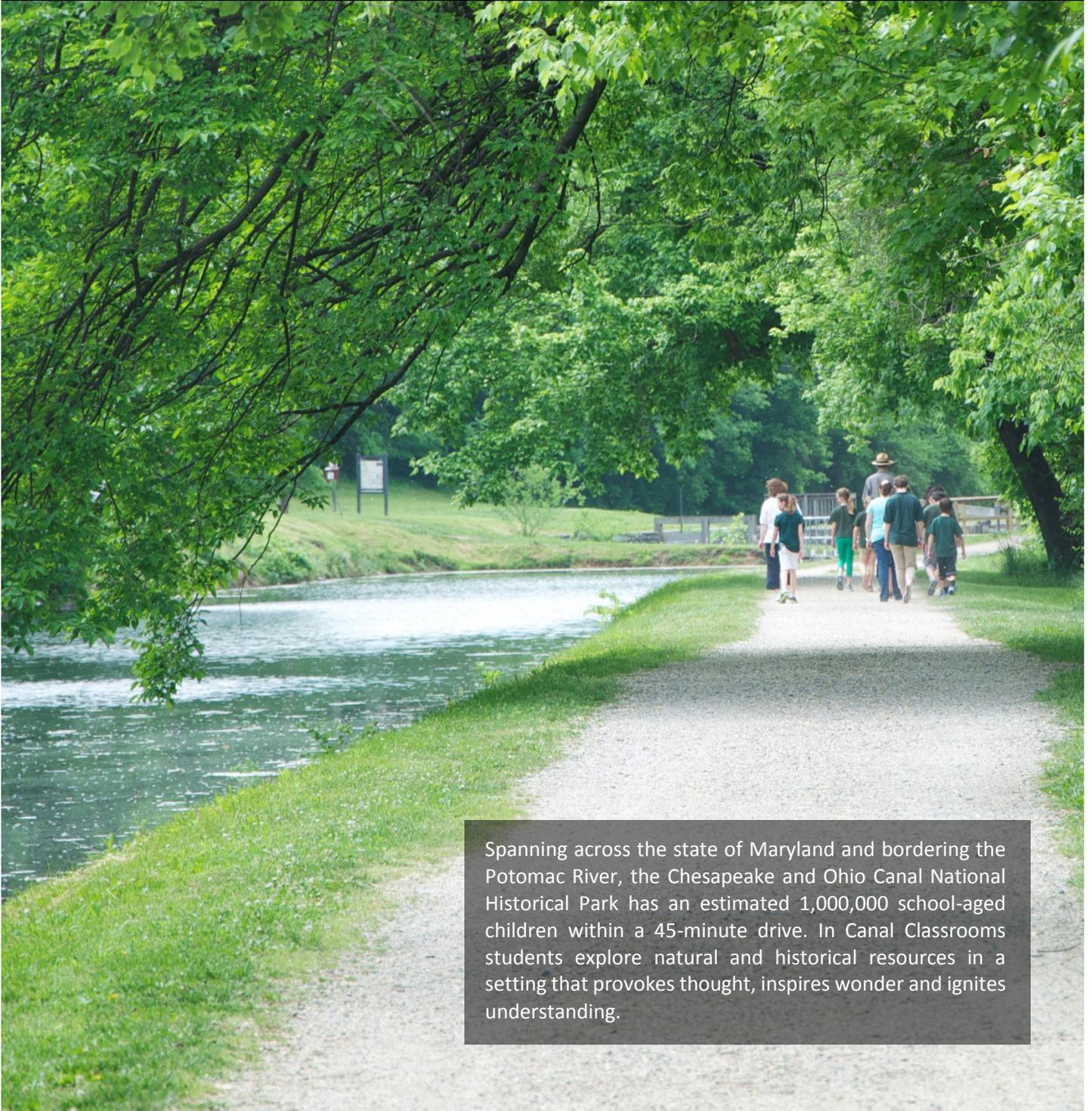




## Exploring the Cushwa Basin Site Guide and Lesson Plan



Spanning across the state of Maryland and bordering the Potomac River, the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park has an estimated 1,000,000 school-aged children within a 45-minute drive. In Canal Classrooms students explore natural and historical resources in a setting that provokes thought, inspires wonder and ignites understanding.

