

Pre-visit lesson plan: Upcountry Frontier

Objective: Students will construct a topographical map depicting the upcountry in the 18th century including the natural environment, the Cherokee and Catawba Indian Nations, and their trade and travel routes.

Essential Question: *Where were the Cherokee and Catawba tribes located in the Upcountry and where were their primary trade routes located?*

SC Social Studies Standards

- 3-2.3 Use a map to identify the sea and land routes of explorers of South Carolina and compare the geographic features of areas they explored, including the climate and the abundance of forests.
- 3-2.4 Compare the culture, governance, and geographic location of different Native American nations in South Carolina, including the three principal nations – Cherokee, Catawba, and Yemassee – that influenced the development of Colonial South Carolina.
- 3-2.5 Summarize the impact the European colonization of South Carolina had on Native Americans, including conflicts between settlers and Native Americans.

Background Information

From the Museum:

Upcountry Frontier

Both Native Americans and European settlers appreciated the mild weather, good hunting, and rich soil of the Upcountry, but they divided over possession of the land. Before it was called the Upcountry, the lands of South Carolina's Piedmont were part of the "Backcountry" – the wild frontier beyond the colonial capital of Charlestown. The Cherokees and the Catawbans lived here and valued the region's good water, land, and abundant wildlife. They encountered Europeans first as traders, then as settlers. To help satisfy its native neighbors, the colonial government of South Carolina prohibited settlement of Native American lands in the Piedmont. However, determined European settlers quickly pushed beyond legal boundaries. Their growing population on the frontier threatened the Cherokees' supply of game, and the two sides clashed violently. After decades of conflict, the Cherokee Nation ceded nearly all of its South Carolina land to a new revolutionary government in 1777.

The Wild Land

Situated in the Piedmont and lined with swift rivers, the Upcountry offered mild weather and rich lands that attracted both Native Americans and European settlers. The South Carolina Piedmont lies at the base of the Appalachian Mountains. In colonial times, stands of enormous trees grew on the land, while canebrakes covered the banks of the rivers and creeks. The temperate climate and abundant vegetation attracted the animals hunted by the Native Americans. Europeans eventually ventured onto the land and built farms on

good soil and near rivers. As the Natives and Europeans lived and moved throughout the region, they carved paths into the lush landscape.

Native Routes and Settler Roads

The Cherokee Path, the Road to the Catawbias, Pearis' Wagon Road, the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road, the Drover's Trail, the State Road to Charleston, and the Wagon Road to Tennessee all connected the peoples and places of the Upcountry to other regions. Some of the busiest roads in the upcountry today- Interstates 26 and 85 and state highways 11 and 25 – follow the old paths used Centuries ago by Native Americans, traders and settlers.

The Cherokee

The Cherokees called themselves *Ani Yunwiha*, “real people”. Their civilization included Lower Cherokee towns in the northeast corner of South Carolina. The great Cherokee Nation spread across the Southern Appalachian mountains. By the time Europeans arrived, most of present-day Greenville and Pickens Counties had become their hunting grounds. The Cherokee men hunted, while women farmed and prepared meals. Hunting parties tracked buffalo, squirrel, pheasant, turkey, rabbit, black bear, and deer across the Upcountry. Deer, their staple prey, provided the Cherokees with food and skins for clothing and trade. A deeply spiritual people, the Cherokees saw themselves as one creature among many. Their religious ceremonies gave thanks for harvests and sought victories in battle, which was an integral part of Cherokee life. Bravery was highly prized, and warriors helped develop agility by playing a ball game that resembles today's lacrosse. In Lower Towns within the Upcountry, the Cherokee lived, celebrated, farms and worshipped. Towns like Sinica, Keowe, Kulsage, Tugilo, and Estatowe were in or near the region that became the Upcountry. Their villages provided homes, land for planting, a storehouse for corn, a ceremonial field for dances, parades, and ball games, and a round town house, or council house, which held the sacred fire. A chief led each village. The “white” chief and his council guided residents during days of peace, but a “red” chief took over and protected the town and battled during times of war. When the seasons changed, residents moved to another village, where summer airy log houses kept them cool, or mud-insulated winter houses kept them warm.

