

**Made in America: Colonial Imports, Exports, & Boycotts
For Grades 3 & 5**

Lesson 1- Where Did Colonial People Get Things?

In this lesson students explore via images of colonial rooms, what items might have been made by the colonists and what might have been purchased.

Pre-Lesson

Use a map and activity of your choice to help students see where the colonies were and understand that Massachusetts was one of them.

Session #1

Assign a photo to several students and provide each with a printed copy. Tell them they will be examining pictures of the insides of some houses from the 1700's. Instruct them to list everything that they see. If they don't know what an item is, they can sketch it. Use these pictures:

- An 18th century kitchen
- Wells Thorn House East Parlor
- Wells Thorn House South Parlor
- Wells Thorn House Chamber

The pictures are attached to this lesson plan for printing and distributing. If teaching remotely, students who are assigned the same image might work together via phone, email, or another online platform.

Session #2

Where did colonial people get things? Provide each student with a list of what is in the room they viewed. The lists are attached to this lesson plan for printing and distributing. Tell students to edit their lists to match the handouts and read any notes on the handouts about the items. Then tell them to hypothesize for each of their items:

- Might it have been made by someone in the house or did they buy it? They might put a symbol by each item, such as "H" for handmade, and "B" for bought.

Students can write their answers on their lists.

Session #3

If you can meet virtually as a group or if students are in the classroom, ask them to report out about what would be provided by the family versus what needed to be purchased. Review answers (refer to "Notes for the Teacher").

If you can't meet virtually, have students give you their lists. Then, provide them with a report of their responses overall with the correct answers. Ask for written responses about what surprised or interested them.

Notes for the Teacher

Many items in a house would have been purchased. You and your students will learn more about why this was so in Lesson #2- Imports & Exports. A few items would have been provided by the family:

- The straw or goose down (tiny feathers) used to stuff a mattress or pillow
- Women and girls made candles at home in the winter
- The wool in the basket most likely came from the family's sheep if they did not live in a city
- Although almost all fabric was purchased, the sewing was done at home

Woodworkers such as cabinetmakers or furniture makers created the furniture, boxes and chests, picture frames, and spinning wheels. Nicer pieces of furniture came from England. The furniture in the pictures was probably all made here.

Weavers, who were usually men at this time, wove fabric on hand-powered looms. This was true in England and here. Weavers in the colonies were only allowed to make very basic fabrics such as blankets and toweling. Most other fabrics were supposed to be imported. Sheets were made of linen, which would have been imported, but the sheets would have been hemmed by women and girls living here.

Made by men in workshops: paint, glass and mirror glass, porcelain, brass items. Some porcelain was imported from China and some was made in England. Colonists might be allowed to produce some paint and glass.

Baskets such as the one pictured were created by Native Americans living in New England. This style of basket was made of ash or oak. Indigenous people traveled from town to town and door to door selling baskets and sometimes brooms.

Items of "cast" iron, such as cooking pots, were made in foundries by pouring molten iron into molds. Items of "wrought" iron, such as the slice (big spatula), trivet, "S" hooks, andirons, and ladle were made by blacksmiths hammering on very hot iron or steel. Wrought items were often made here.

The mug in the East Parlor and the pitcher in the kitchen are "redware", made from a type of clay found in New England that turns brick-red when fired. Redware was made here by male potters.

The broom is made from broom corn, which was grown in New England. The brooms were made here, either by Native Americans or white men.

The pipe in the corner cabinet of the south parlor is made of a white clay that comes from England.

An 18th Century Kitchen

table

metal hooks

slice (a big spatula)

andirons

broom

metal pots

firewood

wooden bowl & spoon

clay pitcher

metal ladle

metal trivet

Notes

Andirons- stand in the fireplace and hold burning wood

Slice- It looks like a big spatula- like what is used today to take pizza out of a pizza oven. The slice was used to take hot food out of the oven. You can see part of it in this picture. It is a hole in the brick wall next to the broom. The oven would have a door to keep in the heat.

Trivet- the heart-shaped item. It could go over a pile of red-hot coals on the hearth (the brick part of the floor) to create a burner and a pot could be put on it, or it could be put on a table to hold a hot pot so that it wouldn't burn the table.

Wells Thorn House East Parlor

chest

basket of wool

mug

spinning wheel

table

chairs

stool

window glass

candle

candle holder

tablecloth

Notes

Chest- for clothing because houses had no closets, might also hold sheets and blankets

Basket of wool- yarn for knitting was made of wool

Spinning wheel- women and girls used spinning wheels to turn wool into yarn

Candle- made from "tallow", which is fat from sheep or cows

Wells Thorn House South Parlor

wineglass

teapot

teacup and saucer

spoons

2 bowls

cream pitcher

pipe

Notes

Bowls- were used to hold punch with rum in it- for adults!

There is a piece of paper on a shelf but it is hard to tell what it is, so that item can be skipped.

Wells Thorn House Chamber

bed frame

mattress

sheets, blanket, bedspread, pillows

bed curtains

mirror

chest

chamber pot

window glass

candle holder

candle

Notes

Bed frame- the frame that holds the mattress

Bed curtains- for privacy and warmth

Chest- for clothing because houses had no closets, might also hold sheets and blankets

Chamber pot- a toilet

Candle- made from "tallow", which is fat from sheep or cows



**Wells Thorn House East Parlor
Historic Deerfield, MA**



Wells Thorn House South Parlor
Historic Deerfield, MA



**Wells Thorn House Chamber
Historic Deerfield, MA**



An 18th Century Kitchen