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**Need to reach us?** Call 301- 714-2213 (the park’s education line) or email [cocanaleducation@nps.gov](mailto:cocanaleducation@nps.gov)

**Go digital.** Find teacher resources including field trip reservations and pre- and post-visit classroom activities at [www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers](http://www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers)

**Like us.** Find us on Facebook at Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park.

## Exploring the Cushwa Basin: At a Glance

This program helps students understand the many challenges faced by the C&O Canal throughout its history. We will discover George Washington's vision for westward expansion and think about the canal as an engineering marvel. Exploring the daily life of Canallers, students will gain an appreciation for the challenges they faced operating their boats and locks. Finally, the program focuses on the canal's connection to the Potomac River.

As a result of visiting the Canal Basin, students will be able to:

1. Define the purpose and importance of National Parks with a focus on preserving the C&O Canal as a place to learn and explore our history
2. Describe the many challenges faced by those who lived and worked on the canal, particularly Locktenders and Canallers/boat crew
3. Explain the competition between the C&O Canal and the B&O Railroad
4. Examine the role of flooding as a major challenge in both canal history and present day
5. Describe George Washington's Dream/Vision for a water-transportation route West
6. Understand the process and operations of a lock
7. Describe the process and operations of locking a boat through
8. Explain the concepts of earth processes: weathering, erosion and deposition

The park partnered with Washington County (Maryland) Public Schools to develop this field trip day along with pre- and post-visit activities for your classroom. Completing the classroom activities will enhance student learning. The lessons include a mapping project, a critical thinking activity, a reader's theater, and several math and estimation activities. See Appendix A or our website for the materials: <http://www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers/classrooms/exploring-the-c-o-canal-s-cushwa-basin.htm>.

<b>Duration</b>	160 minutes
<b>Arrival Time</b>	9:15 (or call us for another start time)
<b>Best Time to Plan Trip</b>	Spring or Fall
<b>Cost</b>	Free
<b>Group size</b>	Based on number of homeroom classes <i>Please note: you may be scheduled the same day as another school</i>
<b>Rotations</b>	Four (Lockhouse, Trolley Barn, Earth Processes or Nature Hike) + lunch
<b>Grade</b>	Third, Fourth, or Fifth Washington County (Maryland) Public Schools: use this for fourth grade
<b>Chaperone to Student Ratio</b>	1 to 5 (maximum); 1 to 10 (minimum)

<p><b>Maryland Common Core Standards</b></p>	<p><b>English Language Arts, Speaking and Listening, Comprehension and Collaboration</b></p> <p>SL.3.1, SL.3.2, SL.3.3  SL.4.1, SL.4.2, SL.4.3  SL.5.1, SL.5.2, SL.  ELA-Literacy W4.25.3  ELA-Literacy RI4.1  ELA-Literacy RI4.2  ELA-Literacy W4.1.b.  ELA-Literacy SL4.1  ELA-Literacy SL4.4</p> <p><b>Next Generation Science Standards</b></p> <p><b>4-ESS2-1 Earth Systems</b> – Make observations and/or measurements to provide evidence of the effects of weathering or the rate of erosion by water, ice wind or vegetation</p> <p><b>4PS3-1 – Energy</b> – Use evidence to construct an explanation relating to the speed of an object to the energy of that object</p>
<p><b>Maryland State Curriculum Standards</b></p>	<p><b>2.A.1 – Peoples and Nations of the World</b> – Describe the various cultures of early societies of Maryland</p> <p>a. Define how culture influences people</p> <p><b>3.A.1 – Geography</b> – Use geographic tools to locate places and describe human and physical characteristics of those places. c. Identify and locate natural/physical features and man-made features of Maryland</p> <p><b>3.B.1 – Geography</b> – Describe similarities and differences of regions by using geographic characteristics. c. Describe how geographic characteristics change over time and affect the way people live and work</p> <p><b>5.C.2 – History</b> – Explain the political, cultural, economic and social changes in Maryland during the early 1800’s</p> <p>a. Describe the importance of changes in industry, transportation, education, rights, and freedoms in Maryland, such as roads and <b>canals</b>, slavery, B&amp;O Railroad, the National Road, immigration, public schools and religious freedom</p> <p><b>5.C.4. – History</b> – Analyze how the institution of slavery impacted individuals and groups in Maryland</p> <p>a. Compare the lives of slave families and free blacks</p>

# Itinerary

There are four on-site activities at the Cushwa Basin: a walk to Lockhouse 44 that includes a visit inside a historic lockhouse and a lock demonstration, a visit to our historic Trolley Barn with scavenger hunt and case study, a STEM activity about Earth Processes, and a Nature Hike. Schools have the option of 3 programs if planning for a 9:30-1:30 visit. *Note: If groups are larger than 120 students, a 4-group rotation schedule is necessary in which case students will participate in all activities in order to reduce group size.*

## **Lockhouse (1.25 hours)**

On the way to the lockhouse, students will utilize a field observation guide as scientists would to explore the canal's natural and historical attributes. Students visit Lock House 44 and open/close the lock gates. This 1-mile roundtrip walk is on a flat surface.

