colonies' literature and history
- To focus on attitudes toward slavery during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
- To become acquainted with the work of Phillis Wheatley

Notes to the Teacher

The first African-American slaves arrived in the British colonies in 1619; by 1725, there were at least seventy-five thousand black slaves in what is now the United States. While all of the colonies had slaves, the majority were in the South, where they became indispensable to the large plantations as field workers; a smaller number worked in domestic areas and as skilled laborers. The study of literature involves reflection on and analysis of voices; for the most part uneducated and deprived of stable family connections, the voices of these African Americans are only a dim murmur that we must strain to hear today.

The "peculiar institution" was a controversial topic from the very start. At first, the imported slaves were treated very much like the indentured servants who came from Europe. Later, slavery became a permanent state; when the slave trade with Africa was abolished, slave owners bred slaves for a growing market of plantation workers. Slavery was a hot topic during the revolutionary period, but the southern states' staunch position kept the slaves as exceptions to the belief that "all men are created equal."

In this lesson, students examine several writings in order to consider the situation of African Americans long before the Emancipation Proclamation. First, students respond to statements by the first three presidents of the United States; they were, at least in theory, opposed to slavery. Second, students study a brief excerpt from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African*, which was published in 1789. Equiano's accounts of slavery are direct and personal and graphically describe the inhumanity of the institution. Students then respond to a poem by Phillis Wheatley, and they conclude the lesson with creative writing.

Procedure

1. Point out that the study of literature involves a look at the numerous voices of the past and present. Ask students what voices from colonial America they have not yet heard. Lead them to see that having a voice depends largely on literacy. Many of the indentured servants who came to the New World were not literate; the slaves imported from Africa did not know English, let alone how to read and write.
2. Explain that the first handful of slaves arrived in the British colonies in 1619 and that by 1725 there were seventy-five thousand African-American slaves in what is now the United States.
3. Distribute **Handout 15**, and have small groups complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. All three men express opposition to slavery, which was and is offensive to democratic idealism. It was also the foundation of the plantation economy of the South.
2. Both Washington and Jefferson inherited slaves. When economic realities conflict with idealism, pragmatism usually wins. As Jefferson's comments suggest, there was a fundamental belief in white superiority. There was also widespread fear, especially in the South, of the social consequences if all of the slaves were freed.
3. In the United States, the president does not make the laws, although he might help to shape public opinion and in that way influence legislators.

4. Explain that it is hard to imagine the experiences of the people abducted from the west coast of Africa and taken across the ocean to a life of slavery in a society that spoke a different language among people with totally different physical features. Distribute **Handout 16**, and ask students to read the excerpt and reflect on the questions.

Suggested Responses

1. Equiano describes landing in a harbor in the New World after a long journey across the ocean.
2. The narrator clearly thought that the white people were cannibals who planned to eat the captives.
3. Nothing about the captors would have resembled African standards of beauty.

4. The colonial houses were a total contrast to the village housing the speaker knew in Africa.
5. Equiano tells his story in an elegant way that is not without irony. The word *packet* sums up the view of the Africans as property to be sold. The fear he describes seems to be something far in the past, and there is an ironic tone to much of what he says.

5. Tell students that a young eighteenth-century African-American woman named Phillis Wheatley wrote poems. Distribute **Handout 17**, and ask students to complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. The speaker says that she wants to explain reasons for her love of freedom.
2. She describes her abduction from Africa; compared to Equiano's writing, the style is very restrained.
3. She mentions devoted parents who must have grieved the disappearance of their child.
4. The regular rhyme and rhythm impose an air of propriety on the poem.

6. Distribute **Handout 18**, and review the directions with the students. You may want to urge them to create variations of the suggested topics or to devise new ones. Emphasize that the writings can take a variety of forms: poems, songs, letters, diary entries, descriptions, narratives, etc.

Interdisciplinary Connection

Ask students to create an album of pictures depicting the lives of slaves and slaveholders in the colonies before the Revolutionary War. Instruct students to write a brief caption to explain each picture.

Presidents Speak about Slavery

Directions: From the first, slavery in the New World was a controversial issue. Read the following information about and comments from the first three U.S. presidents, and answer the questions.

George Washington (1732–1799) was a Virginian and the head of a great estate, Mount Vernon. He was raised as a slaveholder, and he owned slaves until his death, but he insisted, "I can only say that there is not a man living who wishes more sincerely than I do to see a plan adopted for the abolition of slavery." His will provided for the eventual freedom of all of his slaves.

John Adams (1735–1826) was a prominent lawyer in Massachusetts. His wife, Abigail, was against slavery and hired free black people as servants. John Adams had this to say: "I have throughout my whole life held the practice of slavery in abhorrence."

Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826) owned a large estate, Monticello, in Virginia. He came from a slaveholding family, and he owned slaves. This is what he had to say: "No defender of slavery, I concede that is has the benevolent aspect in lifting the Negro from savagery and helping prepare him for that eventual freedom which is surely written in the Book of Fate."

1. What was the opinion of each man on slavery?

2. Why would someone opposed to slavery actually own slaves and use slave labor?

3. If the first three presidents disapproved of slavery, why was the institution allowed to continue?

The Voice of Olaudah Equiano

Directions: Read the following excerpt from a very early slave narrative, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African*, which was published in 1789. Then answer the questions.

> . . . [A]s the vessel drew nearer we plainly saw the harbour, and other ships of different kinds and sizes; and we soon anchored amongst them off Bridge Town. Many merchants and planters now came on board, though it was in the evening. They put us in separate parcels, and examined us attentively. They also made us jump, and pointed to the land, signifying we were to go there. We thought by this we should be eaten by these ugly men, as they appeared to us; and, when soon after we were all put down under the deck again, there was much dread and trembling among us, and nothing but bitter cries to be heard all the night from these apprehensions, insomuch that at last the white people got some old slaves from the land to pacify us. They told us we were not to be eaten, but to work, and were soon to go on land, where we should see many of our country people. This report eased us much; and sure enough, soon after we were landed, there came to us Africans of all languages. We were conducted immediately to the merchant's yard, where we were all pent up together like so many sheep in a fold, without regard to sex or age. As every object was new to me every thing I saw filled me with surprise. What struck me first was that the houses were built with stories, and in every other respect different from those in Africa: but I was still more astonished on seeing people on horseback. I did not know what this could mean; and indeed I thought these people were full of nothing but magical arts.

1. What experience does Equiano describe here?

2. What did he initially think that the white people intended to do with their captives?

3. Why did he think that the white people were ugly?

4. What amazed him about the houses he saw?

5. How would you describe the personality of the narrator?

Phillis Wheatley, American Poet

Directions: Phillis Wheatley (1753–1784) was a house slave in Massachusetts. Her owners recognized her talents so, unlike most slaves, she received an education and became a poet. Carefully read the following stanza from her poem entitled "To the Right Honorable William, Earl of Dartmouth." Then answer the questions.

> Should you, my lord, while you peruse my song,
> Wonder from whence my love of Freedom sprung,
> Whence flow these wishes for the common good,
> By feeling hearts alone best understood,
> I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
> Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat:
> What pangs excruciating must molest,
> What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?
> Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd
> That from a father seiz'd his babe belov'd:
> Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
> Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

1. What is the speaker trying to explain?

2. What keen memory does she describe?

3. What does she emphasize about her family?

4. What can you observe about the poet's use of rhythm and rhyme?

Putting Experience into Words

Directions: Try to put yourself into the place of one of the following slaves. Do some Internet research to discover what life would have been like for the person, and imagine yourself there. Then write a creative piece from that individual's point of view and using his or her voice.

- Twenty-two-year-old male working as a boat builder in New York City
- Eighteen-year-old male working tobacco fields in Virginia
- Sixteen-year-old female working cotton fields in Georgia
- Fifty-year-old female house slave in Baltimore, Maryland
- Seven-year-old child of a house slave in South Carolina
- Seventeen-year-old girlfriend of a young slave sold south
- Fifteen-year-old African on the auction block for the first time
- Seventy-year-old male, once a field worker in Virginia, but now a house slave

Before you start to write, complete the following steps.

1. Acquire information about a slave's life in the New World in the first half of the eighteenth century.
2. Give yourself a name and a definite personality.
3. Select a specific audience. Decide to whom you are going to write.
4. Identify your purpose. What are you trying to accomplish in this writing?

Lesson 10

Poor Richard's Almanack

Objectives

- To appreciate Benjamin Franklin's wry, homespun humor
- To appreciate the economy of language and thematic power of aphorisms

Notes to the Teacher

Benjamin Franklin is truly one of the most amazing persons in American history. An early demonstration of the rags-to-riches ideal, he was a printer, writer, inventor, scientist, university and library founder, revolutionary leader, and statesman. In this lesson, students will focus on his witty aphorisms as proof that people in prerevolutionary America were not without a sense of life's humor and ironies.

Sources disagree on whether *Poor Richard's Almanack* was first published in 1732 or 1733. The publication appeared annually for more than two decades and was a best seller (ten thousand copies a year) in which Franklin gave himself the fictional identity of a henpecked husband named Richard Saunders. Like almanacs people purchase today, it dealt with the weather, crops, recipes, and important days and topics. It also included advice and words of wisdom from Poor Richard.

It is easy to think of Americans of the colonial and revolutionary periods as dour individuals with no sense of fun or humor. The popularity of the *Almanack* proves a keen appreciation of ironic situations and verbal wit. The aphorisms were fillers to complete page layouts. Franklin used and adapted folk adages and created some of his own; many of them have come to the present day as well-known expressions of commonsense humor and truth.

In this lesson, students meet Franklin's aphorisms as they were expressed in *Poor Richard's Almanack*. They also complete visual projects related to aphorisms. The Advanced Placement extension focuses on the voice of Poor Richard.

Procedure

1. Ask students what they already know about Benjamin Franklin. (He invented the Franklin stove and eyeglasses. He founded the first fire department in America and public lending libraries, as well as the University of Pennsylvania. He is famous for almost electrocuting himself with a kite during a storm. He participated as a leader in the movement toward American independence, and he served as an ambassador for the new United States.)

2. Point out that Franklin began his career as a printer and was also a creative writer. For two and a half decades, he wrote and published *Poor Richard's Almanack*, in which he gave himself a fictional identity as Richard Saunders. The almanac was a huge success with everyday people. Explain the general contents of almanacs, and point out that where extra space was available in his book, Franklin would include clever adages that combined humor with insight into the vagaries of human nature and life in general. Often the aphorisms began with the phrase "as Poor Richard says."
3. Define the word *aphorism*. (An aphorism, like a proverb, is a short saying intended to convey a message of some sort, often—but not always—in metaphorical terms. An example might be "No pain, no gain.")
4. Distribute **Handout 19**, and ask students to complete it individually. Follow with whole class discussion. Then ask students to identify the values and beliefs that underpin each aphorism.

Suggested Responses

1. Franklin implies the need for caution in extending trust and says that most people are prone to say whatever they know. Expecting someone to keep a secret is foolish.
2. The aphorism says that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, not in the object or person that is beheld.
3. It is easy for people in large crowds to stop thinking and just go with the flow; that is why riots happen.
4. This whimsical aphorism suggests that even homely things and people have the potential to acquire beauty.
5. This is realistic; death is inevitable.
6. Franklin says we have to be careful who our friends are; negative qualities hop from friend to friend.
7. Jokes about lawyers obviously go back not just years, but centuries. Law is a tricky thing.
8. It is important for guests not to outstay their welcome.
9. What is true of produce is also true of people; bad attitudes and behavior are contagious.
10. A good reputation is a valuable and fragile thing; once it is ruined, it is never fully restored.
11. The aphorism suggests that it might be better to replace the noisy wheel (or whining person) than to spend time, energy, and resources trying to fix it.
12. It is easier and cheaper to guard against problems than to fix them once they occur; prudence is important.

13. Desperate people cannot make good bargains. It is better to have many options available.
14. Rudeness and other negative behaviors are unlikely to win people over.
15. The adage promotes persistence in big projects; it also warns not to overlook small enemies.

5. Point out that Franklin was not the only one to create or write down aphorisms. Ask students to brainstorm aphorisms that they hear in everyday life. (Examples might include "The apple never falls far from the tree," "A stitch in time saves nine," or "The early bird gets the worm.")
6. Direct students to use the Internet to peruse aphorisms by Franklin, by other famous people, and from oral traditions. Have each student pick one and create a visual that includes the adage itself, the source, and an image that depicts its meaning. Conclude by having students share results, and post the projects around the classroom.

Advanced Placement Extension

Ask students to complete **Handout 20**, which involves an examination of Poor Richard's narrative voice.

Suggested Responses

1. The main similarity lies in the reference to scientific apparatus.
2. Franklin himself was the printer, and he gave Richard Saunders a homespun kind of voice. Saunders seems a simple and straightforward person.
3. Poor Richard presented himself as a henpecked husband, but we can see that he and his wife were poor, and she lacked basic necessities. This naturally made her irritable.
4. Spelling, capitalization, and punctuation were not yet standardized. Franklin gave himself the persona of an ordinary person and wrote as he imagined that person would write. The capitalization may have been intended to highlight important words.
5. People must have enjoyed the humor and valued the information in the almanac. Attention must have shifted from a primary focus on God and an afterlife to life in the here and now in the colonies.

