Unit of study
Portrait of Colonial America
Overview

Unit description and outline: The purpose of this unit is to develop a “picture” of what colonial America appeared as (using modern technology) in which the students develop a tour of the various colonial regions of America and in doing so learn to use the technologies that are available to them on their MLTI laptops. The unit will include mapping skills, podcasting, the use of Imovie editing and the use of the pages program on the Macs.

The unit is student driven and is designed to give students some leeway in which they can present their final product as a cumulative presentation. It will also teach some collaboration and production skills to the students with a technology base. Also rather than the teacher telling the students about the regions that they will learn about the students will be guided to the information that they will” discover” on their own while developing their presentations.

Focus question: How can we use technology in order to create a picture of what life was like in the colonial regions of North America prior to the American Revolution.

Lesson 1: students will explore the three regions of the colonies (new england, middle, and southern colonies). The students will paint a picture of what makes each one of these regions unique and sets them apart from the other regions

Lesson 2: The students will map out their assigned colonial regions and through the use of Google earth mark the location of key cities, industries, borders, trade routes, etc.

Lesson 3: The students will create a brochure to advertise their colonial region to prospective investors and describe what features make that region a good prospect for investment.

Lesson 4: using I video the students will develop a “news program” in which they broadcast their regional news from the colonial regions which they have been assigned.

Lesson 5: The students will write a series of journal entries describing their life in ‘real time” from the colonies. The goal is to teach writing process and word processing within a historical framework.

Curricular goals
Students are required to learn about the various eras in American and world history both by the state standards and the school requirements as well. This unit provides the snapshot of the colonies that the students will need to have. It also allows for the integration of technology into each of these lessons in a manner that puts much of the creativity and the production into the hands of the students.

**lesson title:** Exploring your colonial region

**technology/ equipment and supplies needed:** Laptops and internet connection.

**content areas covered:**

**National technology standards**
1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity

   Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments.

   promote student reflection using collaborative tools to reveal and clarify students' conceptual understanding and thinking, planning, and creative processes.

**Maine essential parameters for instruction**

A. Applications of Social Studies Processes, Knowledge, and Skills: Students apply critical thinking, a research process, and discipline-based processes and knowledge from civics/government, economics, geography, and history in authentic contexts.

**collaboration:** With technology specialist (if needed)

**curriculum objectives:**
1. The students will learn the process of searching the internet for legitimate sources of information and websites that are reliable.
2. The students will also review how the economies of the various colonial regions developed based upon the geography and climate of the regions. (New England, Middle, and Southern colonies).

**task (process and activities)**

1. The students will be broken up into three groups one for each of the three colonial regions on the east coast of the United States.
2. The students will then be required to research several key aspects of each of the colonial regions.
3. They will determine what three to five major aspects of the economy were for each of the colonial regions (New England whaling, various farming and cash crops in the middle and southern colonies).
4. The students will also determine what five of the major cities were for each of the regions. Also what was important about the location of the major cities and what role they played in the development of those colonial regions.

5. While searching the internet the students will begin gathering information for each one of these areas that they will have to present on. The students will review various sources of information about the colonial regions and with the guidance of the teacher they will begin accumulating key pieces of information form the various websites they have accessed. The students have the options of using any mind mapping program (free mind is loaded on the macs) to organize the information that they gather about their colonial regions.

6. This lesson will also include some time away from class as well. The students will come in with a list of resources at the beginning of the lesson that they will research on their own. The teacher will sit down with the students and review the websites and sources of information and help the students to discern which ones are better sources of information than others.

7. After each student gathers the information that they need to “paint a picture” of their colonial regions they will then network with the other students in their group. This will occur in two ways first it will occur in a second class in which the students will work with each other, but also through the use of either Google docs, or a wiki as a way for the group to collaborate. This will allow the groups to collaborate away from the classroom as well.

lesson title: Mapping the 13 colonies on Google Earth

Technology/equipment and supplies needed:
The students will need the Macs and the use of internet

content areas covered:

Maine parameters for essential learning

E2 Individual, Cultural, International, and Global Connections in History

D2 Individual, Cultural, International, and Global Connections in Geography

National Education technology standards

2. Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments

Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessment incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the NETS•S. Teachers:

a. design or adapt relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student learning and creativity.
**collaboration:**
Use of technology specialist if needed

**task process and activities:**

- The students will use the information that they have gathered during the previous two days lessons of accumulating information about their colonial regions.