## **Trolley Barn (approximately 1 hour)**

Students will learn about life on the canal through observation and discussion. Students will participate in a scavenger hunt to explore canal exhibits and hands-on materials. Students will work in teams to do a historic canal photograph analysis and a case study of real events occurring on the canal during the Civil War. This program takes place inside the historic Trolley Barn.

## **Earth Processes (approximately 60 minutes)**

Weathering, erosion, and deposition shape our landscapes. Working in small teams, students will use an erosion table to discuss earth processes and how they changed the area around the Conococheague Creek Aqueduct. In small teams, students will explore the canal for examples of earth processes and discuss possible causes.

## **Nature Walk (approximately 60 minutes)**

Students will investigate and document their hike on the historic canal towpath using iPads and nature apps (provided by the park). Photos taken by students, limited to 4-5 per group, will be sent to the teacher following the field trip for an optional post visit activity.

## Daily Schedule – Three group rotation

A	B	C
9:15 Arrival at Cushwa Basin, Welcome by NPS staff		
9:30-10:30 Erosion Program <i>or</i> Nature Observation Walk (60 min.)	9:30-10:30 Exploring the Trolley Barn (60 min.)	9:30-10:45 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge, lock and lock house (75 min.)
10:30-11:30 Exploring the trolley barn, Civil War dilemma (60 min.)	10:30-11:45 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge, lock and lock house (75 min.)	10:45-11:45 Erosion Program <i>or</i> Nature Observation Walk (60 min.)
11:30-12:00 Lunch (30 min.)	11:45-12:15 Lunch (30 min.)	11:45-12:15 Lunch (30 min.)
12:00-1:15 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge, lock and lock house (75 min.)	12:15-1:15 Erosion Program <i>or</i> Nature Observation Walk (60 min.)	12:15-1:15 Exploring the trolley barn, Civil War dilemma (60 min.)
1:20 Load buses for departure		

## Daily Schedule – Four group rotation

A	B	C	D
9:15 Arrival at Cushwa Basin, Welcome by NPS staff			
9:30-10:15 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge	9:30-10:15 Lock and lock house	9:30-10:00 Erosion and natural changes	9:30-10:00 Nature walk
		10:00-10:30 Nature walk	10:00-10:30 Erosion and natural changes
10:15-11:00 Lock and lock house	10:15-11:00 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge	10:30-11:00 Civil War dilemma	10:30-11:00 Exploring the trolley barn
		11:00-11:30 Erosion and natural changes	11:00-11:30 Nature walk
11:00-11:30 Erosion and natural changes	11:00-11:30 Nature walk	11:00-11:30 Exploring the trolley barn	11:00-11:30 Lunch
11:30-12:00 Nature walk	11:30-12:00 Erosion and natural changes	11:30-12:00 Lunch	11:30-12:00 Trolley Barn Civil War Dilemma
12:00-12:30 Exploring the Trolley Barn	12:00-12:30 Lunch	12:00-12:45 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge	12:00-12:45 Lock and lock house
12:30-1:00 Lunch	12:30-1:00 Civil War dilemma		12:45-1:30 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge
1:00-1:30 Civil War dilemma	1:00-1:30 Exploring the trolley barn	12:45-1:30 Lock and lock house	12:45-1:30 Warehouse, basin, high water marks, railroad bridge
1:30 Load buses and depart			

# A Letter to Students

*Teachers, please distribute and read with your students and provide as a take home to parents.*

Dear Students,

We rangers, teachers, and volunteers in the Canal Classroom Corps look forward to meeting you and spending a few hours exploring the Cushwa Basin together.