Words of Wisdom from Benjamin Franklin

Directions: In *Poor Richard's Almanack* and elsewhere, Benjamin Franklin often included pithy quips that reflect both keen insight and wry humor. Read the following examples. Then select five that appeal to you, and write a brief reflection about each one. Be ready to share your insights with the class as a whole.

1. Three may keep a secret, if two of them are dead.
2. There are no ugly loves nor handsome prisons.
3. A mob's a monster; heads enough, but no brains.
4. What is a butterfly? At best he's but a caterpillar dressed.
5. Death takes no bribes.
6. He that lieth down with dogs shall rise up with fleas.
7. A countryman between two lawyers is like a fish between two cats.
8. Fish and visitors stink in three days.
9. The rotten apple spoils his companion.
10. Glass, china, and reputation are easily cracked and never well mended.
11. The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise.
12. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.
13. Necessity never made a good bargain.
14. A spoonful of honey will catch more flies than a gallon of vinegar.
15. Little strokes fell great oaks.

The Voice of Poor Richard

Directions: Read the following excerpts from early issues of *Poor Richard's Almanack*, and answer the questions.

The 1733 edition included this comment to readers:

> Courteous Reader,
>
> I might in this place attempt to gain thy Favour, by declaring that I write Almanacks with no other View than that of the publick Good; but in this I should not be sincere; and Men are now a-days too wise to be deceiv'd by Pretences how specious soever. The plain Truth of the Matter is, I am excessive poor, and my Wife, good Woman, is, I tell her, excessive proud; she cannot bear, she says, to sit spinning in her Shift of Tow, while I do nothing but gaze at the Stars; and has threatned more than once to burn all my Books and Rattling-Traps (as she calls my Instruments) if I do not make some profitable Use of them for the good of my Family. The Printer has offer'd me some considerable share of the Profits, and I have thus begun to comply with my Dame's desire.

The 1734 issue had this to say:

> Courteous Readers,
>
> Your kind and charitable Assistance last Year, in purchasing so large an Impression of my Almanacks, has made my Circumstances much more easy in the World, and requires my grateful Acknowledgment. My Wife has been enabled to get a Pot of her own, and is no longer oblig'd to borrow one from a Neighbour; nor have we ever since been without something of our own to put in it. She has also got a pair of Shoes, two new Shifts, and a new warm Petticoat; and for my part, I have bought a second-hand Coat, so good, that I am now not asham'd to go to Town or be seen there. These Things have render'd her Temper so much more pacifick than it us'd to be, that I may say, I have slept more, and more quietly within this last Year, than in the three foregoing Years put together. Accept my hearty Thanks therefor, and my sincere Wishes for your Health and Prosperity.

1. What characteristics of Benjamin Franklin himself are evident in Richard Saunders?

2. What fictional characteristics does Franklin give Saunders?

3. What is your impression about Mrs. Saunders?

4. How would you explain the irregularities in spelling and punctuation?

5. What does the popularity of *Poor Richard's Almanack* reveal about Americans in the 1730s and 1740s?

Lesson 11

Benjamin Franklin: The Autobiography

Objectives

- To examine Benjamin Franklin's focus on developing a disciplined daily schedule
- To consider his efforts to improve his own character
- To understand the characteristics of autobiographies

Notes to the Teacher

Benjamin Franklin began writing his autobiography in 1771 at the age of sixty-five; at the time, he was in England as an agent for the colonies, and he seems to have wanted to tell the story of his life to his son, William. Later he apparently realized that the work could be useful for readers beyond the circle of his own family. The writing was interrupted by events prior to and during the American Revolution; Franklin got back to it in 1784 when he was in France as a diplomat. After that, he added little to the document, which is incomplete and does not include Franklin's involvement in the colonies' bid for independence.

One of seventeen children of a Boston soap maker, Franklin was apprenticed to his brother, a printer. Eventually, he ran away, first to New York, eventually to Philadelphia, where he settled and became a printer, storekeeper, inventor, scientist, writer, and statesman. He embodies the rags-to-riches theme that constitutes the American Dream.

The autobiography provides fascinating glimpses of life in the colonies during the first half of the eighteenth century. It is permeated with Franklin's subtle humor and sense of responsibility to himself and others.

In this lesson, students first consider the challenges and responsibilities involved in writing an autobiography or memoir. The writer has to decide what to include and what to leave out, as well as how the contents can affect other people. As with all writing, audience awareness is vital.

Students then study the section of the autobiography that is most often included in high school anthologies, Franklin's daily schedule, which reflects his commitment to discipline, work, and intellectual endeavors. If students will later have the opportunity to study *The Great Gatsby*, familiarity with Franklin's schedule will prove helpful. After this, students consider the list of qualities that Franklin considered essential to a good

person. They also begin to write their own autobiographical narratives. The extension at the end of the lesson is ideal for American studies programs and for Advanced Placement classes and involves reading and discussing an excerpt from Thomas Jefferson's autobiography. If students have not already discussed some of Franklin's life and work, you may want to precede the first procedure with information about his achievements such as inventions, scientific experiments, founding the first lending library and fire station, and participation in the American search for independence.

Procedure

1. Share with students the following aphorisms from Benjamin Franklin.
   - Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.
   - Lost time is never found again.
   - A place for everything, everything in its place.
   - By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.

   Ask students what the quotes suggest about Franklin's attitudes toward life. (He believed in discipline, organization, responsibility, and order. He probably hated to waste time and deplored disorganized places and situations.)
2. Distribute **Handout 21**, and ask students to study the information. Then ask volunteers to surface observations. (Franklin was an early riser, and he retired fairly early. He was very conscious of the need for self-improvement, and he was purposeful. He believed in working a full day, but he also left time for relaxation and entertainment.)
3. Ask students how a modern person might alter this schedule. (For some, it would include a daily run or time at the gym; it might include times to check e-mail or conduct research on the Internet. For a lot of people, it would have to include time to commute back and forth to work.)
4. Ask students to write similar schedules of their own school days. Have small groups share results. Point out that having a schedule can help people to accomplish things they tend to put off.
5. Explain that Franklin also created a list of characteristics he thought important to a good person. Ask students to jot down five qualities they would include on such a list. Then pool all responses to create a general list.
6. Distribute **Handout 22**, and have students complete the exercise. Conduct an open-ended discussion based on the following questions.
   - Which of the characteristics do you think are the most important?
   - Did any of them surprise you?
   - Are there any characteristics that you would add to the list?
   - Why does Franklin mention Jesus and Socrates?

7. Point out that Franklin lived a century after the first English colonists appeared in the New World. Ask students if his ideas and values in any way resemble those of the Puritans who came over on the *Mayflower* and their descendants. (There is a similar emphasis on sobriety, hard work, and prosperity. These are values with deep roots in American traditional culture.)
8. Point out that Franklin worked on his autobiography for many years and never did finish it. Ask students what challenges a would-be autobiographer faces. (Once the writer decides on a purpose and audience, the next challenge is to decide what to include and what to leave out. The goal is to choose events and characters instrumental in shaping the autobiographer's character and choices and also of potential interest to the reading audience.)
9. Direct students to write autobiographical narratives. Ask them to select a significant experience or set of experiences and to tell the story in a way that will interest a specific audience (e.g., classroom peers, younger students, scholarship committee). Allow informal time for students to play with and share ideas. Establish length requirements, a day for conferencing, and a due date.

Advanced Placement Extension

Benjamin Franklin was not the only one to attempt an autobiography. Thomas Jefferson did too. Distribute **Handout 23**, which includes an excerpt, and ask students to read it and answer the questions. Follow with discussion.

Suggested Responses

1. Unlike Franklin, who began with the intention of addressing his son, Jefferson seems to be addressing a general audience of readers of his own time and perhaps of the future.
2. Jefferson seems to be trying to present events in order as they occurred, so his wedding comes right between pieces of less personal import and seems to interest him primarily for financial reasons. His voice is impersonal.
3. Jefferson's voice is factual and, for the most part, dry; Franklin often inserts wry humor, and his personality is very evident.
4. Jefferson seems more fact-oriented; his interests extend outward, without the emphasis on personal improvement we see in Franklin. Jefferson was caught up in pre-Revolution politics while Franklin was away in England. Jefferson was clearly electrified by Patrick Henry, and it is no surprise that he was instrumental in bringing about independence from England.

5. Franklin's story may have more human interest angles; Jefferson's work is bound to have a lot of material of high interest to history buffs. Both men had superior abilities to use language to make their points.

Benjamin Franklin's Daily Schedule

Directions: *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* includes a daily schedule. Study the schedule, and be prepared to share observations about it.

THE MORNING *Question*. What Good shall I do this day?	5 6 7	Rise, wash, and address *Powerful Goodness*! Contrive day's business, and take the resolution of the day; prosecute the present study, and breakfast.
	8 9 10 11	Work
NOON	12 1	Read, or overlook my accounts, and dine.
	2 3 4 5	Work
EVENING *Question*. What Good have I done today?	6 7 8 9	Put things in their places. Supper. Music or diversion, or conversation. Examination of the day.
NIGHT	10 11 12 1 2 3 4	Sleep

 Name:

Benjamin Franklin's List of Good Qualities

Directions: *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* describes his systematic efforts to improve his character by focusing on thirteen traits. Read the list and his descriptions of the characteristics. Then star the three on which you would place the most value.

These names of virtues, with their precepts, were

1. TEMPERANCE. Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. SILENCE. Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. ORDER. Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.
4. RESOLUTION. Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. FRUGALITY. Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. INDUSTRY. Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. SINCERITY. Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. JUSTICE. Wrong none by doing injuries, or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. MODERATION. Avoid extreams; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. CLEANLINESS. Tolerate no uncleanliness in body, cloaths, or habitation.
11. TRANQUILITY. Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
12. CHASTITY. Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
13. HUMILITY. Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

An Excerpt from Thomas Jefferson's Autobiography

Directions: Like Benjamin Franklin and many other noteworthy people, Thomas Jefferson wrote an autobiography. Read the following passage, and answer the questions.

> In 1769, I became a member of the legislature by the choice of the county in which I live, & so continued until it was closed by the Revolution. I made one effort in that body for the permission of the emancipation of slaves, which was rejected: and indeed, during the regal government, nothing liberal could expect success. Our minds were circumscribed within narrow limits by an habitual belief that it was our duty to be subordinate to the mother country in all matters of government, to direct all our labors in subservience to her interests, and even to observe a bigoted intolerance for all religions but hers. The difficulties with our representatives were of habit and despair, not of reflection & conviction. Experience soon proved that they could bring their minds to rights, on the first summons of their attention. But the King's Council, which acted as another house of legislature, held their places at will, & were in most humble obedience to that will: the Governor too, who had a negative on our laws, held by the same tenure, & with still greater devotedness to it: and, last of all, the Royal negative closed the last door to every hope of amelioration.
>
> On the 1st of January, 1772, I was married to Martha Skelton, widow of Bathurst Skelton, & daughter of John Wayles, then twenty-three years old. Mr. Wayles was a lawyer of much practice, to which he was introduced more by his great industry, punctuality & practical readiness, than to eminence in the science of his profession. He was a most agreeable companion, full of pleasantry & good humor, and welcomed in every society. He acquired a handsome fortune, and died in May, 1773, leaving three daughters; the portion which came on that event to Mrs. Jefferson, after the debts should be paid, which were very considerable, was about equal to my own patrimony, and consequently doubled the ease of our circumstances.
>
> When the famous Resolutions of 1765, against the Stamp-act, were proposed, I was yet a student of law in Williamsburg. I attended the debate, however, at the door of the lobby of the House of Burgesses, & heard the splendid display of Mr. Henry's talents as a popular orator. They were great indeed; such as I have never heard from any other man. He appeared to me to speak as Homer wrote.

1. What audience does Thomas Jefferson seem to be addressing?

2. What seems to be Jefferson's purpose?

3. How does the autobiography differ in style from that of Benjamin Franklin?

4. How does Jefferson as a person seem to contrast with Franklin?

5. Would you like to read more of either man's story? Why or why not?

Lesson 12

The Impulse toward Independence

Objective

- To analyze elements of the move toward independence in the American colonies

Notes to the Teacher

Looking back, we can see that the American drive toward independence was a great success, but the eighteenth-century colonists did not have that certainty. Breaking away from the mother country, the most powerful nation across the Atlantic, was a gigantic risk. There were no guarantees of success. Some people opposed the idea; in addition, there was a need to decide what kind of country the new nation would be if independence was secured.

Politicians listened to and made speeches, and educated people read authors like Thomas Paine. Everyday colonists encountered songs, often of unknown authorship, which were disseminated by memorization, newspapers, or broadsides. The songs were accompanied by fife and drum music. Although of limited literary value, the songs portray the spirit of the American patriot. In this lesson, students first consider the lyrics of "Revolutionary Tea," which probably first appeared as a broadside. If you want to do more with Revolutionary War songs, you can find examples on the Internet. Titles include "Yankee Doodle," which comes in many versions, "The Battle of the Kegs," and "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier."

Students then consider an excerpt from a political speech. Patrick Henry, a Virginian, was one of the most gifted orators of the Revolution. Thomas Jefferson was amazed at his power. Henry's most famous line, and one that many Americans can recite from memory, came at the end of his speech to the Virginia convention: "Give me liberty or give me death." If the entire speech is in your students' textbook, you may want to have them read it.

