Settling in Appalachia

Grade Level: Upper Elementary

Essential Question:

What was it like to begin life in Appalachia in the 18th century?

Teaching Strategy:

*Building A Frontier Cabin* is an approximately 28 minutes video narrated by Josh Wilson, a docent at Heritage Farm Museum and Village in Huntington, WV. He describes what it like to begin life in Appalachia in the 18th century. It is presented in 7 chapters so you can view it in its entirety or in shorter segments.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmWpVFas2Sc>

You might consider these questions within each chapter.

Chapter 1: Tools (duration: less than 4 minutes)

What tools were used? Felling Axe, Broad Axe, Adze, Froe

How are these different than tools we use in construction today?

Chapter 2: Location (duration: app. 2 minutes. Start at 3:55)

What do you need to consider when choosing the location for your home?

What is the difference between cash crop and truck patch?

How did you claim the land? tomahawk right

Chapter 3: Assembling Your Cabin (duration- app. 4 ½ minutes. Start 5:50)

How was the house built?

What is chinking?

What benefit was the porch?

Why would cabins not have any windows?

Chapter 4: Furnishings (duration: app. 6 minutes. Start at 9:35.)

What was used for light? Candles made from animal oil

What was the benefit of using tin?

What furnishings would you have brought with you?

Compare the bed with your bed.

What does “sleep tight” mean? “Don’t let the bed bugs bite”?

Compare the 10’ X 16’ cabin to your room.

What was the purpose of the loft?

Chapter 5: Upgrading the Cabin (duration: app. 3 minutes. Start at 15:45.)

How was the cabin different from the first cabin?

What was the benefit of having a porch?

Chapter 6: Interior Construction (duration: app. 5 minutes. Start at 18:30.)

What is used for lighting?

Why are the doorways short?

What is a benefit of the larger fireplace?

What is a bake oven?

What do you notice in this cabin that was not seen in the first cabin? Staircase, closets, upstairs

How many people could live in this cabin?

Chapter 7: The Outhouse (duration: app. 2 minutes. Start at 23:25.)

Compare the outhouse to your bathroom.

Why was it important that it would be easy to move the outhouse?

What is a chamber pot?

Where did they take baths?

Assessment:

Write a letter to your cousin who lives on the coast in Virginia. Describe your house and what life is like in Appalachia.