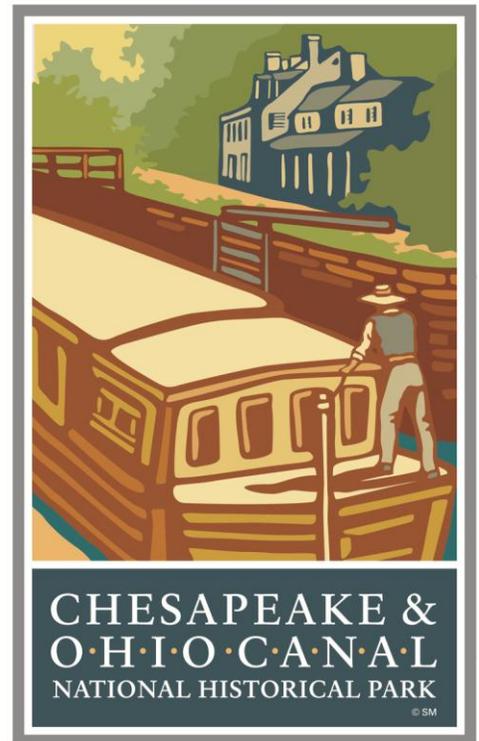
The 184.5 mile long Chesapeake & Ohio Canal is a special place that was important in American history. For nearly 100 years, the canal was a water highway, bringing Western Maryland's natural resources like coal, lumber, and agricultural products to the markets in Georgetown, near Washington, D.C. Today it is a pathway for discovering historical, natural, and recreational treasures.

We will be outside for much of the day, so please dress appropriately. Check the weather forecast for the day, and remember to bring a coat for rain or cool morning temperatures. We will be walking on the towpath, which is covered with small rocks, so remember to wear sneakers or boots. Feel free to wear a hat and bring a water bottle. Finally, we do not have garbage cans in the park, so please pack your lunch in reusable containers and/or your teacher will collect your trash and take back to school to dispose.

We know it will be a fun day of learning, and we can't wait for your visit. It will be an adventure.

Happy Trails,

*Ranger Hollie*



# Map



# Planning a Successful Visit

## What to Wear

- Remind students to wear appropriate footwear for this extended outdoor experience. Flip flops, slip-on shoes, or sandals are not appropriate.
- It is extremely helpful to rangers leading the program for students to wear clearly labeled name tags with first names only.
- We suggest wearing layers. Pants are the best precaution against cool temperatures, bee stings, ticks, and poison ivy.
- Students may wear hats for sun protection and/or warmth.
- Everyone should carry a reusable water bottle (remember to label bottles with names). A drinking fountain is not available.
- Programs will go on in light rain or snow. Encourage everyone to have proper outer wear such as a rain or warm coat.

## Planning for Lunch

- Lunch will be outside, at shady picnic tables near the parking lot. If the weather is bad, the students will eat inside the Trolley Barn.
- The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park is trash free. Bring a trash bag or two and plan to take all garbage with you. Encourage students to pack lunches in reusable containers.
- We want animals to eat only wild food sources, so we will provide an indoor storage location for lunches and trash.

## Communication

- Cell phone coverage is spotty at the Cushwa Basin. Please ask all students, teachers, and chaperones to silence their mobile devices upon arrival.
- For non-emergencies, call (301) 714-2213. For emergencies, call 911 or (866) 677-6677 (this is the National Park Service dispatch center).



## Exploring the Cushwa Basin (4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

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### Chaperones

- At minimum, please have one chaperone (teacher or other adult) for every 10 students. In order to keep programs manageable, do not exceed one chaperone for every five students.
- Chaperones should be an active part of the lessons—keeping up with the group and actively listening. We will likely call on chaperones to assist (handing out materials, sub-dividing groups, crowd control, etc.).
- During programs, refrain from holding conversations with other chaperones or using a cellular phone.
- No smoking during the trip.

### Directions

The Cushwa Basin is at the Williamsport Visitor Center, 205 West Potomac Street, Williamsport, Maryland 21795.

### Arrival

- Please arrive on time at 9:15.
- The Canal Classroom Corps staff will be waiting for your bus. Buses may park near the Trolley Barn, in the upper parking lot.
- The Cushwa Basin has two, accessible vault toilets (non-flushing) near the Trolley Barn. There is also a portable privy. Bring hand sanitizer for the group.

### Great Expectations

- The Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historical Park is a federally-protected public use area. Please be good stewards during your visit. Do not pick the plants or take anything from the park.
- The availability of the packet boat is dependent on water, weather, and staffing. If students are scheduled to ride the boat, please prepare them for a possible change of plans.

### Special Needs

Let us know if any of your students have special needs.



### **Cancellations**

Field trips may be cancelled in very cold weather or heavy downpours or storms. The canal floods on average every 10 years. If flooding or severe inclement weather is predicted, a Canal Classroom Corps member will call to reschedule your field trip.

If you need to cancel, let us know as soon as possible by calling (301) 714-2213.

## **Safety Considerations**

### **Aqueduct**

During our Earth Science program, students may walk across the Conococheague Aqueduct. Students must use caution when crossing.