- The students will use Google Earth to map out the Colonial regions and what they have learned about the economy and key cities of their regions.

- The students will put place marks on the five key cities that are located in their colonial regions. In the place marks they will include the use of hot links under their place marks in which they will give key facts about the five key cities. (population / industry / key facts)

- The students will then also use the place mark system to label the location of key industries in the region (farming locations in the south for example)

- The students will then use the path link on Google Earth to label the physical borders of the colonial regions. The students will also label any key trade connections on Google Earth (triangular trade routes or trade within the colonies)

- This lesson will allow the students to either break up the responsibilities within their group or create wikis for each of the cities and industries that exist within their colonial region and then create a hot link on Google Earth and link with their wikis. It also allows them to create a visual aspect to their explanation of the colonies and what they “appeared” like in the mid 1700’s.

- The lessons also will teach several key applications of Google Earth while collating and presenting their information.
  - place marking -
  - adding a hot link within the Google Earth place mark system -
  - creating a path using the Google Earth path link -

**lesson title:** Why you should come live and invest in the colonies.

**Technology/equipment and supplies needed:**
The students will need access to their laptops /and or computers. They will also need to be able to use the pages program in order to create a flier that advertises their specific colonial region and why it either a perfect place to live or invest in.

**content areas covered:**

Maine parameters for essential instruction
E. History: Students draw on concepts and processes from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.

C2 Individual, Cultural, International, and Global Connections in Economics

**National education technology standards**

1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity

   Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments. Teachers:
   a. promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking and inventiveness.

**collaboration:** The students will need to collaborate with each other. Also this would provide an opportunity to possibly collaborate with a business or economics teacher about some of the techniques that are used in advertising.

**task process and activities:**

- The students will put together a brochure that advertises their colonial regions as both a place to live and a business opportunity for an investor who wants to build in the colonies.

- The students will use what they have learned about the colonies as some of the basic information that they will use in their pamphlet. The pamphlet will include “employment opportunities”, investment opportunities, reasons to relocate to the region( such as religious freedom) etc.

- There is also the option within the lesson of having the students either work together to produce one brochure or have the students each produce an individual brochure advertising a different aspect of their colonial regions. This allows the students to apply what they have learned from their research.

- The pamphlet that the students would produce would be done on the “pages” program that is loaded onto the Macs. The program allows for students to produce brochures, business cards, etc. Prior to production piece the students would use a paper template in conjunction with the free mind mind mapping system to plan out what they would be covering in their pamphlets.

- The students would not be required to print their pamphlet, they would instead be able to put it together online and leave it as a “pages document” to be presented digitally.

- The purpose of this lesson is twofold. First it allows the students to take the information that they learned about the colonial regions economy and setting, and apply it to the production of a presentation style product. It also provides some connection between the lessons. Not only are they learning about the colonial regions, but they are being asked to use the information that
they accumulated in the mind mapping exercise in a creative manner. This makes it a requirement that the students have a solid grasp on the information that they are presenting because they have to “know” what they are presenting to the class in their brochures. An example would be that the city of Nantucket Rhode Island would be a great investment for a person interested in the whaling industry, or that it would be a great place for employment in the whaling industry, or that Pennsylvania would be a great place for a farmer to settle. The students must have a solid grasp on the material in order to present it.

**lesson title:** Newscast from the colonies

**Technology/equipment and supplies needed:**

The students will need their laptops loaded with the I movie program and either the use of a video camera, or the use of the camera that is loaded onto the laptops. The students will have to have quick time loaded onto their laptops in order to export the file from I movie.

**content areas covered:**

**Maine parameters for essential instruction**

A. Applications of Social Studies Processes, Knowledge, and Skills: Students apply critical thinking, a research process, and discipline-based processes and knowledge from civics/government, economics, geography, and history in authentic contexts.

