

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT
Lesson Title –The Diary of Mary Osgood Sumner
From Judith Perkins

Grade - 5

Length of class period – 40 minutes

Inquiry – How important was religion (right vs. wrong, good vs. evil) in the daily lives of colonial children?

Objectives –

Students will:

- Analyze journal entries of a colonial child in the 1700s
- Discuss why the journal was divided into “black leaf” and “white leaf” entries
- Create their own journal entries

Materials

- Journal page from Mary Osgood Sumner’s monitor and transcript (attached)
- Evaluate a Primary Source page
- Blank diary (monitor) page

Activities

- With students working in small groups, distribute copies of the journal page, transcription, and Evaluate page. Explain that Mary Osgood Sumner was a child during the late 1700s. Some explanation of unfamiliar words/expressions will be necessary. Have students study the journal page, read the transcription, and complete the Evaluate page.
- Groups should then discuss why some entries are considered “black leaf” while others are “white leaf” and why Mary’s journal would have been organized this way. Groups should then share their ideas with the whole group.
- Distribute blank diary page. Have students create their own black leaf/white leaf journal entries for the previous 24 hour period, noting how many entries are made in each section and comparing this with Mary Osgood Sumner and other members of their group.

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?

Teacher will listen to group discussions, whole group sharing, evaluate evaluation page and diary entries.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

2.3(6) Create written work using primary sources.

Diary of Mary Osgood Sumner as a Child

late 1700s

July 8th Black Leaf. I left my house on the bed.

9th My friend Sister's Sash.

10th She is a white to my little sister. I put the cream on the floor on the chest.

11th

12th Puff, Sister Cynthia's food on the bed.

White Leaf. I went and said my Catechism, only came home and wrote down the Questions and Answers then I read and went to the Lane endeavored to be very decent.

9th Nothing passed in school. Many common spent the evening in writing the Questions and Answers.

10th I did all my business before breakfast. Came home in the evening from school and finished writing down my Questions.

11th I improved my time before breakfast, after that I wrote some biscuits and did all my work before sun down.

12th I went to meeting and paid good attention to the sermon. Came home and wrote down as much of it as I could remember.

TRANSCRIPTION

BLACK LEAF:-

July 8. I left my staise on the bed.

" 9. Misplaced Sister s sash.

" 10. Spoke in haste to my little Sister, spilt the cream on the floor in the closet.

" 12. I left Sister Cynthia s frock on the bed.

" 16. I left the brush on the chair; was not diligent in learning at school.

" 17. I left my fan on the bed.

" 19. I got vexed because Sister was a-going to cut my frock.

" 22. Part of this day I did not improve my time well.

" 30. I was careless and lost my needle.

Aug.5. I spilt some coffee on the table.

WHITE LEAF.

" July 8. I went and said my Catechism to-day. Came home and wrote down the questions and answers, then dressed and went to the dance, endeavoured to behave myself decent.

" 11. I improved my time before breakfast; after breakfast made some biscuits and did all my work before the sun was down.

" 12. I went to meeting and paid good attention to the sermon, came home and wrote down as much of it as I could remember.

" 17. I did everything before breakfast; endeavored to improve in school ; went to the funeral in the afternoon, attended to what was

said, came home and wrote down as much as I could remember.

" 25. A part of this day I parsed and endeavored to do well and a part of it I made some tarts and did some work and wrote a letter.

" 27. I did everything this morning same as usual, went to school and endeavored to be diligent ; came home and washed the butter and assisted in getting coffee.

" 28. I endeavored to be diligent to-day in my learning, went from school to sit up with the sick, nursed her as well as I could.

" 30. I was pretty diligent at my work to-day and made a pudding for dinner.

Aug. 1. I got some peaches for to stew after I was done washing up the things and got my work and was midlin Diligent.

" 4. I did everything before breakfast and after breakfast got some peaches for Aunt Mell and then got my work and stuck pretty close to it and at night sat up with Sister and nursed her as good as I could.

" 8. I stuck pretty close to my work to-day and did all that Sister gave me and after I was done I swept out the house and put the things to rights.

" 9. I endeavored to improve my time to-day in reading and attending to what Brother read and most of the evening I was singing."

Evaluate Primary Source Documents

Title or name of document: _____

Date of document: _____

Type of document:

___ letter

___ patent

___ diary/journal

___ poster

___ newspaper article

___ advertisement

___ photograph

___ drawing/painting

___ map

___ cartoon

___ telegram

___ other _____

Point of view:

Who created this document? _____

For whom was this document created? _____

What was the purpose for creating this document? _____

What might the person who created it have been trying to express? _____

What are two things you can learn about the time period from this primary source?

What questions do you have about this source? _____