Finally, students look at a brief excerpt from Thomas Paine, who wrote paperbound pamphlets in support of revolution. In *Common Sense* (January 1776), Paine urged a total break from England. He was an aide-de-camp during the war when he wrote *The Crisis*, an appeal for bravery and determination. You may want to have students read additional comments by Paine as excerpted in their textbooks or on the Internet.

You may want to play fife and drum music as students enter the classroom. For the first procedure, you will need to access *The Spirit of '76*, a painting by Archibald Willard, on the Internet or in a reproduction print.

Procedure

1. Show students Archibald Willard's painting *The Spirit of '76*. Point out the fifer and the drummer. Explain that songs during the Revolutionary War were often accompanied by fife and drum. They were ways of mobilizing ordinary people to support the idea of independence from England.
2. Explain that while ordinary people were going about life as usual and sometimes participating in dramatic actions like the Boston Tea Party, political figures were giving and listening to fiery speeches. One of the most gifted of the speakers was Patrick Henry, a Virginia lawyer and statesman.
3. Point out that some patriots wrote essays and pamphlets to urge the more intellectual among the colonists to support the idea of independence.
4. Distribute **Handout 24**, and have students complete the exercise. Then have students share their writings and/or posters.
5. Conduct a discussion of each of the documents on the handout. Include the following points.

   "Revolutionary Tea"

   - The song personifies England as a demanding old lady and the colonies as her feisty young daughter.
   - The issue is the tea tax; the outcome is the Boston Tea Party.
   - The lyrics consist of dialogue and a refrain with variations.
   - For the colonists, the tone is jubilant and resistant, since the old lady is very far away indeed.

   Patrick Henry

   - War is inevitable; to opt for peace is to choose to become a slave.
   - Patrick Henry was speaking in Virginia, where slavery was a way of life essential to the plantations.
   - To refuse to fight for independence was to become like one of the slaves in the tobacco fields.
   - Patrick Henry was exhorting the other delegates to choose death rather than servitude to England.

   Thomas Paine

   - "Summer soldier" and "sunshine patriot" are metaphors like "fair-weather friend."
   - It is easy to be patriotic when there is no political turmoil. The difficult first stage of the war would prove who the true American patriots were.
   - Paine says that the colonists will value freedom more simply because it was not easy to attain.

6. Remind students that letters are among the most important writings of the early centuries of life in America. Distribute **Handout 25**, and ask small groups to complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. Abigail Adams was obviously well educated and articulate, as well as informed about current events.
2. She was concerned about her husband's safety and about the outcome of the effort for independence.
3. The rocks and quicksands are metaphors for the hidden dangers that seemed to surround them.
4. Abigail Adams referred to ancient Greek history and the defeat of Sparta by Athens.
5. She seems to have been concerned that North Carolina might not go along with the effort for independence.
6. People in Boston seem to have been suffering under the hands of British authorities.
7. Abigail Adams would have enthusiastically supported both Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine.

Interdisciplinary Connection

Ask students to select one of the original thirteen American colonies, and research its history from its foundation to the eve of the Revolutionary War. Have students report on major events, key persons, urban areas, and regional characteristics.

Voices for Independence

Directions: Imagine that you are living in the American colonies during the years before the American Revolution. Read the following documents, and then write a paragraph or create a poster stating your views about the idea of independence from England.

Document 1

The following song appeared on broadsides all around town, and you have heard many people singing the lyrics to the catchy tune.

Revolutionary Tea

There was an old lady lived over the sea
And she was an Island Queen.
Her daughter lived off in a new countrie
With an ocean of water between.
The old lady's pockets were full of gold,
But never contented was she,
So she called on her daughter to pay her a tax
Of three-pence a pound on her tea,
Of three-pence a pound on her tea.

"Now mother, dear mother," the daughter replied,
"I shan't do the thing you ax.
I'm willing to pay a fair price for the tea,
But never the three-penny tax."
"You shall," quoth the mother, and reddened with rage,
"For you're my own daughter, you see,
And sure 'tis quite proper the daughter should pay
Her mother a tax on her tea,
Her mother a tax on her tea."

And so the old lady her servant called up
And packed off a budget of tea,
And eager for three-pence a pound, she put in
Enough for a large familee.
She ordered her servants to bring home the tax,
Declaring her child should obey,
Or old as she was, and almost woman grown,
She'd half whip her life away,
She'd half whip her life away.

The tea was conveyed to the daughter's door,
All down by the ocean side,
And the bouncing girl poured out every pound
In the dark and boiling tide,
And then she called out to the Island Queen,
"Oh! Mother! Dear mother!" quoth she,
"Your tea you may have when 'tis steeped enough,
But never a tax from me,
No, never a tax from me!"

Document 2

In a 1775 speech to the Virginia Convention, delegate Patrick Henry made an impassioned plea for independence. It concluded with the following paragraph.

> . . . Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!

Document 3

In 1776, the colonists seemed to be losing to the more powerful British army. Thomas Paine, an influential writer, wrote this in his pamphlet called *The Crisis*.

> These are the times that try men's souls: The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of his country but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain, too cheap, we esteem too lightly:—'Tis dearness only that gives every thing its value. Heaven knows how to set a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed, if so celestial an article as Freedom should not be highly rated. . . .

Letters Just Before the Revolution

Directions: Read the following excerpts from letters Abigail Adams wrote to John Adams, and answer the questions.

In August 1774, Abigail Adams, the wife of the man who would later become the second president of the United States, wrote this in a letter to her husband.

> The great distance between us makes the time appear very long to me. It seems already a month since you left me. The great anxiety I feel for my country, for you, and for our family, renders the day tedious, and the night unpleasant. The rocks and quicksands appear upon every side. What course you can or will take is all wrapped in the bosom of futurity. Uncertainty and expectation leave the mind great scope. Did ever any kingdom or state regain its liberty, when once it was invaded, without bloodshed? I cannot think of it without horror. Yet we are told, that all the misfortunes of Sparta were occasioned by their too great solicitude for present tranquillity, and, from an excessive love of peace, they neglected the means of making it sure and lasting.

Here is an excerpt from a letter from Abigail to John Adams in May 1775.

> I received by the Deacon two letters from you, this day, from Hartford. I feel a recruit of spirits upon the reception of them, and the comfortable news which they contain. We had not heard any thing from North Carolina before, and could not help feeling anxious, lest we should find a defection there, arising more from their ancient feuds and animosities, than from any settled ill-will in the present contest; but the confirmation of the choice of their delegates by their Assembly, leaves not a doubt of their firmness; nor doth the eye say unto the hand, "I have no need of thee." The Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance. Great events are most certainly in the womb of futurity; and, if the present chastisements which we experience have a proper influence upon our conduct, the event will certainly be in our favor. The distresses of the inhabitants of Boston are beyond the power of language to describe. . . .

Name:

1. What can you learn about Abigail Adams from her letters?

2. What seem to be her main concerns?

3. Are the rocks and quicksands she mentions literal or metaphorical? Explain.

4. What is the significance of the allusion to Sparta?

5. What was her concern about North Carolina?

6. What do you think she meant by the reference to Boston?

7. Do you think Abigail Adams would agree or disagree with Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine? Explain.

Lesson 13

The Declaration of Independence

Objectives

- To understand the content, organizational structure, and style of the Declaration of Independence
- To identify the effects of charged words
- To examine the use and effectiveness of parallelism in written and oral discourse

Notes to the Teacher

In June 1776, Thomas Jefferson, at the behest of John Adams, began to draft the Declaration of Independence, one of the foundation documents of the United States. It is part of our national heritage, and it is also a model of persuasive or argumentative writing. It was not intended to be an expression of Jefferson's unique views. He, like other leaders in the colonies, was interested in the ideas of the British philosopher John Locke, who asserted basic human rights of life, liberty, and property. As Jefferson himself explained, "This was the object of the Declaration of Independence. Not to find out new principles or new arguments never before thought of . . . but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent."

Later in life, in composing his own epitaph, Jefferson omitted the many public offices he had held, including president of the United States, and listed three accomplishments: writing the Declaration of Independence, writing the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and founding the University of Virginia. He clearly placed the Declaration of Independence at the acme of his contributions to the new nation called the United States of America.

Jefferson's rhetorical effectiveness in the document derives from clear and cogent arguments against the British crown, as well as from a balance of reason and emotion. Parallelism and charged words contribute undeniable power.

In this lesson, students read and analyze the Declaration of Independence. The document is included in most American literature and American history books, and it is readily available on the Internet. For the final procedure, you will find it useful to provide highlighters.

Procedure

1. Explain that Thomas Jefferson's job in writing the Declaration of Independence was to persuade both individuals and nations that the colonies were justified in demanding independence from England. It was important for the eyes of the world to see the colonies' actions as justified and respectable.
2. Have volunteers read the Declaration of Independence aloud.
3. Distribute **Handout 26**, and ask small groups to answer the questions.

Suggested Responses

1. The Declaration was intended to gain approval from other countries about the decision to become independent from England.
2. The basic rights listed are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is interesting that Jefferson replaced Locke's third right, property, with the pursuit of happiness, a more abstract topic.
3. The king of England treated the colonies in an oppressive and tyrannical manner.
4. The Declaration goes on to list specific offenses of the British against the colonies.
5. England interfered with the colonies' effective government, intruded military troops, prevented trade, imposed taxes, and made just trials impossible or difficult.
6. Jefferson pointed out that the colonies were not quick to turn to revolution but had tried, without success, many ways to reach agreements with the king.
7. The tone becomes forceful; the decision was made, and the colonies were united in their determination to become a free and independent nation.

4. Distribute **Handout 27**, review the directions with the class, and ask students to complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. There are numerous possibilities, such as *satanic, bliss, rout, delectable,* and *baby brother.*
2. Charged words include *unalienable, abuses, usurpations, despotism, sufferance, wholesome, tyrant, invasion, convulsion, imposing, plunder, ravage, perfidy,* and *insurrection*.

3. For the first sentence, it is better to use two active verbs: The soccer players boarded the bus and rode it to the field in a nearby town. The second example can read as follows: If you want to go to college, you need to take the entrance exam; you also need to save some money.
4. "He has" begins the itemization of the king's offensive actions. Then comes another list using *for* followed by gerunds. The second last paragraph has a series of sentences beginning "we have."

5. Point out that both charged words and parallel structure have to be used judiciously to make the most impact on the audience. Too many charged words can come to sound pretentious; too much parallel structure can seem monotonous.
6. Ask students to write paragraphs in which they use both charged words and parallel structure in an argument. If necessary, suggest topics—e.g., an effort to persuade a teacher not to give a unit test on Monday, a request for a raise at work, a campaign to eliminate littering in a neighborhood.
7. Have students exchange papers and use markers to highlight effective examples of charged words and parallel structures. Invite volunteers to read examples aloud, and comment on specific examples of the techniques. If you wish, assign students to expand the paragraphs into essays characterized by charged diction and parallel syntax.

Advanced Placement Extension

Explain that in July 1848, seventy-two years after the Declaration of Independence, a meeting in Seneca Falls, New York, led to the formulation of the Declaration of Sentiments. Ask students to find it on the Internet and to compare and contrast it with the 1776 Declaration. (The women at the Seneca Falls conference imitated Thomas Jefferson's structure and use of charged words and parallel structure in a plea for women's rights. You may want to explain that the Seneca Declaration did not have the spectacular success of the Declaration of Independence. The issues at the heart of the Civil War were fermenting, and women's rights were tabled temporarily in the effort to abolish slavery.)

Analyzing the Declaration of Independence

Directions: Use the following questions to analyze Thomas Jefferson's argument in the document.

1. According to the first paragraph, what was the main purpose of the Declaration of Independence?

2. What basic human rights does the second paragraph claim?

3. According to the second paragraph, what was the core reason for the colonies' decision to become independent?

4. What do the following short paragraphs do?

5. What does the Declaration list as some of England's main offenses?

6. What was the purpose of the colonies' emphasis on their efforts to use peaceful means to gain just treatment from the king of England?

7. How does the tone shift in the final paragraph?

Charged Words and Parallelism

Directions: Read the information about important rhetorical devices in the Declaration of Independence, and complete the exercise.

1. Charged words are impactful because of the emotions and ideas associated with them. For example, *parent* is emotionally neutral, and *mother* is more charged. *Seductive* is more charged than *attractive*; *bigoted* is stronger than *prejudiced*. Provide an emotionally charged replacement for each of the following relatively neutral words.

   a. evil

   b. happiness

   c. defeat

   d. tasty

   e. sibling

2. Find ten examples of Thomas Jefferson's use of charged words in the Declaration.

3. Many years ago Julius Caesar wrote, "Veni, vidi, vici," which translates to, "I came, I saw, I conquered." This is a clear example of the device known as parallel structure: a repetition of grammatical patterns that can be a striking and powerful tool in both written and oral language. Use parallel structure to rewrite each of the following statements.

   a. The soccer players boarded the bus and were driven to the field in a nearby town.

   b. If you want to go to college, you need to take the entrance exam. It would also be good for you to save some money.

4. Note the beginning of paragraph 2 of the Declaration and the parallel structure in the series of clauses which begin with the world *that*. Find other examples of parallel structure in the document.

Lesson 14

What Is an American?