The Catawba

The Catawbias, the Cherokees' frequent enemies and infrequent trading partners, settled east along the Catawba and Wateree Rivers. The Cherokees and Catawbias often battled over Upcountry land. After the arrival of the Europeans, the Cherokees and Catawbias agreed to a truce in order to participate in trading. Once a distinct nation, by the 1730s the Catawbias had actually become a composite of many different tribes that joined together after suffering intertribal wars, settler incursions, and disease. War and smallpox continued to ravage the Catawbias and by 1760, the population had dwindled to only 500.

European Settlers

By 1740 townships of new settlers formed a 100-mile arc around Charleston. Some settlers moved their farms farther into the Piedmont. They intruded on Native American

lands and brought conflict between the Cherokees and colonial government. After the Cherokee War of 1760-61, the tribe ceded land to the Europeans. Before the end of the decade, settlers established three new townships within the former “border” territory of the frontier.

The Scots-Irish

A large migration of Scots-Irish immigrants came to the Upcountry during the late 1700s, making their way through the wilderness with a fierce determination born of necessity. The ancestors of the Scots-Irish left Scotland in the 17th century for Northern Ireland. They found religious freedom living in the “Ulster Plantation”, a settlement planned by King James I to help subdue the native Irish population. While in Ireland, the Scots-Irish separated themselves from the hostile natives and established a close community. They adapted well, but in the early 18th century the native Irish rebelled. Government-opposed sanctions, overpopulation, and crop failures left the Scots-Irish fighting for survival. America and its new frontier presented both danger and opportunity. With little to lose, many Scots-Irish left for America. Between 1761 and 1776, 15,000 to 20,000 Scots-Irish traveled down the Great Philadelphia Wagon Road to the South Carolina Upcountry. On the frontier, the fierce and steadfast Scots-Irish built isolated cabins and farmed the rough land.

The German and French

German and French immigrants moved from the eastern coast into the Upcountry. In the 1730's, the British encouraged European Protestants to settle in townships 100 miles inland from Charleston. These settlers acted as a buffer against Native Americans and a military reserve in case of slave uprisings. German and French settlers soon left the townships behind. Some Germans from Charleston moved west to Saxe Gotha, Orangeburg and Amelia, while others settled between the Broad and Salusa Rivers at Dutch (Deutsch) Fork in search of better farmland. The French, in the 1760's, created New Bordeaux, a township near present day Abbeville, where they marveled at the magnificent forests of pine, poplar, beech and oak.

Trading Cultures

On a trip to London in 1730, Cherokee warriors pledged allegiance to Britain and agreed to peaceable trade. By the mid-1700s, Upcountry Native Americans depended on European manufactured goods. A contingent of seven Cherokee warriors went to London in 1730. They signed a treaty that established trade between the Cherokees and the British government. Trade secured alliances for Great Britain and built colonial fortunes. European traders obtained deerskins and, sometimes, Native American slaves from the Cherokees. In the early 1700s, South Carolina exported 54,000 deerskins annually, a testimony to the success of the trading partnership. The trading of Native American slaves, who were members of rival tribes captured during warfare, ended by the 1730s. Native Americans became dependent on European manufactured goods such as fabric, hardware, farming tools, and weapons. They hunted deer for trade, but soon exhausted the deer population. Their debts eventually forced them to sell land in order to satisfy their creditors.

At War for the Upcountry

Treaties between the Cherokees and the Charlestown-based government limited European settlement in the Upcountry. However, many settlers disregarded these boundaries, and their trespassing led to war. South Carolina Governor James Glen secured treaties with Native Americans in the 1740s that promoted trade and designated land for European settlement. However the Piedmont offered rich soil and abundant water for farming, so settlers ignored these treaties. They moved onto Native American lands. In response, the Cherokees attacked frontier settlements during the summer of 1759. At Fort Prince George the colonial militia killed Cherokee hostages when Cherokee warriors stormed the fort that following winter. After intense fighting, another treaty ended the war and created a new boundary between Cherokee lands and European settlements. The Cherokees sided with the British during the American Revolution, believing the British would stop the advancement of settlers. Patriot militia burned Cherokee towns and crops. On May 20, 1777 at DeWitt's Corner, Outacite and other Cherokee leaders gave up their lands to the new government.

Richard Pearis

On the Frontier, shrewd businessman Richard Pearis profited by his unconventional approach to real estate. Richard Pearis, a Virginia man who traded with the Cherokees, acquired 12 square miles of land from the tribe in 1769. Unfortunately for him, colonial law prevented British citizens from privately owning Indian land. To get around the law and retain his land, Pearis convinced Cherokee chiefs to transfer 150,000 acres of land to his half-Cherokee son, George. Colonial law could not interfere with a transfer between Indians. The next year, George sold the land to his father for 500 pounds. News of the transaction reached Charleston, and the colonial governor Montague bristled at the barely-legal land transfer.

