

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Lesson Title – Roger Williams

Grade - 5

Length of class period – 45 minutes

Inquiry – Who is the historical figure that helped shape the Northeast region of the U.S.?

Objectives – As a result of this lesson students will be able to:

- Identify the historical figure using context clues from the excerpt being read.
- Analyze the major contributions of Roger Williams to the Northeast region.
- Compare the theme of tolerance to today's modern society.

Materials

A PLEA FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

Read for grade 5:

(*ca.* 1603-83), a religious leader and one of the founders of Rhode Island, was the son of a well-to-do London businessman. Educated at Cambridge (A.B., 1627) he became a clergyman and in 1630 sailed for Massachusetts. He refused a call to the church of Boston because it had not formally broken with the Church of England, but after two invitations he became the assistant pastor, later pastor, of the church at Salem. He questioned the right of the colonists to take the Indians' land from them merely on the legal basis of the royal charter and in other ways ran afoul of the oligarchy then ruling Massachusetts. In 1635 he was found guilty of spreading "new authority of magistrates" and was ordered to be banished from the colony. He lived briefly with friendly Indians and then, in 1636, founded Providence in what was to be the colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. His religious views led him to become briefly a Baptist, later a Seeker. In 1644, while he was in England getting a charter for his colony from Parliament, he wrote the work from which this dialogue is taken. During much of his later life he was engaged in polemics on political and religious questions. He was an important figure in the intellectual life of his time, though the direct influence of his writings is considered by Professor Brockunier to have been slight: "Earliest of the fathers of American democracy, he owes his enduring fame to his humanity and breadth of view, his untiring devotion to the cause of democracy and free opportunity, and his long record of opposition to the privileged and self-seeking"]

Optional information to use if necessary from the link above and below.

<http://www.constitution.org/bcp/religlib.htm>

<http://www.tolerance.org/>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tolerance>

Activities

Teacher will:

- Distribute copies of the excerpt being read.
- Read an excerpt from A PLEA FOR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY to the class.
- Instruct students to discuss context clues in the excerpt which will lead them to identify the significant historical figure.
- Ask probing questions to enhance the discussion of tolerance.

Students will:

- Actively listen and follow along to the excerpt being read by the teacher.
- Underline or highlight 7-10 context clues that they believe are significant.
- Discuss in small groups key points each student underlined or highlighted.
- Make an educated inference as to the identity of the historical figure.
- Compose an obituary or encyclopedia entry illustrating the students' personal beliefs of tolerance.

Assessment:

- Write an obituary or encyclopedia entry describing the major contributions of Roger Williams to the Northeast Region and articulating their own personal beliefs of modern day tolerance.

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards –

CONTENT STANDARD 1: Historical Thinking

- analyze data in order to see persons and events in their historical context, understand causal factors and appreciate changeover time;
- examine current concepts, issues, events and themes from historical perspectives and identify principle conflicting ideas between competing narratives or interpretations of historical events