Objectives

- To recognize the challenges that faced the colonists after they won independence
- To analyze J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur's description of the American character
- To understand characteristics of agrarian idealism

Notes to the Teacher

J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur came to the New World as a soldier with the French army, worked for a decade as a surveyor, then married and became a farmer in New York. He is most famous for *Letters from an American Farmer*, which was hugely popular with Europeans who were curious about life in the New World. The section entitled "What Is an American?" is most often included or excerpted in textbooks.

The question of what it would mean to be an American must have been in many people's minds during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. When the colonists stopped being British, what did they become? The Founding Fathers had to create a new government, and a new nationality had to evolve, one quite distinct from those of the Europeans who settled in the colonies.

Crèvecoeur was the first to write about the American Dream in action. In the book, he created a character named James as his persona, and the writing expresses agrarian idealism. It is the first truly romantic piece written in America. At the time, most people in the country were engaged in farming or other aspects of rural life; this would not change until the Civil War and the development of large urban areas in the North.

Crèvecoeur's writing is not easy for today's students to read. His paragraphs tend to be exceedingly long, and he tends to repeat the same generalizations over and over. **Handout 28** is intended to present a sampling of his ideas.

Procedure

1. Point out that the colonies' move toward independence succeeded, and people who had been British subjects found themselves with the challenge of forming a new national identity as Americans. Briefly describe Crèvecoeur's career. Then distribute **Handout 28**, and ask small groups to examine and respond to the excerpts.

2. Follow with general discussion, and point out ironies.

Suggested Responses

1. To Crèvecoeur, America consisted of the eastern seaboard from Nova Scotia to Florida. He applauds the idea that here there is no chasm between the social classes and sees the country, for the most part, as a community of farmers. This is no longer the case today.
2. He was perhaps the first to hold the melting pot theory of American culture, but it was a melting pot consisting only of Europeans.
3. The one great reason why most immigrants come to America is economic opportunity, so this ideal still holds, although it is not always reached. Certainly, Crèvecoeur saw the new country as a land of opportunity.
4. The United States certainly became a vast and powerful nation and played leadership roles in many arenas. Is it still in the vanguard?
5. The United States became something new in the modern world by choosing not to become a monarchy. The great experiment in democracy has continued over the centuries and has been imitated in many places around the world.
6. Crèvecoeur presents religion as an individual's private business, a very different view from that of the early colonists, but one which dominates today in a nation in which state and church are separate institutions.
7. He holds that anyone who is willing to work can succeed in America. He does not mention the disenfranchised—black slaves and Native Americans. He also seems to be speaking primarily about males.
8. Crèvecoeur does not praise wilderness. He praises the beauty of cultivated fields and well-kept farmhouses. What would he think of miles of strip malls along today's roads and our nearly total dependence on supermarkets?

3. Explain that at about the same time Crèvecoeur was writing his book, romanticism was being born in England. Explain that romanticism is characterized by idealism; it is concerned more with the way things should be than with the way they are. Point out evidence of romanticism in Crèvecoeur's descriptions of America and Americans.
4. Distribute **Handout 29**, and have students complete it individually. Follow with open-ended class discussion.

5. Assign students to respond to the following topic: What is an American today? Explain that their responses can consist of essays, poems, stories, or artworks; they should be ready to share results with the class as a whole. Set a target date for the final projects.

Advanced Placement Extension

Assign students to read Letter 9 in *Letters from an American Farmer*, "Description of Charles Town." Ask them to record notes on ways the subject matter, tone, and insights contrast with those in the chapter entitled "What Is an American?" (Crèvecoeur was appalled at the system of slavery he saw in the South. His tone is critical and lacks the optimistic idealism of the earlier letter. It is evident that the promising new nation about which he was so enthusiastic endorsed a system in which all men were clearly not considered equal.)

Crèvecoeur Speaks of America

Directions: One of the earliest reflections on what it means to be an American was written near the end of the eighteenth century by J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur, a French soldier who settled for a time in America and wrote *Letters from an American Farmer*. Read the following excerpts, and consider the extent to which you think they were true then and are still true today.

1. According to Crèvecoeur, the visitor to America "is arrived on a new continent; a modern society offers itself to his contemplation, different from what he had hitherto seen. It is not composed, as in Europe, of great lords who possess every thing, and of a herd of people who have nothing. Here are no aristocratical families, no courts, no kings, no bishops, no ecclesiastical dominion, no invisible power giving to a few a very visible one; no great manufacturers employing thousands, no great refinements of luxury. The rich and the poor are not so far removed from each other as they are in Europe. Some few towns excepted, we are all tillers of the earth, from Nova Scotia to West Florida. We are a people of cultivators, scattered over an immense territory communicating with each other by means of good roads and navigable rivers, united by the silken bands of mild government, all respecting the laws, without dreading their power, because they are equitable."

2. Crèvecoeur speaks of American diversity. "The next wish of this traveller will be to know whence came all these people? they are a mixture of English, Scotch, Irish, French, Dutch, Germans, and Swedes. From this promiscuous breed, that race now called Americans have arisen."

3. He holds that the poor who had nothing in Europe find their real country in America. "In this great American asylum, the poor of Europe have by some means met together, and in consequence of various causes; to what purpose should they ask one another what countrymen they are? Alas, two thirds of them had no country. Can a wretch who wanders about, who works and starves, whose life is a continual scene of sore affliction or pinching penury; can that man call England or any other kingdom his country? A country that had no bread for him, whose fields procured him no harvest, who met with nothing but the frowns of the rich, the severity of the laws, with jails and punishments; who owned not a single foot of the extensive surface of this planet? No! urged by a variety of motives, here they came."

4. Crèvecoeur believed in the future of America. "Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims, who are carrying along with them that great mass of arts, sciences, vigour, and industry which began long since in the east; they will finish the great circle. The Americans were once scattered all over Europe; here they are incorporated into one of the finest systems of population which has ever appeared, and which will hereafter become distinct by the power of the different climates they inhabit."

5. He describes America as something entirely new. "The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas, and form new opinions. From involuntary idleness, servile dependence, penury, and useless labour, he has passed to toils of a very different nature, rewarded by ample subsistence. —This is an American."

6. He also saw it as a land of religious freedom. "How does it concern the welfare of the country, or of the province at large, what this man's religious sentiments are, or really whether he has any at all? He is a good farmer, he is a sober, peaceable, good citizen: William Penn himself would not wish for more. This is the visible character, the invisible one is only guessed at, and is nobody's business."

7. Crèvecoeur describes a land of opportunity. "There is room for every body in America; has he any particular talent, or industry? he exerts it in order to procure a livelihood, and it succeeds. Is he a merchant? the avenues of trade are infinite; is he eminent in any respect? he will be employed and respected. Does he love a country life? pleasant farms present themselves; he may purchase what he wants, and thereby become an American farmer. Is he a labourer, sober and industrious? he need not go many miles, nor receive many informations before he will be hired, well fed at the table of his employer, and paid four or five times more than he can get in Europe. Does he want uncultivated lands? thousands of acres present themselves, which he may purchase cheap. Whatever be his talents or inclinations, if they are moderate, he may satisfy them. I do not mean that every one who comes will grow rich in a little time; no, but he may procure an easy, decent maintenance, by his industry."

8. He describes a land of considerable beauty. "It is true, our American fields are in general pleasing to behold, adorned and intermixed as they are with so many substantial houses, flourishing orchards and copses of woodlands; the pride of our farms, the source of every good we possess. But what I might observe there is but natural and common; for to draw comfortable subsistence from well fenced cultivated fields, is easy to conceive."

 Name:

What Is an American Today?

Directions: Indicate whether you agree (*A*) or disagree (*D*) with each of the following statements. Be ready to discuss your views.

_____ 1. America is the best country in the world in which to live.

_____ 2. Today the color barriers are gone; all people really are equal.

_____ 3. Unlike most people during the colonial and revolutionary periods, most Americans today value the wilderness.

_____ 4. Today in America religion has become insignificant; it really does not matter any more, so no one cares about differences.

_____ 5. In America, no one who is willing to work will go hungry.

_____ 6. America should continue to be a refuge for the needy and persecuted in other countries.

_____ 7. Today there is very little difference between life in an American city and life in a city like London, Rome, or Paris.

_____ 8. People would all be better off if they did at least a little farming.

_____ 9. In America today, as in England and France in the 1700s, there is a great gap between the very rich and the very poor.

_____ 10. American idealism has lost the war with pragmatism.

Lesson 15

Looking Westward: Writings from Lewis and Clark

Objectives

- To become familiar with the explorers' perspectives on the land and people west of the Mississippi River
- To appreciate the value of journals in American literary history

Notes to the Teacher

The expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark was mandated by President Thomas Jefferson, who wanted to know what was west of the Mississippi River. Both Lewis and Clark, as well as the other men on the trip, kept journals to describe their experiences from 1803 to 1806, as they travelled from St. Louis to the Pacific Ocean and back again. The explorers crossed difficult terrain, navigated dangerous waters, and encountered American Indian tribes that were not necessarily glad to see them, but only one of the men died during the exploration, and that was from natural causes.

The journals of Lewis and Clark record human character at its best. There is no record of friction or discord among the party, even in the most difficult circumstances. The writings record images of an America now lost forever and demonstrate the value of precise and accurate observation of people, objects, and events.

In this lesson, students consider the magnitude of the task President Jefferson set in motion when he sought congressional approval for exploration of the lands west of the Mississippi. They then read and discuss excerpts from the journals of Lewis and Clark. You will want students to have access to a topographical map of the contiguous United States.

Procedure

1. Remind students that the initial colonies in the New World began on the eastern seaboard; gradually, usually in search of arable land, people moved westward. By the time Thomas Jefferson became president, people had settled as far west as the Mississippi River; St. Louis, founded by French traders, was already a frontier city. Jefferson wanted to know what lay beyond the Mississippi River.

2. Show students a topographical map of the United States, and point out the location of St. Louis. Ask students to estimate the distance between St. Louis and the Pacific Ocean (depending on route, about 3,500 miles). Explain that, directed by Jefferson, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark set out to explore this vast territory in a trip that lasted from 1803 to 1806. Along the way, they and other members of the expedition kept journals.
3. Point out that for both historians and literary experts, journals are vitally important ways of learning about the past. This often involves a struggle with difficult handwriting, faded or damaged pages, personal abbreviations, and spelling or grammatical errors. It takes patience to investigate old journals, but the result is knowledge about and insight into people and events about which we would otherwise remain ignorant.
4. Give half the class **Handout 30** and the other half **Handout 31**. Ask students to read the documents carefully and to highlight important information.
5. Ask volunteers to share observations with the class as a whole. Follow with discussion based on these questions:
    - What personal qualities would have been necessary among the people on the expedition? (Among them are physical toughness, an ability to face danger calmly and act efficiently to cope with it, keen observation skills, and willingness to collaborate with others.)
    - What do the excerpts on **Handout 30** stress about the wildlife west of the Mississippi? (The excerpts mention the sheer abundance and variety of the wildlife and describe the plentiful supply of game animals.)
    - What happened to the sandbar? (It did not provide stable mooring and could have caused the camp big problems were it not for the wary guard.)
    - What impressions did Clark, in his journal entry on **Handout 31**, seem to have about the Indians he described? (They used animal skins for clothing; the women were subservient to the men; it does not seem to have been difficult for the men on the expedition to get along with the Indians; the various Indian tribes had wars with each other.)
6. Explain that the journals are the only ways available to know about some aspects of the lands west of the Mississippi at the beginning of the nineteenth century. For example, the Mandan Indians were wiped out by an epidemic within half a century of Lewis and Clark meeting them.

7. Point out that in later life Clark became an Indian commissioner in St. Louis. Ask students whether they think he was qualified to do well at this job. (History reveals that he was both tactful and respectful in dealing with the various Indian tribes.)

Interdisciplinary Connection

Divide the class into small groups, and ask each group to research and report on one of the following topics:

- the exact route of the Lewis and Clark expedition going to the Pacific Ocean and returning to St. Louis
- the role of Sacajawea
- additional journal entries by Lewis and/or Clark
- the code Jefferson devised to maintain secrecy in communications
- the lives of the expedition members after 1806

The Journals of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark

Directions: Read the following excerpts, and highlight key observations.

Meriwether Lewis
Sunday September 16th 1804

This morning set out at an early hour, and come too at ½ after 7 A.M. on the Lard. Shore 1¼ miles above the mouth of a small creek which we named *Corvus*, in consequence of having kiled a beatiful bird of that genus near it we concluded to ly by at this place the ballance of this day and the next, in order to dry our baggage which was wet by the heavy showers of rain which had fallen within the last three days, and also to lighten the boat by transfering a part of her lading to the red perogue, which we now determined to take on with us to our winter residence wherever that might be; while some of the men were imployed in this necessary labour others were dressing of skins washing and mending their cloaths &c. Capt. Clark and myself kiled each a buck immediately on landing near our encampment; the deer were very gentle and in great numbers on this bottom which had more timber on it than any part of the river we had seen for many days past, consisting of Cottonwood Elm, some indifferent ash and a considerable quanty of a small species of white oak which is loaded with acorns of an excellent flavor very little of the bitter roughness of the nuts of most species of oak, the leaf of this oak is small pale green and deeply indented, it seldom rises higher than thirty feet is much branched, the bark is rough and thick and of a light colour; the cup which contains the acorn is fringed on it's edges and imbraces the nut about one half; the acorns were now falling, and we concluded that the number of deer which we saw here had been induced thither by the acorns of which they are remarkably fond. almost every species of wild game is fond of the acorn, the Buffaloe Elk, deer, bear, turkies, ducks, pigegians and even the wolves feed on them; we sent three hunters out who soon added eight deer and two Buffaloe to our strock of provisions; the Buffaloe were so pour that we took only the tongues skins and marrow bones; the skins were particularly acceptable as we were in want of a covering for the large perogue to secure the baggage; the clouds during this day and night prevented my making any observations. Sergt. Gass and Reubin Fields whom we had sent out yesterday to explore the White river returnd at four oclock this day and reported that they had [followed the] meanders of that stream about 12 miles r[iver]'s general course West, the present or principal channel 150 yards wide; the coulour of the water and rapidity and manner of runing resembled the Missouri presisely; the country broken on the border of the river about a mile, when the level planes commence and extend as far as the eye can reach on either side; as usual no timber appeared except such as from the steep declivities of hills, or their moist situations, were sheltered from the effects of the fire. these extensive planes had been lately birnt and the grass had sprung up and was about three inches high. vast herds of Buffaloe deer Elk and Antilopes were seen feeding in every direction as far as the eye of the observer could reach.