### **Lock 44**

Students may have the opportunity to operate Lock 44. They must follow all instructions from the park staff about how to approach, operate, and leave the lock area.

### **Bikers**

The towpath is an active recreation corridor. Please ask students to remain in single file or gather in short, grassy areas off the towpath.

### **Ticks**

You will be in areas where ticks are found. Remind students to take precautions such as wearing insect repellent, staying on the towpath, and checking frequently and thoroughly for ticks.

### **Snakes**

Two species of poisonous snakes are found in the park: the Northern Copperhead and the Timber Rattlesnake. Students should be cautious where they place their hands and feet.

### **Stinging insects**

You will be in areas with hornets, wasps, and bees, which can cause severe allergic reactions



in sensitive individuals. Chaperones should carry epinephrine pens with them.

**Rabies**

All animals in the park are wild and their behaviors are unpredictable. Treat all animals with caution.

**Poisonous plants**

You will be visiting an area with poison ivy and other noxious plants. Stay alert and stay on the towpath or in mowed areas.

**Sun and Heat Exposure**

Remind students to wear sunscreen and a hat to avoid exposure to sun. Students are invited to carry water (preferably from a refillable water bottle) and stay in the shade to avoid heat exposure.

**Wind and Inclement Weather**

Because of falling tree hazards, we will not go on the towpath if wind gusts are more than 30 m.p.h. If the predicted high temperature is less than 40°, we will stay inside the trolley barn. If there is lightning at any distance, programming will continue in the trolley barn.

## Additional On-line Resources about the C&O Canal and the National Park Service

Description		Website URL
C&O Canal NHP	The park's website for teachers hosts classroom materials and on-line resources	<a href="http://www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers">www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers</a>
C&O Canal Trust	The park's partner in education provides 50 short stories about places along the C&O Canal for students to read	<a href="http://www.canaltrust.org">www.canaltrust.org</a>
National Park Service	Learn more about the NPS mission, history, and organization	<a href="http://www.nps.gov/aboutus/index.htm">www.nps.gov/aboutus/index.htm</a>
National Park Service America's Best Idea	More facts about the NPS, including an excellent timeline and movies	<a href="http://www.nps.gov/americasbestidea/">http://www.nps.gov/americasbestidea/</a>

## Pre Visit Activity: Journey on the C&O Canal

Use this lesson as a stand-alone or as a pre-activity to a canal visit. This lesson addresses a host of indicators and objectives in both reading and social studies for the Maryland State Curriculum. Students will learn why the C&O Canal is an amazing accomplishment in Maryland's history, understand more about the genre of historical fiction, and describe what a typical nine-year old canal boy and family were like in the late 1800's. The lesson was designed for Washington County, Maryland, students who visit the Williamsport Visitor Center at the Cushwa Basin; but it is applicable for other locations along the canal as well.

Teachers should refer to Grade 4 Unit 1 Earth/Space Science Guide for lesson seeds and resources to support instruction for weathering and erosion. Students will be able to make stronger observations at the canal if they have had time to investigate with processes that change Earth's surface. Visit netTrekker on the youseemore.com WCPS website. Students can use the C&O Canal Trip Grade 4 folder in the portfolio to do research. Contact the WCPS Office of Elementary Education for Science (X8780) for instruction and content assistance.

Grade Level	Third, fourth, or fifth grades Note to Washington County Public School Teachers: use this for 4 <sup>th</sup> grade
Group Size	20+
No. breakout groups	As many as needed for discussion
Subject Area	Maryland state history
Activity Time	60 minutes
Setting	Inside/classroom
Maryland Common Core Standards	<b>English Language Arts, Reading Literature and Informational Texts</b> RL.3.1, RL.3.3, RL.3.4, RI.3.7 RL.4.1, RL.4.3, RL.4.4, RI.4.7 RL.5.1, RL.5.4, RL.5.6, RI.5.7
Maryland State Curriculum Standards	<b>Social Studies/Geography</b> 3C1d – Describe the transportation and communication networks for the movement of people, goods and ideas to, from, and within Maryland, such as the Bay Bridge, National Road, B&O Railroad, Port of Baltimore, and the C&O Canal <b>Social Studies/History</b> 5C2b – Describe the importance of changes in industry, transportation, education, rights, and freedoms in Maryland such as roads, canals, slavery, B&O Railroad, the National Road, immigration, public schools, and religious freedom <b>Social Studies/Skills and Processes</b> 6 A3,4 - Use strategies to monitor understanding and derive meaning from text and portions of text (during and after reading) <b>English/Language Arts</b> 3A3d – Analyze characterization (character traits based on what the character says, does, and thinks...)

