

PRE- AND POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Grades 4 through 8

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

A visit to the Museum of Appalachia should be dual in purpose: to teach lessons in social history while fostering an awareness of the importance of historical preservation. For older students, it should offer an opportunity to develop critical thinking and research skills. To maximize the educational experience from a trip to the Museum, we suggest that students participate in activities both before and after their visit. They should come prepared to look for specific items and ask questions about those items that will stimulate creative thinking and inquiry about the past.

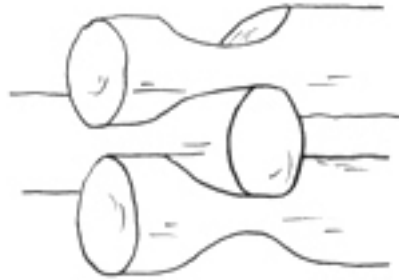
PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Explore some of the following topics with your students before they visit the Museum:

1. To help your students understand great lengths of time, have them compile a simple family tree.
2. Students can collect oral histories from older friends or family members about what life was like when they were young. They can learn to see how lifestyles change in a fairly short period of time, and will be better prepared to understand how life has changed since pioneer days.
3. Students coming to the Museum will see over 30 early log structures. Even young students can learn some basic construction techniques for log buildings before their arrival here.

Four common joints found at the corners of log structures were saddle notches, square notches, half-dovetail notches, and full-V notches.

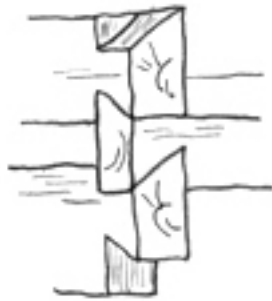
Saddle notches, V-notches, and half-dovetail notches were the more popular notches because water was not able to collect in the joints, thus preventing rot. V-notching was most prevalent on house construction, and saddle notching was generally used on outbuildings where the logs remained unhewn.



Saddle Notch



"V" Notch



Half-Dovetail Notch



Square Notch

When your students arrive at the Museum, ask them to look for the buildings that have these notch constructions.

Another element of building construction to study before coming to the Museum is chinking and daubing. When properly prepared and notched, logs were stacked so they did not rest against each other except at the notch, with general an inch or more visible between the logs. This allowance was left because the unseasoned wood might warp and expand over time. Chink or daubing allowed for these changes and permitted builders to work with the irregular surfaces and natural tapers of logs. When your students arrive at the Museum, have them inspect the different historic structures to identify these different elements of log construction.

4. **Developing Research Skills:** Have your students research some of the following topics:

- Most of the artifacts at the Museum of Appalachia are from Southern Appalachia. What are considered the geographic boundaries of Southern Appalachia?
- What was the primary occupation of people in 19th-century Southern Appalachia? What areas were the first to industrialize, and what areas continued to engage primarily in agriculture?
- What is subsistence farming? It is a difficult way to survive, so why were so many people forced to do it? What kind of soil did subsistence farmers farm?
- What were the steps necessary to create clothing in pioneer times?

5. Have the students make a shopping list of items they would take on an imaginary trip to a large store that sells everything from clothing to groceries to sporting goods (such as Super Target, Sam's Club, Walmart, etc.) Students can imagine that they are buying everything they need for a new home, or that they are going on a camping trip or buying Christmas presents for their families. When they come to the Museum, they will bring their shopping list to the General Store in the Display Barn to see what on their lists would have been available to pioneers.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

1. Discussion – Students can discuss how pioneer life was the same and how it was different from today. It's important that they be able to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each time period. Some of the advantages of today: speed and convenience of communication, improved health and medical care, home construction and cleanliness, improved access to education, tools and technologies, ease of mobility and relocation. Some of the disadvantages of post-agrarian life, however, might be (depending upon one's point of view) the loss of extended family, environmental concerns, high stress levels, ease of spread of epidemic disease. What are the relative merits of loss of regional identity, mass production versus handcraftsmanship?

2. Discussion – Having seen the Museum's collections, students can discuss the importance of preserving relics from the past. Ask them how they feel about the settlers in our region, now that they have "looked back into the past" at the Museum. Do they admire them? Pity them? Like them? How do they think future generations will feel about *them*? Try to get them to think about *their* belongings—the things in their closets, kitchens, and bedrooms—and ask them if they think anything they own might be of interest to people of the future. What about their hairstyles? Their clothing?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cobb, Mary. The Quilt-Block History of Pioneer Days with Projects Kids Can Make. Brookfield: The Millbrook Press, 1995. ISBN: 1-56294-485-1

Summary: Presents the history of American pioneers through the quilts they made, this appealing book links common experiences of the period with various quilt patterns.

dePaola, Tomie. Charlie Needs a Cloak. Aladdin Paperbacks, 1988. ISBN: 0671664670

Summary: A shepherd shears his sheep, cards and spins the wool, weaves and dyes the cloth, and sews a beautiful new red cloak.

MacLachlan, Patricia. Sarah, Plain and Tall. HarperTrophy, 2004. ISBN: 64402053

Summary: Although Sarah is homesick for Maine, she grows to love two youngsters. She shows them the beauty of Maine through her illustrations.

Paul, Ann Whitford. The Seasons Sewn: A Year in Patchwork. San Diego: Browndeer Press, 1996. ISBN 0-15-276918

Summary: Shows how the names of patchwork quilt patterns tell us about life in our country during the nineteenth century.

Roberts, Leonard W. Up Cutshin and Down Greasy: Folkways of a Kentucky Mountain Family. University of Kentucky Press; Reissue edition (April, 1988). ISBN: 081310176X

Summary: Along the isolated headwaters of the Kentucky River--Cutshin and Greasy creeks--folklorist Leonard Roberts found the Couches, a remarkable mountain family of gifted memory and imagination. For half a century they had preserved the traditional ways of their forebears--the farming methods, the household arts, and the games, ballads, dances, and tales that were their chief entertainment.