William Clark

September 16th Sunday, we proceeded on 1¼ Miles and Camped on the L. Side in a butifull Plain Surounded with timber in which we Saw Severall Der, we delayed here for the purpose of Drying the articles which were wet & the cloathes to Load the Perogue which we had intended to send back, finding the water too Shoal Deturmind to take on the Perogue also to make Some observations for Longitude &c. the two men G. & R. F. joined us and informed "that the river as far as they were up had much the Appearance of the river about the mouth, but little timber and that chiefly elm", the up land between this river & the White river is fine, Great numbers of Goat, Deer

of three kinds, Buffalow, & wolves, & Barking Squrels, The fallow Deer, Cloudy, all day Cleaning out the boat examining & Drying the goods, & loading the Perogue, I killed 2 Deer Capt Lewis one & a Buffalow, one Buffalow & five other Deer Killed. I observed Pine Burs & Burch Sticks in the Drift wood up white river which Coms in on the L. S. imedeately in the point is a butifull Situation for a town 3 Gentle rises, & more timber about the mouth of this river than usial

16th of September Sunday 1804

We Set out verry early & proceed'd on 1¼ miles between Sand bars and Came too on the L. S. (1)— deturmined to dry our wet thig and liten the boat which we found could not proceed with the present load for this purpose we Concluded to detain the Perogue we had intended to Send back & load her out of the boat & detain the Soldiers untill Spring & Send them from our winter quarters. We put out those articles which was wet, Clean'd the boat & perogus, examined all the Locker Bails &. &c. &.

This Camp is Situated in a butifull Plain Serounded with Timber to the extent of ¾ of a mile in which there is great quantities of fine Plumbs—The two men detachd up the White river joined us here & informed that the [river] as far as they were up had much the appearance of the Missourie Som Islands & Sands little Timber Elm, (much Signs of Beaver, Great many buffalow) & Continud its width, they Saw & well as my Self Pine burs & Sticks of Birch in the Drift wood up this river, They Saw also Number of Goats Such as I Killed, also wolves near the Buffalow falling Deer, & the Barking Squrels Villages Capt. Lewis went to hunt & See the Countrey near the Kamp he killed a Buffalow & a Deer

Cloudy all day I partly load the empty Perogue out of the Boat. I killed 2 Deer & the party 4 Deer & a Buffalow the we kill for the Skins to Cover the Perogus, the meet too pore to eat. Capt Lewis went on an Island above our Camp, this Island is abt. one mile long, with a Great purpotion ceder timber near the middle of it

I gave out a flannel Shirt to each man, & powder to those who had expended thers

21st of September Friday 1804

at half past one oClock this morning the Sand bar on which we Camped began to under mind and give way which allarmed the Sergeant on Guard, the motion of the boat awakened me; I get up & by the light of the moon observed that the land had given away both above and below our Camp & was falling in fast. I ordered all hands on as quick as possible & pushed off, we had pushed off but a few minets before the bank under which the Boat & perogus lay give way, which would Certainly have Sunk both Perogues, by the time we made the opsd. Shore our Camp fell in, we made a 2d Camp for the remainder of the night & at Daylight proceeded on to the Gouge of this Great bend and Brackfast, we Sent a man to measure step off the Distance across the gouge, he made it 2000 yds. The distance arround is 30 mes. The hills extend thro the gouge and is about 200 foot above the water— in the bend as also the opposite Sides both abov and below the bend is a butifull inclined Plain in which there is great numbers of Buffalow, Elk & Goats in view feeding & Scipping on those Plains Grouse, Larks & the Prarie bird is Common in those Plains. we proceeded on passed a (1) willow Island below the mouth of a Small river called Tylors R about 35 yds. wide which coms in on the L. S. 6 miles above the Gorge of the bend, at the mouth of this river the two hunters a head left a Deer & its Skin also the Skin of a white wolf—we observe an emence number of Plover of Different kind Collecting and takeing their flight Southerly, also Brants which appear to move in the same Direction.

The Cat fish is Small and not So plenty as below

(2) The Shore on each Side is lined with hard rough Gulley Stones of different Sises, which has roled from the hills & out of Small brooks, Ceder is comon here, This day is worm, the wind which is not hard blows from the S. E, we Camped at the lower point of the Mock Island on the S. S. this now Connected with the main land, it has the appearance of once being an Island detached from the main land Covered with tall Cotton wood— we Saw Some Camps and tracks of the Seaux which appears to be old three or four weeks ago— one frenchman I fear has got an abscess on his they [thigh], he complains verry much we are makeing every exertion to releiv him—

The Praries in this quarter Contains Great qts. of Prickley Pear.

An Excerpt from the Journal of William Clark

Directions: Carefully read the following journal entry, and highlight key observations.

26th of September Wednesday 1804

Set out early proceeded on and Came to by the wish of the Chiefs for to let their Squars & boys See the Boat and Suffer them to treat us well great number of men women & Children on the banks viewing us, these people Shew great anxiety, they appear Spritely, generally ill looking & not well made thier legs & arms Small Generally— they Grese & [paint] themselves with coal when they dress, make use of a hawks feather about their heads the men a robe & each a polecats Skins, for to hold ther Bais roly for Smokeing fond of Dress & Show badly armed with fuseis &. The Squaws are Chearfull fine lookg womin not handson, High Cheeks Dressed in Skins a Peticoat and roab which foldes back over thir Sholder, with long wool. doe all ther laborious work & I may Say perfect Slaves to the men, as all Squars of nations much at war, or where the womin are more noumerous than the men— after Comeing too Capt. Lewis & 5 men went on Shore with the Chiefs, who appeared desposed to make up & be friendly, after Captain Lewis had been on Shore about 3 hours I became uneasy for fear of Some Deception & sent a Serjeant to See him and know his treatment which he reported was friendly, & thy were prepareing for a Dance this evening

The made frequent Selecitiation for us to remain one night only and let them Show their good disposition towards us, we deturmined to remain, after the return of Capt. Lewis, I went on Shore ❮on landing I was recved on a elegent painted B. robe & taken to the village by 6 men & was not permited to touch the ground untill I was put down in the grand Councl house on a White dressed robes—❯ I saw Several Maha Prisoners and Spoke to the Chiefs it was necessary to give those prisoners up & become good friends with the Mahars if they wished to follow the advice of their Great father I was in Several Lodges neetly formed as before mentioned as to the Bauruly [Bois brulé] Tribe— I was met by about 10 well Dressd. yound men who took me up in a roabe Highly a decrated and Set me Down by the Side of their Chief on a Dressed robe in a large Council House this house formed a ¾ Cercle of Skins well Dressed and Sown together under this Shelter about 70 men Set forming a Circle in front of the Chiefs a plac of 6 feet Diameter was Clear and the pipe of peace raised on Sticks under which there was Swans down Scattered, on each Side of the Circle two Pipes, The flags of Spain 2 & the Flag we gave them in front of the Grand Chief a large fire was near in which provisions were Cooking, in the Center about 400 wt. of excellent Buffalo Beif as a present for us—

Soon after they set me Down, the men went for Capt Lewis brough him in the same way and placed him also by the Chief in a fiew minits an old man rose & Spoke approveing what we had done & informing us of their Situation requesting us to take pity on them &c which was answered—The Great Chief then rose with great State to the Same purpote as far as we Could learn & then with Great Solemnity took up the pipe of peace whin the principal Chiefs Spoke with the pipe of Peace he took in one hand Some of the most Delicate parts of the Dog which was prepared for the feist & made a Sacrifise to the flag— & after pointing it to the heavins the 4 quarter of the Globe & the earth, lit it and prosist presented the Stem to us to Smoke, after a Smoke had taken place, & a Short Harange to his people, we were requested to take the meal we Smoked for an hour [until] Dark & all was Cleared away a large fire made in the Center, about 10 misitions playing on tamberins. long sticks with Deer & Goats Hoofs tied So as to make a gingling noise and many others of a Similer kind, those men began to Sing, & Beet on the Tamboren, the women

Came foward highly Deckerated in theire way, with the Scalps and Trofies of war of ther father Husbands Brothers or near Connection & proceeded to Dance the war Dance which they done with Great Chearfullness untill 12 oClock when we informed the Cheifs that they were fatigued &c. they then retired & we Accompd. by 4 Chiefs returned to our boat, they Stayed with us all night. Those people have Some brave men which they make use of as Soldiers those men attend to the police of the Village Correct all errors I saw one of them to day whip 2 Squars who appeared to have fallen out, when he approachd all about appeared to flee with great turrow at night thy keep two 3 4 or 5 men at deffinit Distances walking around Camp Singing the accurrunces of the night

all the men on board 100 paces from Shore wind from the S. E. moderate one man verry sick on board with a Dangerass abscess on his Hip. all in Spirits this eveninge

In this Tribe I saw 25 Squars and boys taken 13 days ago in a battle with the mahars in this battle they Destroyd 40 lodges, killed 75 men, & Som boys & children, & took 48 Prisones Womin & boys which they promis both Capt. Lewis and my Self Shall be Delivered up to Mr. Durion at the [Bois brulé] Tribe, those are a retched and Dejected looking people the Squars appear low & Corse but this is an unfavourabl time to judge of them

Lesson 16

From Colonization to the Lewis and Clark Expedition: Synthesis

Objectives

- To recognize the dominance of nonfiction writing during the first two centuries
- To synthesize an understanding of writing during the first two centuries of what is now the United States

Notes to the Teacher

The first two centuries of writing in America are dominated by nonfiction. The early settlers in Virginia and Massachusetts had no use for idleness and would have viewed fiction as lies. The revolutionary period was fraught with suspense and danger, leaving little time for imaginative writing for its own sake. People were, for the most part, too busy with the practical needs of everyday life to write for anything but practical reasons.

This lesson is intended to provide synthesis. **Handout 32** can be used as a quiz or as a tool for discussion and review. **Handout 33** goes beyond memorization and testing. You can have students work either individually or in small groups to research information and present their findings in formal papers or in multimedia presentations.

Procedure

1. Point out that victory in the Revolutionary War brought an end to an era. The Lewis and Clark expedition in a sense served as a prelude to a new era. Ask students what kinds of writing dominate the first two centuries of American literature. Lead them to see that Native American lore consisted entirely of oral traditions; there was an occasional poet like Anne Bradstreet and Phillis Wheatley, but most of the writing was nonfiction and consisted of things like journals, histories, and sermons.
2. Tell students that it is now time for them to demonstrate an overall understanding of what they have learned, first through an objective review.

3. Distribute **Handout 32**, and ask students to complete the exercise.

Suggested Responses

1. True
2. True
3. False—They wanted to grow tobacco.
4. False—The writer was Governor William Bradford.
5. True
6. True
7. False—The spider represents the individual human soul.
8. True
9. False—Phillis Wheatley was the slave who wrote poetry.
10. False—The persona was Poor Richard.
11. True
12. False—The orator was Patrick Henry.
13. True
14. False—Crèvecoeur emphasized the American farmers.
15. True

4. Distribute **Handout 33**, and review the list of topics. Establish parameters for the projects, including modes of presentation and deadlines.

Suggested Responses

1. The letter, written in Spanish, was a report from Christopher Columbus to the sponsors for his voyage of exploration. He never made it to the mainland, but his four voyages took him to islands, including Cuba. He appears to have been very curious about the indigenous people he found there, but also condescending toward a culture not advanced in weaponry and toolmaking. He did not hesitate to seize people and try to force them to change beliefs. Columbus was first of all an explorer and a conqueror, and he was capable of brutality. He told his sponsors a lot of facts, but he also told them what they wanted to hear about things he would bring back to Spain.
2. Spanish interest in the New World aimed mainly for discovery of gold and other precious treasures. Ponce de León landed in Florida in 1513, almost a century before the first British colonists arrived in Virginia. The Spanish ruthlessly tried to enslave the Native Americans in the area and just as ruthlessly strove to convert them to Christianity. St. Augustine, Florida,

is the oldest permanent European settlement in the continental United States. Florida was the site of attacks by both the English and the French and Indian uprisings. In 1763, Spain traded Florida to Great Britain in exchange for Cuba. Spanish influence was dominant in Florida, which did not become one of the United States until 1845.

