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LESSON TITLE:

Schuyler House Scavenger Hunt

Course: History of the United States and New York State (Social Studies)

Grade Level: Middle School (6th through 8th Grade)

Time: 45 minutes

Developed by: Peter Arruda, Cobleskill-Richmondville Central School District

Funding Acknowledgment

This program was made possible in part by a grant from the National Park Foundation.

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be able to compare the domestic life of an upper-class 18th century family with what they know of their own modern life in the 21st century.
- Through the scavenger hunt of the Schuyler House, students will examine:
 - how an 18th century family experienced life in their day including technologies, adaptations, and solutions for heating, lighting, and obtaining water.
 - Philip Schuyler's role in the local and regional economy.
 - how the Schuyler's welcomed guests in their home with period entertainment and dining.
 - how the life of the upper-class Schuyler family compared with that of their enslaved servants.

NYS Social Studies Standards:

- NYS K-8 Social Studies Framework Standard 7.2c (Indicator #2): Students will examine the economic, social, and political characteristics of each colonial region.
- NYS K-8 Social Studies Framework Standard 7.2e (Indicator #2): Students will explain why and where slavery grew over time in the United States and students will examine the living conditions of slaves, including those in New York State.

NYS Next Generation Learning Standards for Literacy:

- Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts. (NYS Reading Standard RH7 in History/Social Studies for grades 6-8).
- Write responses to texts and to events (past and present), ideas, and theories that include personal, cultural, and thematic connections. (NYS Writing Standard WHST4 in History/Social Studies for grades 6-8).

Prior to this lesson:

Before completing this lesson, students will have examined the creation English colonies in North America (Jamestown, Plymouth, etc.), New York's 17th century roots as New Netherland, and the development of the patroon system in New York's Hudson River Valley through political, economic, social, and cultural contexts. This lesson serves as a digital complement to an on-site visit to Saratoga National Historical Park. It can be completed either in preparation for, in reflection of, or as an alternative to a physical trip to the park.



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Procedure:

1. The teacher should begin the lesson by activating students' background knowledge of daily life in the late 18th-century. Through small group or whole class discussion, the teacher should guide students to identify some ways life in the late 18th century was different from their life today. Some guiding questions to consider asking are: How was life at home different for Americans 250 years ago? What are some things in your home that did not exist 250 years ago? What things might people have used instead of... lights, electricity, running water, etc.? Depending upon student responses, the teacher may also wish to point out that there were also numerous ways that life was different regarding family customs and social expectations, and that these customs and expectations could vary among different social classes and/or a person's status as free or enslaved.
2. Next, the teacher will introduce the task for students by telling students they will complete a Scavenger Hunt of an 18th-century home using a 360° Virtual Tour. The teacher will introduce the Schuyler Family, Philip, Catherine, and eight children (out of 15) that lived to adulthood, as an upper-class family well positioned in New York Society. The teacher will distribute the Scavenger Hunt Worksheet (either paper or digital) and review the directions with the class.

Teacher note: The infant mortality rate in the late 1700s was 50%. Even wealthy families experienced a high infant mortality rate in that time.

3. Students will then be provided the link to access the 360° Virtual Tour of the Schuyler House. As students follow the guidelines within the Scavenger Hunt and complete the corresponding questions, the teacher will remain on hand to help students with navigating the tour including pointing out the location of the interactive icons in each room. Many of the items you will see are antiques. Some items are high-quality copies of artifacts, including some based on originals found in archaeology on the property.
4. After completing the Scavenger Hunt of the Schuyler House, the teacher will conclude the lesson by asking student volunteers to share their responses to question #8 and question #9. With this review, some further discussion might ensue, and the teacher can provide some relevant clarification on questions students may have. The teacher will then instruct students to turn in the Scavenger Hunt worksheet (either paper or digital).
5. In closing the lesson, the teacher will provide each student an index card to complete the lesson's exit ticket. Students will then complete a quick writing exercise based on the following prompt: "Comparing your own home life with that of the Schuyler family, what things are similar? What things are different?" The teacher will then collect the index card from students as they exit the classroom.

Lesson Alterations and Accommodations:

There are several alterations that could be applied to this lesson as the teacher sees fit to adjust for time or student ability. Primarily, the teacher may choose for students to complete the Scavenger Hunt independently or with their partner. In a smaller class setting, or a class setting in which students do not have individual devices to use when exploring the 360° Schuyler House tour, it is recommended that the teacher lead students through the tour using a Smartboard or projector, stopping, and reading aloud significant items on the tour that pertain to the objective of the lesson.

Assessment:

In line with the lesson's objective, students will finish the lesson by completing a writing exercise asking them to compare their life with that of the Schuyler family. Further, by collecting and evaluating the Scavenger Hunt worksheet, the teacher can make direct connections to students' comprehension in alignment with the lesson objectives.