## Exploring the Cushwa Basin (4<sup>th</sup> Grade)

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	3A3e – Identify and explain relationships between and among characters, setting, and events
Concept	At the end of the activity, students should be able to understand why the C&O Canal is an amazing accomplishment in Maryland’s history, understand more about the genre of historical fiction, and describe what a typical nine-year old canal boy and family were like in the late 1800’s.
Materials	The lesson materials include this printable lesson plan, Power Point presentation and notes for the teacher, journal exerts with a map for the students, and a vocabulary list. See appendix and visit <a href="http://www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers/classrooms/journey.htm">http://www.nps.gov/choh/forteachers/classrooms/journey.htm</a> to download the Power Point presentation.
Vocabulary	Aqueduct, canal, cargo, canal lock, lock house, lock keeper, towline, towpath
Hook	You might begin by discussing your upcoming field trip or show a photo from the Power Point, the park’s website, or other resource.  Ask: How would you like to live on a boat and travel up and down a canal for 8 months every year?  Give some talking time and time to share. Explain that many families who lived and worked on the C&O Canal did just that.
Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Begin with the Power Point to build students’ background information (Note talking points and additional background information on the notes below each slide.)</li> <li>2) Give one copy of <i>A Journey on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal</i> (journal), vocabulary words, and a map to each student. Ask them to write the location names on the map as they read the journal. Cue students to other pieces of historical fiction they have read. Make sure they understand key elements of this genre and have opportunities to self-select other pieces of historical fiction.</li> <li>3) The readability of the journal is early Grade 5; consider how you will support readers who are not able to read the text independently (shared reading, partner reading).</li> <li>4) Process through the text, sharing background information and allowing students to process information and make personal connections along the way.</li> <li>5) Review the key points of the stated objectives with questions such as, “Why is the C&amp;O Canal an amazing accomplishment?”, “What have we learned about Michael that makes him a typical 9 year old boy?”</li> </ol>
Assessment	<p>Review the key points of the stated objectives with questions such as, “Why is the C&amp;O Canal an amazing accomplishment?” and “What have we learned about Michael that makes him a typical 9 year old boy?”</p> <p>When the journal has been completed, you may wish to have students respond in writing to any of the questions, or additional questions that you develop.</p> <p>The real test will be when students visit the canal. Notice the questions they ask, and how well they are able to focus during the program.</p>

## Appendix A: Pre-Visit Materials to follow this page

# A Journey on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal



Adapted from a previous instructional resource in partnership with Washington County Public Schools and the National Park Service  
September - 2011



# A Journey on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal

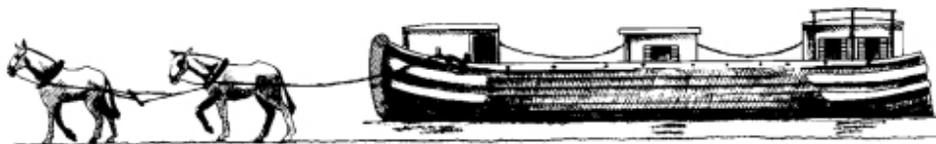
## Introduction

The O' Leary family lives on a canal boat on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. William O'Leary is the Captain of their family boat named the "Turn Over."



Captain O'Leary takes care of the family business, which is transporting cargo up and down the length of the C&O Canal.

Captain O'Leary's wife, Anna, takes care of the family. They have three children. Michael O'Leary is nine years old and is a mule driver. Elizabeth O'Leary is seven years old and helps her mother with the family chores. Jeffrey O'Leary is two years old and keeps everyone busy! Everyone in the O'Leary family (except Jeffrey) works together to make the canal boat run. Michael has decided this year to keep a diary of his journeys on the C&O Canal. Let's take a peek into Michael's diary to see what he's been up to.



Monday June 14, 1876

When we got to **Great Falls** today, I took Elizabeth out to see the falls. If it weren't for those waterfalls and all of those rocks in the Potomac River, we wouldn't be here. Folks would have used the river to carry their cargo instead of building this canal.

