



Twelve Gardens of Stewardship

Online Curriculum Example from 'Learning to Give'

Garden of History

Lesson: 'Self – Sufficiency and the Community'

(Grade levels 3 – 5)

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to point out the character of the people in colonial times. This lesson illustrates how historical colonial daily life differs from the present and may be used to demonstrate ways this history can serve as a guide to living our own lives.

Duration:

One 30 Minute Class Period

Objectives:

The learner will:

- describe the importance of **self-sufficiency** in the colonial experience.
- compare and contrast modern living with colonial life on the frontier.

Materials:

Ox-cart Man by Donald Hall. (see **Bibliographic References**)

Instructional Procedure(s):

Anticipatory Set:

*Put the word "**self-sufficient**" on the chalkboard and ask students to talk about what it means. Ask students whether or not it is a good thing to be "self-sufficient."*

- Put students in the time frame of the colonial period and in the location of the frontier. Using a brainstorming technique, ask students to list ideas that come to mind about what life was like at that time and place. Put these ideas on the board.
- Remind students that because of the wilderness around them, people's lives were centered around providing food and shelter for themselves. Most of the population was not able to go to a market to buy from those who specialized in a trade or skill. This resulted in a common folk that were extremely self-sufficient. Each family worked hard as a "mini-community" to survive. The family unit in many ways had to be self-sufficient. The many chores from dawn to dusk were carried out by all the members of the family, each doing what they could to contribute to the survival of the family unit.

- Ask students to name the chores that members of the family had to do to survive. These chores ranged from planting, maintaining, harvesting, and preserving the crops; cooking, making soap, washing the clothes, and cleaning the home; husbandry, that is, taking care of the farm animals; shearing, carding, spinning and weaving cloth and sewing clothing; and building furniture or other implements for use. If the family couldn't purchase what they couldn't make, they learned to do without or make do. Life was simple, yet extremely full. Of the items listed, ask students which they believed the children in the family would do.
- Read the story of *The Oxcart Man* by Donald Hall. It is a simple story that nicely portrays this rugged individualism. This story dramatically points out community in the life of a family unit. The students might conclude the family didn't need anyone else. Each member of the family had a job to do. Each completed job provided for the common good of the family. Members of the immediate family met all the needs.
- Talk about what it means to be self-sufficient. Is this a good thing? Are there some things that still require the larger community to get done? What do students think the expression "No man is an island" means? Putting a chart on the board, compare frontier life with modern life as each pertains to self-sufficiency and community.

Assessment:

Ask students to write a letter to an imaginary friend who lives in a wilderness area in Alaska. Have the student relate what life is like here in the local community and ask questions about being self-reliant in the wilderness of Alaska. Conclude the letter with a statement about the student's preferences for his/her life or the life of the friend.

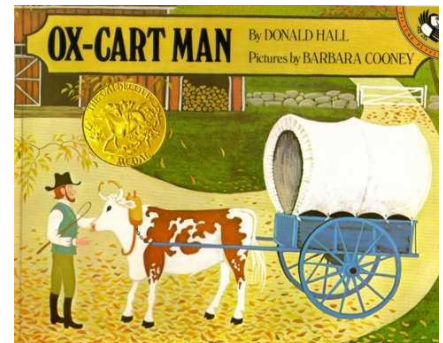
Bibliographical References:

Hall, Donald. *Ox-cart Man*. Viking Press: 1983. ISBN: 0140504419.

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NOTE:

The Learning to Give website supplements this history lesson with an additional philanthropic focus on Habit For Humanity.

The Stewardship website, Learning to Give, offers a wide variety of lesson plans which may be used to incorporate the Twelve Gardens of Stewardship into your curriculum. Though philanthropy is the filter for many of these lesson plans, you will find a large number of appropriate choices and useful ideas to adapt to your needs. Visit LearningToGive.org.