**National educational technology standards**

2. Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments

   Teachers design, develop, and evaluate authentic learning experiences and assessment incorporating contemporary tools and resources to maximize content learning in context and to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes identified in the NETS•S. Teachers:

   c. customize and personalize learning activities to address students' diverse learning styles, working strategies, and abilities using digital tools and resources.

**collaboration:** If needed the students will have a chance to collaborate with the technology department.

**task process and activities:**

- The students must observe a local newscast on television and take notes over the process and
length of each presentation topic

-the students then would brainstorm the following day in class what topics they would be doing a newscast over for their presentation. (the topics could be business related, political, social etc.)

-The students will then come up with the script and create through the use of neo office a script to follow.

-also the creation of visual references for the newscast could be the use of maps, charts pictures, etc. all related to the colonial regions and time period that is being covered.

-this is a presentation in which the students can have a lot of fun with the production. They will have the freedom to dress like someone from the time period (possibly hooking up with the drama department). This is a production piece that allows for a lot of creative freedom on the part of the students which makes it very enjoyable for them, and gives them a chance to “run with it” so to speak. I would expect the students to have a minimum of 8-10 key historical references in the newscast. Also the newscasts should reflect the region of the country that the students are covering (southern colonies, middle colonies, and New England Colonies, and if the need for a fourth group exists the frontier could be also considered another colonial region)

**lesson title:** Journal entries from the colonies (based on primary source document research)

**Technology/equipment and supplies needed:**
Laptops or word processing tool.

**content areas covered:**

**Maine parameters for essential learning**

**E2 Individual, Cultural, International, and Global Connections in History**

É. History: Students draw on concepts and processes from history to develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world.

**E1 Historical Knowledge, Concepts, Themes, and Patterns**

**National educational technology standards**

1. Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity

Teachers use their knowledge of subject matter, teaching and learning, and technology to facilitate experiences that advance student learning, creativity, and innovation in both face-to-face and virtual environments. Teachers:

a. promote, support, and model creative and innovative thinking and inventiveness.
collaboration: none needed

task process and activities:

- The students will read a series of primary sources over what life was like in the colonies. They can utilize either available online primary sources, or they can use hard copies to do their research from. (from an actual library)

- The students will then after having developed a picture of what life was like for someone who was living in the colonial region they were assigned begin the brainstorming process. They will again rely on a combination of creativity and research. The research from various primary sources will give them an idea of what they should be creating in their journal entries for a picture of everyday life in their colonial regions.

- I would like the students to use free mind as a first step in the brainstorming process.

- I also would like the students to read some journal entries to help them with the writing process. The students then would draw from reading and discussion of journal entries that there is usually some sort of topic or emotion that is attached to a person diary/journal entries. The goal is that the students will then put themselves in some ones shoes when they create their fictitious journal entries, and in doing so it may help to aid the writing process. The second goal of reading the primary sources is that I want them to understand that basic human wants, desires, fears and experiences in some ways have not changed that much over time, which should help them (I hope) in the writing process.

personal reflections
as a teacher
on the colonial america unit

The only way that this unit would be even remotely possible without a tremendous amount of out of class time and in class time being taken up us with MLTI technology. Every one of my students has access to a laptop that they bring with them in school or home. Also our district is very liberal in its rules about access to materials on the internet. It allows me as a teacher a tremendous amount of freedom and ability to enhance my lessons with students. It also allows me to answer questions on the fly with small video clips that very quickly give the students a better idea about a topic than I could ever present them with words alone.

The unit would be possible without MLTI unless I was willing to dedicate a tremendous amount of time to one single unit. I think that the technological capabilities that are available to the student and teacher through the use of MLTI are nearly overwhelming if not sorted through and practiced. I have just started using this unit with my students and there are some aspects of this unit that I am struggling with. The unit simply becomes bigger than I would like it to. There are too many days spent on the
same subject matter, and I feel like the student process of developing their presentations creeps along and that we do not cover enough information. The production piece is great, as is the fact that the students are seeking out the information on their own. The problem is that the process is so slow.