



PRE- AND POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Grades K through 3

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. 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. Many pioneers were subsistence (or "scratch") farmers, working small farms with poor soil. By growing several beans in different glass jars with dampened paper towels, students can learn about how plants and farm crops grow; if some beans are given less water and others given less light, students can learn how growing conditions can affect crop size, and how climate can affect the success or failure of a year's harvest.

2. Students are interested in learning the many important roles that farm animals played in pioneer lives, from draft animals to food sources. Prior to their visit to the Museum, they can collect pictures of animals that they will see during their visit, using the following list:

1. Sheep
2. Goats
3. Cows
4. Scottish Highland Cows
5. Ducks
6. Chickens
7. Mules

3. Instead of collecting pictures of animals, you might ask your students to help you collect several items into a "Museum box": these items should consist of items they might expect to see in a pioneer village, such as a bird feather, some straw, a gourd, some cornmeal, some yarn, a quilt piece, or some old buttons. After the visit is over, they can compare what they actually saw to the box's contents.

4. 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.

5. To help your students understand great lengths of time, have them compile a simple family tree. Encourage them to go back at least two generations.

6. To understand the simplicity of earlier children's play, have the children make a simple doll (or "action figure" for boys) out of wooden spoons or clothespins. Discuss with them the differences between the toys that pioneer children had and the toys they have today. The Museum has a large collection of children's toys that the students will be interested in comparing to their own.

POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

1. Now that the students have seen the Museum's relics, they should have a better understanding of how inanimate objects still have stories to tell. Let them handle a piece of wood, some rope, a nail, and a bag of salt, then help them speculate how these items might have been used by pioneers.

2. Students can put together a time capsule, selecting items that they believe will tell something about their class to future children. From

this exercise, they learn that inanimate items can tell us about people we've never met. Possible items might include a newspaper, some small toys, pictures they've drawn of their school or their playground—anything the children suggest that might help "tell the story" of who they are. They could also include some inexpensive examples of today's technologies—a battery, a small calculator, a light bulb).

3. Students will see a number of quilts at the Museum, some of incredible intricacy and others that were merely for warmth. Show students common quilt patterns and let them "piece" some out of construction paper. This activity will provide an opportunity to discuss why hardworking pioneer women took the time to incorporate design and color in otherwise utilitarian objects like quilts and coverlets. Even small children understand the difference between "regular" clothes and "Sunday" or "party" clothes, so they can also understand why some quilts might have been more special than others and why some had more work invested in them.

4. Older students can ask themselves why is it important for us to know about people from the past and how they lived. Some of their reasons may be so we can appreciate how pioneers sacrificed to make it possible for us to live here. This is especially true if the students have relatives who settled this area.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Lyon, George Ella. Basket. Illustrated by Mary Szilagyi. New York: Orchard Books, 1990. ISBN: 0531058867

Summary: The reminiscences of a mother, her "mama," and her grandmother are interwoven in this story of a basket brought from farm to house to apartment, and back to the house again. Memories of the wonderful things that it had held, and then, when it was misplaced, all of the things that may have been mislaid with it, become a part of family oral tradition.

Lyon, George Ella. Who Came Down That Road? Illustrated by Peter Catalanotto. New York: Orchard Books, 1992.

Summary: The concept of historical time is introduced by the story of a mother and child looking at a road near their home. Answering the child's questions, the mother tells how her great-grandparents used the road, then moves back to Civil War soldiers, and earlier settlers.

Coerr, Eleanor. The Josefina Story Quilt. New York: Harper Trophy, 1989. ISBN: 0064441296

Summary: While traveling west with her family in 1850, a young girl makes a patchwork quilt chronicling the experiences of the journey and reserves a special patch for her pet hen Josefina.

Johnston, Tony. Amber on the Mountain. Puffin Books, 1998. ISBN: 014056408X

Summary: Isolated on her mountain, Amber meets and befriends a girl from the city who gives her the determination to learn to read and write.

Paul, Ann Whitford. Eight Hands Round. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991. ISBN 0-06-024689-8

Summary: Introduces the letters of the alphabet with names of early American patchwork quilt patterns and explains the origins of the designs by describing the activity or occupation from which they are derived.