Other detailed background information about these topics can be found in:

Scott Foresman, Social Studies, South Carolina

Chapter 2 *Regions of South Carolina* Lesson 1 *The Blue Ridge and Piedmont*

Chapter 3 *The First South Carolinians* Lesson 1 *The Cherokee*, Lesson 2 *The Catawba*

The History of South Carolina in the Building of the Nation by Archie Vernon Huff, Jr

Chapter 1 The Land; Chapter 2 The Earliest Americans; Chapter 3 The Coming of the Europeans

Greenville The History of the City and County in the South Carolina Piedmont by Archie Vernon Huff pp. 1-26

Traditions and History of Anderson County by Louise Ayer Vandiver Chapter 1 *The Days of the Indians*

Greenwood County: A History by Ann Herd Bowen Chapter 1 *Origins and Overview*

Primary Activity: Topographical Map of the Upcountry

Materials

- large Styrofoam meat tray for each student (found at grocery stores)
- map of Upcountry (attached)
- labels and reference map sheet (attached)
- green and brown modeling clay
- blue pipe cleaners or thin blue ribbon (for rivers)
- thin green and red ribbon (for trade and travel routes)
- collection of natural items to make landscape: tiny evergreen branches for trees and forests, rocks and dried grasses for areas around rivers, mountains, canebrakes
- collection of items for the Indian nations: acorn caps for Catawba round houses, square pieces of bark for Cherokee houses
- optional items: small plastic animals to represent wildlife

Procedure

1. Print out the map of the Upcountry (1 for each student) and the labels and reference map sheet (1 for each student)
2. Have students cut out the map of the Upcountry and tape it to the Styrofoam tray.
3. Using the modeling clay and the basic design on the map, have students form the land of the upcountry, with mountains along the upper edge and rolling hills throughout the Piedmont.
4. Using the labels and reference map sheet as a guide, have the students form the Savannah, Saluda, Broad, and Catawba Rivers using the blue pipe cleaners or blue ribbon.
5. Using the reference maps as a guide, have students form trade and travel routes with the green and red ribbon.
6. Using the collection of natural materials, have the students fill in areas to represent foliage, mountains and forests.
7. Using the collection of items for the Indian nations, have the students represent the Cherokee and Catawba tribe areas.
8. Cut out the labels and have students place them correctly in the areas of their map.

Optional:

1. Students can make or use small plastic animals to represent the wildlife of the time.
2. If lack of time or supplies prohibits each child making his own map, this activity can be done as a group project or as a class project.
3. This project can be done without the materials and simply drawing on and coloring the map according to the directions.

Assessment

A rubric can be used to assess this project:

Correctly forms the landscape areas of the Upcountry using clay and natural materials – 3 points

Correctly forms the rivers and trade and travel routes with pipe cleaners and ribbons – 3 points

Correctly depicts Cherokee and Catawba Nation areas with collected items – 3 points

Correctly labels the areas of the map – 1 point

Cross-Curricular Activities

Social Studies

* Construct a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the Cherokee and Catawba tribes.

* Famous Faces - Choose one of the following people to research: The Cherokee or Catawba chief, warrior, woman or child, Richard Pearis or others. Using a white paper plate, markers, and yarn make this famous face to go along with your short biography.

Research & Language Arts

* Research Upcountry places that have Cherokee and Catawba names.

* Research Richard Pearis, the Scots-Irish, or the German and French settlers that moved into the area. What is your family's heritage?

* Research the present-day Cherokee and Catawba Nations. Where are there reservations? How are things better or worse for them now?

Writing

* Using the letters of the alphabet, write an account of the Upcountry Frontier. For example:

Along time ago, the Upcountry was wilderness.

Before the white man came and settled the area,

Cherokee and Catawba Indians lived and hunted here.

Deer, bear and wild turkey roamed the forests and open lands.

Every part of the hunted animal was used for

Food, clothing or tools.

Good natural resources of the area attracted the Indians as well as the European settlers.

However, the Natives and settlers didn't always get along.

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Science

* Take samples of the area soil and water and test for water quality and soil acidity.

* Research the abundant wildlife that once roamed this area. Write a report about your favorite animal or bird that perhaps no longer thrives here.