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NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Schuyler House Virtual Scavenger Hunt



Phillip Schuyler Country Estate

Credit: Jean Mackay

DIRECTIONS:

After clicking the link below, you will be taking a virtual field trip to the historic Phillip Schuyler Country Estate, part of Saratoga National Historical Park. Located along New York's Hudson River, the country home stands along the path taken by British General John Burgoyne's army as they marched south toward Albany, NY from Canada during the American War of Independence. As Burgoyne's British forces retreated after the Battles of Saratoga in the Fall of 1777, the previous home that stood on the estate was burned. Schuyler quickly made plans to rebuild in late 1777 and the estate would continue to play an important role in the local and regional economy. As you move through the home on this 360° Virtual Tour there is a lot to see but use the guidelines to complete the Scavenger Hunt.

Link to Virtual Tour — <https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=13CoFuYWNpx>

SCHUYLER HOUSE VIRTUAL SCAVENGER HUNT



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Welcome to the Virtual Tour!

As you take the tour of Phillip Schuyler's Historic Country Estate, there is much to see. Overlaid on the 360° images are interactive icons you can hover over that will provide you with information about the home and the objects within. Circles on the floor will allow you to move around from room to room, up and down stairs, and even through doors to the outside of the home.

The Main Hallway

The Virtual Tour starts in the Main Hallway, the place where visitors often entered the home. Visitors could be local, like tenant farmers or certain family friends. They could be from far-off states, like some friends or government officials. Guests would be quickly greeted. Some local visitors like tenant farmers might have to wait a while, as Philip was occupied with many businesses

1. What objects within the Main Hallway were provided for waiting guests?

Exploring Downstairs

As you explore downstairs, stop to answer Scavenger Hunt questions in the Office, the Parlor, and the Dining Room. You can answer these questions in any order as you explore.

The Office

Hovering over the interactive icon at Philip's desk reveals his involvement in multiple businesses of all different kinds. Among the objects that can be seen today are surveying equipment used for measuring and dividing plots of land, ledger books for recording business transactions, and a scale which may be used to weigh coins of gold or silver.

2. Despite Philip's many kinds of businesses, what do you notice about the physical space of the Philip Schuyler's Office?

The Parlor

In the 18th and 19th centuries, a Parlor room like this was common in homes for those of higher social classes. This is where the Schuyler family would spend time with guests and entertain certain visitors. Works of art, fine furniture, and a large, tall case clock were symbolic of the family's wealth and social status. While in the Parlor, note the portraits of your hosts on the wall, Philip and Catherine Schuyler.

3. What object(s) within the parlor might be used to entertain the family and its guests?



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The Dining Room

The Dining Room is where the Schuyler Family and their guests would have their meals. Like the Parlor, the Dining Room could often be a symbol of the family's wealth. From the luxurious silverware and dishes to the assortments of roasted meats, fish, vegetables, and even desserts like cakes and fruit, the quality of dining was an important indication of social class in the colonial period. Enslaved servants working in the separate Kitchen behind the house prepared these fine meals. A proper butler, also enslaved, served the family and their guests. Next, you'll head out the back door to the kitchen.

The Kitchen

Though the original kitchen for the house was in the cellar, this kitchen, likely built soon after the reconstruction of the house, provided better service for the family. Typical for homes of the era, the Kitchen itself is in a separate nearby structure off the back of the house where meals could be prepared out of sight of the family and its guests. Further, the separate structure helped minimize heat from the fireplace, noise, and the risk of fire within the home.

4. With the kitchen playing many functions in the enslaved servants' lives, what caught your attention in the kitchen, and why?

Exploring Upstairs

As you explore upstairs, stop to answer scavenger hunt questions in the South Chamber, the North Chamber, and the Children's Room.

The South Chamber

The South Chamber was typically shared by the older children but may also be used for guests of the family. Note the two beds within the room. Typical beds of the era included a rope and canvas hanging to support a mattress made of horsehair or cornhusks. Luxurious beds would include a sack filled with feathers for comfort. One of the more important parts of an early American bed was the four-post canopy frame. From the frame, thick curtains could be draped which helped to keep the heat through the night as the fire died down.

5. Sharing a room with many other siblings, what other purpose might bed curtains be helpful for?

The Children's Room

The smallest room in the main house, the Children's Room is two small rooms. Like the South Chamber, the Children's Room may be shared by multiple children in the family. However, the youngest child would likely share a bedroom with his or her parents for at least the first six months of life (note the baby cradle in the North Chamber). In all, Philip and Catherine Schuyler had eight children that lived to adulthood.

6. In the Children's Room, what objects do you notice that suggest it was used by the younger children?

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The North Chamber

7. In the North Chamber, describe one item that would be useful to Catherine or Philip Schuyler?

Free Explore

This is your opportunity to explore the Schuyler House freely. There is a lot more to see! In the Upper Hallway, you can find access to the Attic containing a small, finished space that may have been used by guests. Going outside by the kitchen also provides some new places to explore. There is a cellar, a Kitchen Attic, and a few outdoor spaces to explore.

1. What interesting things did you discover on your free explore? What questions might you have for your teacher or Park Ranger? Your teacher may have you contact a Park Ranger at Saratoga National Historical Park with your question(s).

2. If you were visiting the Schuyler family, what would you have liked the most?