3. The American Constitution and Bill of Rights went a step further in the experiment with democracy. The framers of the Constitution aimed to create a perfect union. The document specifies roles of both the executive and the legislative branches of the government. The judicial branch did not achieve its final form until later. The Bill of Rights describes rights that sometimes still become controversial today: freedom of belief and speech; the right to be armed; privacy at home; freedom from involuntary searches; limits on imprisonment; right to legal defense; trial by jury; no excessive bail or fines; recognition of additional rights; states' rights.
4. Philip Freneau (1752–1832) was a graduate of what is now Princeton. During the Revolutionary War, he was captured by the British. Later, through Thomas Jefferson, he was known as the Poet of the Revolution. He was involved in journalism and politics, and he wrote poems. His works reflect the philosophy/religion of Deism, which sees God as creating the universe but then stepping aside to let things happen as they will. Two poems that exemplify this are "On the Religion of Nature" and "On the Universality and Other Attributes of the God of Nature."
5. The first British colonists were staunch Christians, some in the Church of England, others from groups of reform churches. They did not aspire toward separation of church and state, and sin and crime were synonymous. They also persecuted dissenters, who often had to move elsewhere; Maryland, for example, was created for Catholics. Pennsylvania is sometimes called "the Quaker state." Despite efforts of religious revivalists, people gradually came to focus more on life here and now than on the afterlife. By the time of the Revolution, most of the leaders believed in God, but saw the creator as disengaged from creation. A veneer of Christianity was laid over the traditional beliefs of African Americans and American Indians. By the time of the Constitution, freedom of religion was a right, and church and state were totally separate.

6. The colonists' persistent incursions into the continent and spreading towns and farms interfered with American Indians' lifestyles. The two groups had totally different views of the possibility of land ownership. The colonists sometimes tried to enslave the Indians and generally looked down on them, sometimes even persecuted them. The colonists also brought European diseases to which the Native Americans had no resistance. There were attacks in frontier areas. The Indians also aligned themselves with either the French or the English at various points. Native Americans were not seen as citizens of the United States.
7. Slavery existed in all thirteen of the original colonies and in other territories as well. People also had indentured servants, who were like temporary slaves. The slaves were most often of African descent, but some were Native American or of mixed heritage. They were sold or bartered like livestock; some were treated cruelly. Most people in the northern colonies had only a limited number of slaves to do menial work. In the South, however, a vast system of slavery was necessary to keep plantations going. For slaves in the South, there was little possibility of a stable family life, and there was always the dreaded threat of being "sold south." Slaves were not seen as citizens of the United States.
8. Sarah Kemble Knight (1666–1724) was a wife, mother, teacher, and businesswoman. In 1704, she embarked on horseback from Boston to New York City, and she kept a journal of her experiences on the round trip, which took many months. The journey tells of the great difficulties involved in the journey and reveals a feisty woman with a sense of incongruities. It provides a bird's-eye view of life in provincial New England early in the eighteenth century. It also shows that women of the time may not have been as tightly controlled as we usually imagine.

Interdisciplinary Connection

Have students research scientific advancements between 1600 and 1800 and explore the impact of those advancements on American life and writing. Possible focus areas include medicine, technology, and astronomy.

True or False: An Overview of Two Centuries of American Writing

Directions: Indicate whether each of the statements is true or false. If it is false, indicate what is wrong with it.

_____ 1. Native American legends were an oral tradition, passed down from one generation to the next.

_____ 2. Native American legends reflect a strong belief that life is cyclical in nature.

_____ 3. Journals from the settlement in Virginia reveal the colonists' determination to grow cotton.

_____ 4. Captain John Smith's writings describe the struggles of the *Mayflower* colonists in Massachusetts.

_____ 5. The Puritans wanted to make church and state one entity.

_____ 6. Anne Bradstreet's poems describe the feelings of a seventeenth-century Puritan woman.

_____ 7. In "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," a spider represents the devil.

_____ 8. Olaudah Equiano wrote that his arrival in the New World was filled with fear and wonder.

_____ 9. Phillis Wheatley owned a slave who wrote poetry.

_____ 10. In his almanac, Benjamin Franklin gave himself the persona of a person named Robert.

_____ 11. Franklin's writings emphasize the importance of organization and thinking before taking action.

_____ 12. Thomas Paine is famous for saying, "Give me liberty, or give me death."

_____ 13. One characteristic of the Declaration of Independence is parallel structure.

_____ 14. Crèvecoeur emphasized the happy life of American villagers.

_____ 15. Writings by Merriwether Lewis and William Clark describe what they found west of the Mississippi River.

The First Two Hundred Years: A Synthesis

Directions: Choose one of the following projects for research and presentation.

1. In 1493, Christopher Columbus sent to Spain a letter explaining results of his voyage of exploration. Read a translation of it, and analyze what it says about the lands and people he found, as well as what it reveals about European attitudes toward the New World.

2. Research the colonization of Florida, and compare and contrast it to what happened in Massachusetts and Virginia.

3. Read and analyze the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and significant documents in the nation's history.

4. Research the life and work of Philip Freneau, including his political involvement and his poems.

5. Research the role of organized religion in the colonies through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and discuss the changing relationship between church and state.

6. Research what happened to Native Americans in the years before 1800.

7. Research the use of slaves in the thirteen colonies and the conditions in which the people lived.

8. Research the journals of Sarah Kemble Knight, and explain what they reveal about women of her time.

Lesson 17

Washington Irving's Tom Walker

Objectives

- To recognize Washington Irving as the Father of the American Short Story
- To read, understand, and respond to "The Devil and Tom Walker"
- To analyze examples of verbal and situational irony

Notes to the Teacher

Once the new American nation was founded, creative writing for its own sake began to germinate and flourish. No one is more important in its foundation than Washington Irving, America's first recognized man of letters. Instead of focusing on logic and argumentation, he wrote stories and other types of creative pieces. He was a lawyer, but his main interests were focused elsewhere.

Irving (1783–1859) was the youngest of eleven children in a prominent New York family. He established himself as a celebrity with the publication of *Knickerbocker's History of New York*, which began in serial form in 1808; it introduces a fictitious narrator, an unpretentious Dutchman named Dietrich Knickerbocker. Irving seems to have been a good-humored man, but also one who recognized absurdities in individuals, in accepted practices, and in politics. His writings are full of irony and satire. Among his most famous stories are "Rip Van Winkle," "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," "Ichabod Crane," "The Spectre Bridegroom," and "The Devil and Tom Walker." The last of these is frequently included in American literature textbooks; all of Irving's stories are readily available both online and in print.

"The Devil and Tom Walker" is a Faustian kind of story. Tom Walker and his wife are poor and unpleasant people who live in early-eighteenth-century Massachusetts. Tom enters into an agreement with Old Scratch and becomes rich and powerful, but eventually he loses everything when the time comes for paybacks.

In this lesson, students read and discuss the story. They then create contemporary versions.

Procedure

1. Ask students what they know about Captain Kidd, Old Scratch, and Dr. Faust. Lead them to understand that Captain Kidd was a pirate, Old Scratch is a name for the devil, and Dr. Faust is a famous literary character who sells his soul to the devil.

2. Explain that after the United States was established as an independent country, imaginative writing—stories and poems—began to grow and displace argument as most people's favorite choice for reading. Washington Irving was a popular writer, and one of his most famous stories is "The Devil and Tom Walker."
3. Distribute **Handout 34**, and have students use it to record information as they read "The Devil and Tom Walker."

Suggested Responses

1. The Walkers are poor, mean, and greedy people. They do not care for each other, and there is nothing for readers to like about them.
2. The following definitions work: stingy and selfish; sad and hopeless; a loud and quarrelsome women.
3. There is irony here. The stranger is described as looking as if he spent a lot of time around a fire. According to tradition, hell consists of fire.
4. The trees represent individual people; when a tree comes down, a person dies.
5. What exactly happens to Mrs. Walker is ambiguous, but it is also clearly unpleasant.
6. Tom refuses to work in the slave trade. Washington Irving thought slavery was a very bad practice—so bad that this nasty character would not participate.
7. A usurer is a person who loans money and charges extravagant interest rates. Usurers can become very rich and can also bring others into financial ruin.
8. Irving mentions people's proclivity to want to make a fortune from nothing. The fact is that everyone would love to do this, but it rarely works out that way.
9. Tom tries to align himself on the side of religion in hopes of escaping his deal.
10. Tom exclaims, "The devil take me," and that is exactly what happens.
11. Tom Walker leaves nothing behind. Whatever riches he had are gone.
12. The story warns against greedy and miserly behavior, which in the end leads to ruin.

4. Ask students to brainstorm contemporary parallels to situations in the story. (Credit card debt is a serious problem for a lot of people, and the companies often charge large interest rates. Companies offer instant money loans but are merciless if they are not paid back promptly and with interest. People with gambling problems often find themselves in deep debt.)
5. Point out that a contemporary story might not involve a meeting with a devil; some other coincidence could lead the protagonist into crisis.
6. Assign students to create contemporary adaptations of "The Devil and Tom Walker." Point out that the project could result in a short story, in a graphic book, or even in a video. Set a deadline for students to share their work.

Advanced Placement Extension

Assign students to read Washington Irving's story "Rip Van Winkle." Explain that satire is a literary form that uses tools such as exaggeration to make fun of people's and society's peccadilloes. Distribute **Handout 35**, and ask students to complete the analysis and writing. (The passage satirizes a good-natured but lazy guy who works hard to avoid work. Rip has no sense of responsibility at all.)

"The Devil and Tom Walker"

Directions: Answer the following questions about the story.

1. How does the narrator describe Tom Walker and his wife?

2. Washington Irving had a good vocabulary and used it in his stories. Often readers can define unfamiliar words based on context. Reread the second and third paragraphs, and define the following words.

   a. miserly

   b. forlorn

   c. termagant

3. Do you see any ironies in the description of the stranger that Tom meets in the forest?

4. Why are names on the trees?

5. What happens to Mrs. Walker?

6. What detail shows that Tom is not totally bad? What does that detail show about Irving?

7. Old Scratch wants Tom to become a usurer. What does that mean?

8. What tendency of many people does Irving satirize? Do people still have that tendency today?

9. As Tom gets older, what attempts does he make to renege on his deal?

10. Find an irony in Tom's conversation with the man on whom he is trying to foreclose.

11. What does Tom leave behind?

12. Toward the end of the story, Irving makes a direct theme statement. What moral does "The Devil and Tom Walker" convey?

Satire in "Rip Van Winkle"

Directions: Read the following excerpt from Washington Irving's famous story, and write an essay in which you point out satirical elements.

> Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles, and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.
>
> The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder, for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.
>
> In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; everything about it went wrong, and would go wrong in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

Lesson 18

Edgar Allan Poe's Poems

Objectives

- To learn about Edgar Allan Poe's life
- To understand and appreciate selected poems

Notes to the Teacher

Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) was certainly one of the great geniuses of American literature—a gifted poet, insightful critic, writer of eerie stories, and inventor of the detective story. His life was not a happy one. His behavior was often erratic, and he was a habitual drunkard. Some events are notorious—abandonment by his actor parents, marriage to his thirteen-year-old cousin, somehow landing up unconscious in the street or in a bar shortly before his death. His last words are reported as "Lord, help my poor soul."

In this lesson, students first learn about Poe's life. They then focus on three of his most famous poems. "Annabel Lee" reflects Poe's abiding love for Virginia Clemm and his despair after her death. "To Helen" seems to have been occasioned by his admiration of a friend's mother; later he worked on various revisions of it. "The Raven," one of his most widely known works, tells the story of a man grieving the loss of a loved one. Because the poem is quite long, it is not included on a handout, but it is in most American literature textbooks, and it is readily available online.

The Advanced Placement extension at the end of the lesson involves students in an examination of Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition," in which he discusses his creation of "The Raven."

Procedure

1. Ask students what they know about Edgar Allan Poe. (Many will have encountered one or more of his works in junior high.) Explain that Poe is one of the most famous American writers worldwide, even though he died at the young age of forty.
2. Distribute **Handout 36**, and ask students to read the information. Then ask students for general responses to Poe's life story. (Some of his problems probably trace back to his very dysfunctional early home and to the absence of long-lasting and deep emotional ties. The drinking and gambling were problematic but are not particularly unusual patterns for college students. His very genius along with an unsteady temperament may have been at the root of his difficulties. It seems

as if his relationships tended to end with early deaths. At any rate, despite his famous stories and poems, he led a sad life.)

3. Read "Annabel Lee" aloud to the class, or have students listen to a recording of it. Point out the effective use of repetition and the poem's haunting sound.
4. If "Annabel Lee" is not in your students' textbook, distribute **Handout 37**, and have students read the poem and note biographical elements. (The poem stresses Annabel Lee's youth, devoted love, and early death, as well as the speaker's memories and grief.) Ask students why this is one of Poe's most famous and popular poems. (It is a romantic story about young love and loss; it has haunting sound effects; it also seems somewhat mysterious.)
5. Distribute **Handout 38**, and ask students to complete the analysis.

Suggested Responses

1. In both poems, the speaker is talking about a woman, but "To Helen" stresses admiration more than romantic love, and the woman seems to be alive.
2. The speaker seems to have looked up and seen the woman standing in a window and holding a lamp.
3. The name is probably an allusion to the legendary Helen of Troy, supposedly the most beautiful woman who ever lived.
4. The beauty of the woman is timeless and eternal.
5. The speaker admires the woman and finds her to be a source of comfort and solace.