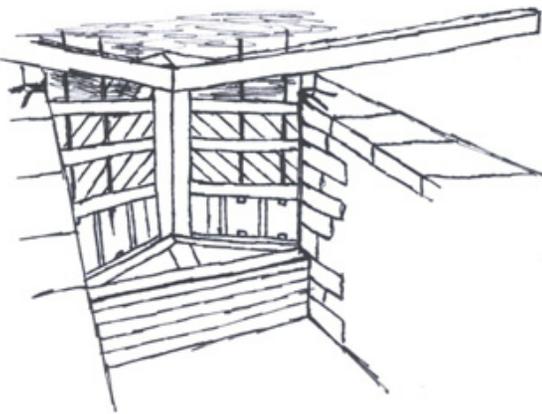
You can tell when we're close to the city, lots of people come and watch the boats. At the Crommelin House (Great Falls Tavern) the lockkeeper added a hotel to his home so all the folks visiting would have a place to stay.

When we got into **Georgetown** today, we had to wait in line awhile for our boat to be unloaded. Mother went shopping and bought fabric, some for 15 cents a yard and some calico for 8 cents a yard, to make new clothes. Elizabeth and I got to buy some candy, four pieces for a penny! When we got back to the "Turn Over", all the coal had been unloaded. The company doesn't always get all the coal off so I crawled underneath the hatches and swept up what coal they left so we can use it in our stove to cook with on our way back. Tonight we sleep in the city, and tomorrow we'll head back for Cumberland.

the stone from here to make the Smithsonian Museum in Washington. Tonight we've been invited to the Eaton's boat to listen to some music and sing songs. A couple of other families are coming too. I hope there are some other boys there my age. We're bringing some freshly made cornbread to share that Elizabeth helped Mother make.

### Sunday June 13, 1876

Since today is Sunday, Father decided we should take the day off. We walked to a nearby church and then visited with the lockkeeper, at **Rileys Lock**. Mr. Riley let me help him "lock through" a couple of boats. I helped him push open and push closed the big lockgates, and he even let me turn the lock key to let the water out of the lock to make the boats lower. Tomorrow we're going to stop at Great Falls for awhile, and then we'll be in Georgetown.



# DIARY

### Monday June 7, 1876

Today we left **Cumberland** where the canal begins and started our trip to Georgetown where the canal ends.

The men from the Consolidated Coal Company used huge buckets to fill up the "Turn Over" with 120 tons of Coal. Cumberland gets real busy sometimes with everybody hurrying to start their trip. We were the second boat in line this morning, so we got a good start.



I hitched Frances and Ida (our mules) up all by myself, and Dad steered instead of Mother since there were so many boats nearby. This is my third year walking these mules up and down the towpath. I hope next year Dad will let me steer the "Turn Over". After we'd been on our way for a few hours, Mother sent Elizabeth out on the towpath with me. I have to teach her how to be a mule driver. She can say "Whoa" and "Come Up" all right, but she never fixes the harnesses right. I have to watch her all the time.

Tuesday June 8, 1876

We stopped last night just after we got out of the **Paw Paw Tunnel**. It was dark and I get the creeps walking through the tunnel even in daylight. I say the tunnel is haunted, Dad says he isn't going to find out! Too many unexplained things happen at the tunnel at night.



I heard of this one Captain who tied his boat up for the night too close to the tunnel. He and his family hadn't been settled down for more than an hour or two and were eating supper. That's when they noticed the line tying them to the shore had mysteriously come undone. Well, everybody jumped up and used the poles to push the boat back over and tie it up again. Then the Captain noticed that the mules were very restless on the towpath and were not eating their grain. That night after everyone was in bed, the Captain heard the heavy hatches covering the coal being lifted. When he got up to see what was wrong, everything was in place perfectly. Well, that was enough. The Captain and his family and the mules were getting no rest. So they all got up and moved the boat a

Saturday June 12, 1876

It is so hot today that Mother let us go swimming for awhile. Elizabeth could only jump off the boat into the canal, but I dove. We passed a boat today that was headed upstream towards Cumberland which was carrying a bunch of watermelons. A few of them fell off, so I swam over and brought two back to our boat. Dad scooped them out of the water and brought them onboard the "Turn Over".

I also got to do some fishing from the boat today. I caught two perch, a catfish, and a sunfish. Dad caught some fish too so we had fish for dinner, corn, and watermelon for dessert. We had a contest to see who could spit the seeds the farthest and Dad won.

Some of the farmers along the canal leave the two rows of corn closest to the canal for the boatmen and their families to pick as kind of a neighborly thing to do. Elizabeth picked enough for supper tonight. We never pick more corn than we can use or else the farmers might not be so generous.