6. Explain that one of Poe's most famous poems, "The Raven," was very popular in his own time and has continued to be popular today. Have students read or listen to the poem. Distribute **Handout 39**, and ask students to complete the exercise

Suggested Responses

1. False: The speaker was nearly falling asleep as he read very old books; he is vague about the subject matter of the books.
2. True: Everything in the poem is dark, dreary, and even threatening.
3. False: He immediately assumed some neighbor was stopping, perhaps to offer condolences.
4. True: A woman whom he obviously admired and loved seems to have died. He refers to her as Lenore.
5. True: When the speaker found no one outside the door, he seems to have hoped that Lenore's spirit was there. This may hint at the sort of books he was reading.

6. True: The raven is in no way silly; it just perches calmly and repeats the one word it seems to know.
7. False: At first, the speaker found the raven's presence and demeanor amusing.
8. False: The raven perched on a statue of Athena, the goddess of wisdom.
9. True: Amusement rather quickly segued into alarm and even terror.
10. False: The speaker came to see the raven as an emblem of evil.
11. True: He knows for sure the raven is still there.
12. True: This is a subtle topic, but students will at least note the pervasive echo of "Nevermore."

Advanced Placement Extension

Explain that Poe was a literary critic as well as an imaginative writer, and he had definite ideas about what constituted good work. Distribute **Handout 40**, and ask students to read the excerpts and highlight the main points. Follow with discussion. (Poe emphasized the importance of being able to read a poem in one sitting so that there can be unity of effect. He also thought that beauty is an essential element, and he viewed beauty as something that elevates the human spirit. He emphasized the importance of a deliberate choice of tone—in the case of "The Raven," melancholy. The essay goes on to discuss structure, which in this case involves shifting uses of the refrain. It notes that Poe created the climax of the poem first, then built up to and away from it. It is clear that Poe viewed the poet's work as one involving careful craftsmanship. Whether the actual writing of "The Raven" was this methodical is something we can never know. What the essay does give us as literary critics is evaluative criteria including appropriate length, unity of effect, consistent tone, and careful structure.)

Who Was Edgar Allan Poe?

Directions: Read the following information about Poe's life and work.

Edgar Allan Poe was born in Boston on January 19, 1809, the second son of a married pair of traveling actors. Edgar's father, an alcoholic, abandoned the family a few years later, and not long after that his mother died of pneumonia. Their three sons were separated, and Edgar was taken in by John Allan, a wealthy merchant in Richmond, Virginia. Although their relationship was strained, Allan did provide his ward with an education at some of the best schools in England.

Much of Poe's life seems to have been spent in search of love. Mrs. Jane Stith Stanard, the mother of one of his friends, encouraged his obvious writing talent and provided some of the maternal attention he seems to have craved. His first girlfriend, Elmira Royster, married someone else after her father intercepted Poe's letters from England and persuaded her to find a more suitable husband.

Poe returned to the United States to attend the University of Virginia but soon was absorbed in excessive gambling and drinking. John Allan managed to get him into West Point, which quickly dismissed him. Rejected by Allan, Poe went to live with his aunt, Mrs. Maria Clemm, and he became a tutor for her young daughter, Virginia. When Virginia was thirteen years old, the two eloped and then returned to live with her mother. Virginia's frail health and Poe's excessive drinking did not make for a happy family life. Virginia became bedridden, and Poe seems to have had a number of extramarital affairs. Nonetheless, her death in 1847 devastated him.

As a writer, Poe was highly respected in England, and he achieved some success in the United States. His obvious brilliance and erratic behavior have led scholars to speculate about possible causes for his self-destructive choices. He was clearly alcoholic; some believe that he might have been diabetic; others suspect a drug addiction. We do know that late one night in Baltimore he was found lying in the street or in a bar and was rescued by a newspaperman, but he died shortly afterward in the hospital.

The fact that Poe was not universally admired is evident in an obituary written by Rufus W. Griswold, his literary agent.

> Edgar Allan Poe is dead. He died in Baltimore on Sunday, October 7th. This announcement will startle many, but few will be grieved by it. The poet was known, personally or by reputation, in all this country; he had readers in England and in several of the states of Continental Europe; but he had few or no friends; and the regrets for his death will be suggested principally by the consideration that in him literary art has lost one of its most brilliant but erratic stars.

The Beautiful Annabel Lee

Directions: Carefully read Edgar Allan Poe's "Annabel Lee," which he wrote in memory of his wife. Underline elements in the poem that seem to mirror facts in Poe's life.

Annabel Lee

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

I was a child and *she* was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love—
I and my Annabel Lee—
With a love that the winged seraphs of Heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud, chilling
My beautiful Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me—
Yes!—that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud by night,
Chilling and killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;

For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise but I feel the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling—my darling—my life and my bride,
In the sepulchre there by the sea—
In her tomb by the sounding sea.

—Edgar Allan Poe

Poe's "To Helen"

Directions: Read the poem, and use the questions as springboards to discuss and analyze it.

To Helen

Helen, thy beauty is to me
    Like those Nicean barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
    The weary, way-worn wanderer bore
    To his own native shore.

On desperate seas long wont to roam,
    Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
    To the glory that was Greece,
    And the grandeur that was Rome.

Lo, in yon brilliant window-niche
    How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
    Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
    Are Holy-Land!

—Edgar Allan Poe

1. How is this poem like and unlike "Annabel Lee"?

2. Reread the third stanza. What seems to be the occasion of the poem?

3. Why is the woman in the poem named Helen?

4. Why does the speaker refer to classical Greece and Rome?

5. How would you describe the speaker's attitude toward Helen?

"Nevermore"

Directions: Read Edgar Allan Poe's narrative poem, "The Raven," and indicate whether each of the following statements is true or false.

_____ 1. The speaker says that he was reading a popular novel late at night.

_____ 2. From the beginning, the mood of the poem is dreary.

_____ 3. The speaker was immediately alarmed by the sound of knocking on the door.

_____ 4. The speaker was in deep mourning over the loss of a beautiful woman.

_____ 5. The speaker hoped the knocking came from the spirit of a dead person.

_____ 6. The raven that came in the window had a very dignified manner.

_____ 7. The speaker was immediately terrified by the entrance of the raven.

_____ 8. The bird perched on a statue of the goddess of love.

_____ 9. The speaker gradually became more and more agitated by the presence of the raven.

_____ 10. The speaker came to see the raven as a protective guardian spirit.

_____ 11. In the time present of the poem, the speaker seems to still be sitting and looking at the raven.

_____ 12. Part of the mesmerizing effect of the poem comes from the sounds of the words.

Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition"

Directions: In an 1847 essay published in *Graham's Magazine*, Edgar Allan Poe discussed the nature of effective writing. He insisted that good writing requires precision and does not result from accidents. He also assumed that the writer should appeal both to ordinary readers and to literary critics. Throughout the essay, he used "The Raven" as an example. Read the following excerpts, and highlight the key points.

Excerpts from "The Philosophy of Composition"

The initial consideration was that of extent. If any literary work is too long to be read at one sitting, we must be content to dispense with the immensely important effect derivable from unity of impression—for, if two sittings be required, the affairs of the world interfere, and everything like totality is at once destroyed. . . . What we term a long poem is, in fact, merely a succession of brief ones—that is to say, of brief poetical effects. It is needless to demonstrate that a poem is such, only inasmuch as it intensely excites, by elevating, the soul; and all intense excitements are, through a psychal necessity, brief. . . .

It appears evident, then, that there is a distinct limit, as regards length, to all works of literary art—the limit of a single sitting—and that, although in certain classes of prose composition, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, (demanding no unity,) this limit may be advantageously overpassed, it can never properly be overpassed in a poem. Within this limit, the extent of a poem may be made to bear mathematical relation to its merit—in other words, to the excitement or elevation—again in other words, to the degree of the true poetical effect which it is capable of inducing; for it is clear that the brevity must be in direct ratio of the intensity of the intended effect:—this, with one proviso—that a certain degree of duration is absolutely requisite for the production of any effect at all.

Holding in view these considerations, as well as that degree of excitement which I deemed not above the popular, while not below the critical, taste, I reached at once what I conceived the proper *length* for my intended poem—a length of about one hundred lines. It is, in fact, a hundred and eight.

My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed: and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable. I should be carried too far out of my immediate topic were I to demonstrate a point upon which I have repeatedly insisted, and which, with the poetical, stands not in the slightest need of demonstration—the point, I mean, that Beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem. . . . That pleasure which is at once the most intense, the most elevating, and the most pure, is, I believe, found in the contemplation of the beautiful. When, indeed, men speak of Beauty, they mean, precisely, not a quality, as is supposed, but an effect—they refer, in short, just to that intense and pure elevation of *soul*—*not* of intellect, or of heart—upon which I have commented, and which is experienced in consequence of contemplating "the beautiful." . . .

Regarding, then, Beauty as my province, my next question referred to the *tone* of its highest manifestation—and all experience has shown that this tone is one of *sadness*. Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones.

The length, the province, and the tone, being thus determined, I betook myself to ordinary induction, with the view of obtaining some artistic piquancy which might serve me as a key-note in the construction of the poem—some pivot upon which the whole structure might turn. In carefully thinking over all the usual artistic effects—or more properly *points*, in the theatrical sense—I did not fail to perceive immediately that no one had been so universally employed as that of the *refrain*. . . . I resolved to diversify, and so vastly heighten, the effect, by adhering, in general, to the monotone of sound, while I continually varied that of thought: that is to say, I determined to produce continuously novel effects, by the variation of *the application* of the *refrain*—the *refrain* itself remaining, for the most part, unvaried.

These points being settled, I next bethought me of the *nature* of my *refrain*. Since its application was to be repeatedly varied, it was clear that the *refrain* itself must be brief, for there would have been an insurmountable difficulty in frequent variations of application in any sentence of length. In proportion to the brevity of the sentence, would, of course, be the facility of the variation. This led me at once to a single word as the best *refrain*.

The question now arose as to the *character* of the word. Having made up my mind to a *refrain*, the division of the poem into stanzas was, of course, a corollary: the *refrain* forming the close to each stanza. . . .

The next *desideratum* was a pretext for the continuous use of the one word "nevermore." In observing the difficulty which I at once found in inventing a sufficiently plausible reason for its continuous repetition, I did not fail to perceive that this difficulty arose solely from the pre-assumption that the word was to be so continuously or monotonously spoken by *a human* being—I did not fail to perceive, in short, that the difficulty lay in the reconciliation of this monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word. Here, then, immediately arose the idea of a *non*-reasoning creature capable of speech; and, very naturally, a parrot, in the first instance, suggested itself, but was superseded forthwith by a Raven, as equally capable of speech, and infinitely more in keeping with the intended *tone*.

I had now gone so far as the conception of a Raven—the bird of ill omen—monotonously repeating the one word, "Nevermore," at the conclusion of each stanza, in a poem of melancholy tone, and in length about one hundred lines. Now, never losing sight of the object *supremeness*, or perfection, at all points, I asked myself—"Of all melancholy topics, what, according to the *universal* understanding of mankind, is the *most* melancholy?" Death—was the obvious reply. . . .

I had now to combine the two ideas, of a lover lamenting his deceased mistress and a Raven continuously repeating the word "Nevermore"—I had to combine these, bearing in mind my design of varying, at every turn, the *application* of the word repeated; but the only intelligible mode of such combination is that of imagining the Raven employing the word in answer to the queries of the lover. And here it was that I saw at once the opportunity afforded for the effect on which I had been depending—that is to say, the effect of the *variation of application*. . . .

Here then the poem may be said to have its beginning—at the end, where all works of art should begin—for it was here, at this point of my preconsiderations, that I first put pen to paper in the composition of the stanza:

"'Prophet,' said I, 'thing of evil! prophet still if bird or devil!
By that heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore,
Tell this soul with sorrow laden, if within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore.'
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'"

I composed this stanza, at this point, first that, by establishing the climax, I might the better vary and graduate, as regards seriousness and importance, the preceding queries of the lover—and, secondly, that I might definitely settle the rhythm, the meter, and the length and general arrangement of the stanza—as well as graduate the stanzas which were to precede, so that none of them might surpass this in rhythmical effect. . . .

Of course, I pretend to no originality in either the rhythm or meter of the "Raven." The former is trochaic—the latter is octameter acatalectic, alternating with heptameter catalectic repeated in the *refrain* of the fifth verse, and terminating with tetrameter catalectic. Less pedantically—the feet employed throughout (trochees) consist of a long syllable followed by a short: the first line of the stanza consists of eight of these feet—the second of seven and a half (in effect two-thirds)—the third of eight—the fourth of seven and a half—the fifth the same—the sixth three and a half. Now, each of these lines, taken individually, has been employed before, and what originality the "Raven" has, is in their *combination into stanza*; nothing even remotely approaching this combination has ever been attempted. The effect of this originality of combination is aided by other unusual, and some altogether novel effects, arising from an extension of the application of the principles of rhyme and alliteration.

The next point to be considered was the mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven—and the first branch of this consideration was the *locale*. For this the most natural suggestion might seem to be a forest, or the fields—but it has always appeared to me that a close *circumscription of space* is absolutely necessary to the effect of insulated incident:—it has the force of a frame to a picture. It has an indisputable moral power in keeping concentrated the attention, and, of course, must not be confounded with mere unity of place.

I determined, then, to place the lover in his chamber—in a chamber rendered sacred to him by memories of her who had frequented it. The room is represented as richly furnished—this in mere pursuance of the ideas I have already explained on the subject of Beauty, as the sole true poetical thesis.

The *locale* being thus determined, I had now to introduce the bird—and the thought of introducing him through the window, was inevitable. The idea of making the lover suppose, in the first instance, that the flapping of the wings of the bird against the shutter, is a "tapping" at the door, originated in a wish to increase, by prolonging, the reader's curiosity, and in a desire to admit the incidental effect arising from the lover's throwing open the door, finding all dark, and thence adopting the half-fancy that it was the spirit of his mistress that knocked.

I made the night tempestuous, first, to account for the Raven's seeking admission, and secondly, for the effect of contrast with the (physical) serenity within the chamber.

I made the bird alight on the bust of Pallas, also for the effect of contrast between the marble and the plumage—it being understood that the bust was absolutely *suggested* by the bird—the bust of *Pallas* being chosen, first, as most in keeping with the scholarship of the lover, and, secondly, for the sonorousness of the word, Pallas, itself.

About the middle of the poem, also, I have availed myself of the force of contrast, with a view of deepening the ultimate impression. For example, an air of the fantastic—approaching as nearly to the ludicrous as was admissible—is given to the Raven's entrance. . . .

The effect of the *dénouement* being thus provided for, I immediately drop the fantastic for a tone of the most profound seriousness. . . .

. . . The student now guesses the state of the case, but is impelled, as I have before explained, by the human thirst for self-torture, and in part by superstition, to propound such queries to the bird as will bring him, the lover, the most of the luxury of sorrow, through the anticipated answer "Nevermore." With the indulgence, to the utmost extreme, of this self-torture, the narration, in what I have termed its first or obvious phase, has a natural termination, and so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real.

But in subjects so handled, however skilfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required—first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness—some undercurrent, however indefinite, of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with *the ideal*. It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning—it is the rendering this the upper instead of the under current of the theme—which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so-called poetry of the so-called transcendentalists.

Holding these opinions, I added the two concluding stanzas of the poem—their suggestiveness being thus made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them. . . .

Lesson 19

Poe's Horror Stories

Objectives

- To recognize Edgar Allan Poe's genius in creating tension and developing an eerie atmosphere
- To investigate several of Poe's most famous stories

Notes to the Teacher

Many people associate Edgar Allan Poe primarily with his stories that emphasize the eerie and macabre, tales such as "The Black Cat," "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Pit and the Pendulum," "The Masque of the Red Death," and "The Fall of the House of Usher." These stories reflect Poe's views of qualities that constitute literary excellence: a single powerful effect on the reader and artistic structure. They also explore the machinations of the human mind. For many students, these stories are a good place to start, for the tales not only raise goose-flesh, but also are models of carefully elaborated plots.

This lesson is based on a jigsaw approach, as student groups investigate stories and share their findings. They will need access to the five stories, all of which are readily available online and in print.

Procedure

1. Explain that Poe perfected the technique of the short story and is famous for tales that we would now describe as horror stories. He had a kind of blueprint of his own for creating suspenseful short fiction: a limited number of characters with a focus on only one; a central incident; and a single effect or impression on the reader. The story had to be short enough to be read in one sitting so as not to disturb that effect.
2. Divide the class into groups, and assign each group one of the stories listed in Notes to the Teacher. Direct the groups to read the stories and to complete the following for presentation to the class as a whole.
    a. A summary of events and characters
    b. An oral reading of a part of the story that generates tension and even horror in the reader
    c. A description of the story's structure
    d. An explanation of how the story could be used in a successful movie adaptation
    e. A visual depicting a key moment in the story

3. When the groups have finished their work, distribute **Handout 41** for students to record information during the presentations.

Suggested Responses

1. "The Black Cat" is narrated by a man who is in prison and awaiting execution for the murder of his wife, which is to be the next day. He insists that he is sane but tells of insane actions that torture his mind and appall the reader. Drunkenness led to erratic and cruel behavior, along with outbreaks of violence, including torturing and killing animals. The violence climaxed when he killed his wife with an axe. He hid the body behind a wall but was caught when the yowl of a cat that was also behind the wall alerted the police investigating the wife's disappearance. The horror lies in the man's inexplicable bouts of rage and his violent acts, as well as in the tension in his mind as he describes events.
2. "The Tell-Tale Heart," like "The Black Cat," investigates a criminal mind at work. The unnamed narrator describes his aversion to the eye of an old man; eventually, he killed the man, dismembered the body, and buried it under floorboards. The police came to investigate a report from a neighbor, and the murderer/narrator put on a convincing act of innocence and concern until he thought he heard the old man's heart still beating under the floorboards. This drove him over the edge, and he revealed the crime. The reader can feel the horror and threat of that beating heart.
3. "The Pit and the Pendulum" describes the ordeals of a political prisoner during the Spanish Inquisition. He has been found guilty and imprisoned. There he finds walls closing in on him as well as a huge pit. There are also rats. Worst of all, he is tied down, and a huge, sharp-edged pendulum is slowly lowering toward him, threatening to slowly tear him to ribbons. Luckily, help arrives just before it is too late. This story matches all of the horror of contemporary Halloween films, with that slowly descending and lethal pendulum.
4. "The Masque of the Red Death" takes place during a plague, an awful disease that causes an ugly and painful death. To protect themselves, Prince Prospero and many of his friends are sequestered and cheerfully go about their lives, sure they have evaded the disease. Prospero holds a lavish party with the rooms all decorated in different monochromatic themes. From one comes a stranger who, of course, is the Red Death; he has come to claim them all. This story could be a great video around Halloween time. It also has a clear theme: death cannot be avoided.

5. "The Fall of the House of Usher" is a Gothic tale set in a large and spooky home and involving a narrator, his friend Roderick, and Roderick's sister Madeline. Roderick is deeply despondent and highly nervous, and the narrator has come to visit and help him. Madeline is sick, seems to die, and is buried alive. Somehow she fights her way out of the coffin and throws herself upon her brother, whose nerves are shot. Appalled by these events, the narrator flees the house and turns to see it collapse entirely, the end of the Usher house and the Usher family. A movie version might capitalize on the woman buried alive, the visage of Roderick, and the crumbling house at the end.

Advanced Placement Extension

Distribute **Handout 42**, which presents a passage from "The Cask of Amontillado," and ask students to complete the assignment. Follow with discussion. (The first-person narrator is addressing someone who knows him well, which casts the reader in that role. He is clearly articulate and intelligent, and he will not forgive what he perceives as an insult. He wants revenge against Fortunato, but he also wants perfect safety for himself. He has carefully hidden his true feelings, waiting for opportunity to strike. There is a coldness to the narrator that indicates he will not relent. The story is likely to tell of his devious pursuit of revenge. If students finish the story, they will find Fortunato buried alive behind a wall in the narrator's basement.)

Poe's Genius at Horror Fiction

Directions: Use the chart to record information about five of Edgar Allan Poe's most famous stories focusing on an atmosphere of tension and horror.

Story	Summary	Elements of Horror
1. "The Black Cat"		
2. "The Tell-Tale Heart"		

 Name:

Story	Summary	Elements of Horror
3. "The Pit and the Pendulum"		
4. "The Masque of the Red Death"		
5. "The Fall of the House of Usher"		

 Name:

Examining Characterization in "The Cask of Amontillado"

Directions: Read the following paragraphs, which begin Edgar Allan Poe's story "The Cask of Amontillado." Then describe the character of the narrator and the devices that are used to convey his personality and motivation, as well as what the paragraphs lead the reader to expect from the rest of the story.

> The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could; but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitively settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved, precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.
>
> It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good-will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

Lesson 20

Poe's Stories of Ratiocination

Objectives

- To learn the origin of the detective story
- To read and discuss one or more of Edgar Allan Poe's stories of detection

Notes to the Teacher

Edgar Allan Poe invented the story of detection. (He also greatly broadened the scope of science fiction.) Since then, there have been an uncountable number of imitators, as is evident in any library or bookstore. Poe's stories aim to make the reader believe that there is a mystery, while in reality there is often a realistic explanation of events.

Poe's six ratiocinative tales of the 1840s represent successes of the astute mind in seeing through the bewildering deceptiveness of the perverse world. Five of the stories are ostensibly serious: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," "The Mystery of Marie Roget," "The Purloined Letter," "The Gold Bug," and "Descent into the Maelstrom." "Thou Art the Man" is comic. The common factor is the discrepancy between appearance and reality. Detective Lupin takes on a godlike omniscience, and the reader becomes the dull-witted dupe, as the detective calmly presents a realistic explanation deduced from clues. Through deduction and a leap of imagination, he sees through chaos to the facts.

Central to the fascination of detective and mystery stories is the idea that readers try to match wits with the writer as they search for clues and look for patterns. Poe consistently suggests supernatural elements at work and then demonstrates perfectly rational explanations of the clues.

In this lesson, students first discuss the nature of detective stories. They then read and discuss "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." Because this is a fairly long story, you may want to have students read it before this lesson begins.

Procedure

1. Ask students if they recognize any of the following names: Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan Doyle, Erle Stanley Gardner, Sue Grafton, Dashiell Hammett, Tony Hillerman, and Mary Roberts Rinehart. Explain that they are all famous authors of detective or mystery fiction, which typically involves one or more crimes and the convoluted

path involved in trying to identify the perpetrators and bring them to justice. Point out that detective stories can and do take place everywhere, including Broadway theater, little English villages, Indian reservations, Rocky Mountain ski resorts, and the New Orleans French Quarter.

2. Point out that the model for detective fiction is Auguste Dupin, a character created by Edgar Allan Poe. Even Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, author of the famous Sherlock Holmes stories, admitted patterning his character on Poe's creation.
3. Ask students to look up the word *ratiocination* and to define it in their own words. (Ratiocination is logical thinking and can involve both deduction and induction. It requires an ability to recognize cause-effect connections.)
4. If students have not read the "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," have them read the story or listen to a recording of it.
5. Distribute **Handout 43**, and ask small groups to discuss the questions.

Suggested Responses

1. Poe begins with a discussion of the meaning of analysis and the differences between analysis and other types of thought. He uses board games like chess and checkers to provide examples.
2. The anonymous narrator seems to be a visitor in Paris and a person who likes to read. He is an ordinary sort of person, intelligent but not brilliant.
3. Lupin came from a well-to-do family that lost most of their wealth, but he has enough of a meager income that he does not have to work for a living. He seems mostly to read and to think.
4. The victims are an elderly woman and her daughter, apparently wealthy people. The daughter's beaten and wounded body is found hanging upside down in the fireplace. The mother is found outside, mutilated and nearly beheaded.
5. The police get evidence from the scene of the crime and witnesses. Unidentified voices were heard before the murder was discovered. We hear of locked windows and abused bodies.
6. The narrator and Lupin become involved in the investigation as an opportunity for analysis. To them, it is a kind of game.
7. The police are seen as plodding through their work and somewhat inept.
8. A red herring is something that seems to be a clue but is actually no help at all. Red herrings include much of the description of the victims' possessions and the arrest of M. Le Bon.

9. By this time, Lupin has solved the murder and is expecting the sailor. The guns are a safety measure in case they should be needed.
10. The murders were committed by an orangutan owned by the sailor. Orangutans, like gorillas, are among the great apes of the world. The animal apparently meant no harm but was enraged by the panicked behavior of the two women. Of course, their reactions are quite understandable.
11. Lupin used analysis to figure out what mattered and what did not in solving the case.
12. Many readers are just a step ahead of the narrator once he exclaims that the hair the old woman clutched was not human hair.

Advanced Placement Extension

Assign students to read one of Poe's other stories of ratiocination and to write essays in which they discuss the mystery, the clues, and the processes used in solving the case. Remind them to incorporate textual evidence, including relevant quotations.

Solving the Rue Morgue Case

Directions: Read Edgar Allan Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and answer the following questions.

1. What is the subject of the essay that precedes the story itself? What is the author saying?

2. Who seems to be narrating the story? What are some of the narrator's personal characteristics?

3. What do we learn about Lupin?

4. Who are the victims of the murders in the Rue Morgue? What are some details about their deaths?

5. What facts do the police inquiries reveal?

6. Why do the narrator and Lupin decide to become involved?

7. What view of the police does the story present?

8. What is a red herring? What red herrings does the story include?

9. What visitor is Lupin expecting? What is the purpose of the guns?

10. Who committed the murders in the Rue Morgue?

11. How did Lupin figure out the case when the police were completely stumped?

12. As the reader, did you see the solution to the case ahead of the narrator? Why or why not?

Index of Authors and Works

Common Core English Language Arts Standards

American Literature 1: The Beginnings

ISBN 978-1-56077-963-6

Lesson 1 - Legends from the People Who Were Here First

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Lesson 2 - The Cherokee Tradition

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W.11-12.7	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Lesson 8 - "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God"

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Lesson 16 - From Colonization to the Lewis and Clark Expedition: Synthesis

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Source

Common Core State Standards (Washington, D.C.: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010)

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ISBN 978-1-56077-963-6