I saw some people crossing the Potomac River as we passed by **Whites Ferry** today, and there were a lot of folks out fishing the river's bank. There is a mill here where they cut sandstone used in making buildings. I know they used

Friday June 11, 1876

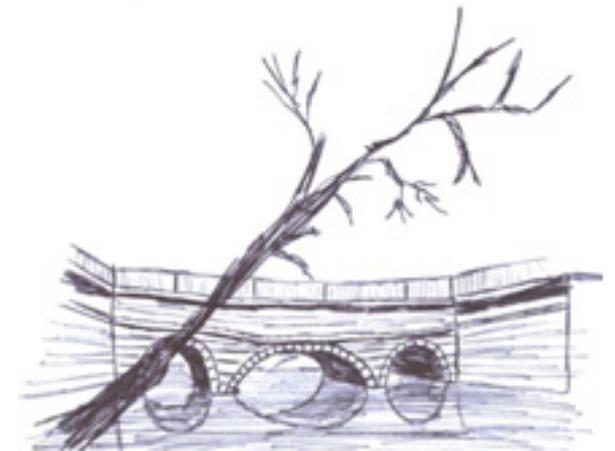
It rained today. Not too hard, but enough to be a bother. We were a few miles from the Antietam Battlefield today where a giant battle took place during the Civil War. I learned in school that the battle at Antietam was the single bloodiest day in all of American History! We also studied John Brown's raid at **Harpers Ferry** where he tried to get guns to the slaves.

I only get to go to school about three to four months a year when the canal is closed for the winter. The rest of the time I work with my family on the canal. Sometimes it's hard to keep up with the other children who are in school the full time. The boys who work on some of the nearby farms don't get a full school year either so it works out all right. I keep up pretty well with the other students, though. I'm going on McGuffey's Third Eclectic Reader this winter, only one behind the boys my age who go to school full time. Mother says keeping this diary is a good way for me to practice my penmanship and orthography (that means spelling). Tonight we are all going to gather together and listen to Father tell stories about the war.

couple of miles further downstream. The mules settled down right away and ate their grain. Nothing else unusual happened for the rest of the night. I don't know about Dad, but I sure believe in ghosts!

Wednesday June 9, 1876

I can hardly believe it! Dad let me steer the boat today. It was great. Once we got into **Hancock**, Dad called out, "Hey Michael, I think it's time you started learning a new job. How about taking a turn at the tiller?" I nearly jumped right over Frances and Ida to get on the boat. I didn't think I'd get to steer the "Turn Over" until I was ten, when most other boys start learning, but Dad thinks I'm big enough now.



I started out at Little Pool, since the canal's wide and straight there. I did a good job, too. You have to push the tiller arm to the left to make the boat go to the right, and push the tiller arm to the right to make the boat go to the

left. Seems backwards to me, but it works! I steered all the way until just before the **Licking Creek Aqueduct**. Then Dad took over again and I went back to the mules. We didn't want Elizabeth walking the mules over the aqueduct alone for her first time. An aqueduct is like a bridge which carries the canal, water and all, and towpath over a creek or a stream. The towpath is pretty narrow and high above the ground. No need getting the mules spooked for nothing. Elizabeth just needs practice. Maybe if I get her to be a good mule driver, Dad will let me steer some more.....

Thursday June 10, 1876

We passed through **Williamsport** today. Lots of warehouses. Seems like all we did today was chores. I gave the mule stables a good cleaning this morning before starting. Dad spliced a new towline since our old rope that leads from the boat to the mules was starting to get worn out. Mother and Elizabeth washed just about everything in sight. They scrubbed the cabin, top to bottom, trying to get rid of some of the coal dust. Then they washed clothes and hung them on a line Dad and I put up on the deck.

Jeffrey was tied to the roof all day today. We put him in a kind of harness with a long rope attached to a ring on the deck. That way he can wander around and play without any of us having to watch him too closely. If he falls off the boat, we just pull him in like a big fish.



Only he doesn't actually fall in the water. We made sure the line wouldn't reach the water so he can't drown. We all started calling Jeffrey "fish bait" today, though. He fell over at least three times, just dangling about two feet above the water teasing all the catfish.

Elizabeth sewed some buttons on Dad's shirts while Mother cooked up some bean soup and biscuits for supper tonight. Dad says when we return to Cumberland, he and I are going to do some painting on the "Turn Over" so she'll look fresh and new again. I'll sleep good tonight. I'm extra tired and Dad said I could sleep in the hay cabin tonight, since I worked so hard cleaning it and all. Plus we went 30 miles today, and I had to walk extra with the mules while everyone was busy with other chores.

# Michael's Journey on the C & O Canal

