LESSON PLAN CODE: SS-8-3

SUBJECT: Social Studies / American History

GRADE LEVEL/COURSE: Grade 8 / Social Studies

TITLE: The Whiskey Rebellion

TEACHER(S) NAME(S): Megan Bell

ALIGNMENTS:

PA Standards:
- 8.1.8.B. Compare and contrast a historical event, using multiple points of view from primary and secondary sources.
- 8.1.8.C. Produce an organized product on an assigned historical topic that presents and reflects on a thesis statement and appropriate primary and secondary sources.
- 8.2.8.A. Compare and contrast the social, political, cultural, and economic contributions of specific individuals and groups from Pennsylvania.
- 8.2.8.B. Compare and contrast the importance of significant historical documents, artifacts, and places critical to Pennsylvania history.

VOCABULARY:

Rebellion - open, organized, and armed resistance to one's government or ruler

Excise - an internal tax or duty on certain commodities levied on their manufacture, sale, or consumption within the country

Whiskey - liquor made from grain
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

In this lesson, students will explore the differing viewpoints and reactions of individuals involved in the Whiskey Rebellion.

Students will:
- Summarize the 1791 Excise Act and identify how American citizens would be affected by the Act.
- Explain the reasoning behind the Excise Act.
- Analyze the reactions of the American citizens to the Excise Act.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS [including guiding historical/investigative question]:

How did the 1791 Excise Act affect the citizens of Pennsylvania?

DURATION:

180 minutes (3 classes), allow more time as needed

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the 1791 Excise Act (one for each student)
- Slideshow including images of the Famous Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania, the Thomas Gaddis House, Braddock's Battlefield, and The David Bradford Building.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES [WHERE TO]:

W: After introducing the lesson, post the performance tasks for the students to see so that the students can see the relationship between the lesson and the final outcome.
H: Share the image of the Famous Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania. Encourage students to share their reactions and analyze the actions of the rebels.
E: Have students write a journal entry, putting themselves in the shoes of the angered citizens.
R: During class discussions, students can reflect on their ideas and revise their thinking by hearing the opinions of the other students.
E: Students will work in groups to come up with an alternate solution to the economic issues faced by the American government after the Revolutionary War.
T: Look over and revise the activities based on the needs of the students and any issues that may arise throughout the lesson.
O: Interact with the students by leading discussions, encouraging the students to come to their own decisions to prepare them for the student-led group activity.
INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES [INQUIRY-DRIVEN]:

Begin the lesson with a discussion of the effects that the Revolutionary War had on the moral and economy of the nation.

Provide students with copies of the 1791 Excise Act. Instruct the students to summarize the act in their own words: [Who would be affected by this act? How would they be affected?] As a class, discuss and brainstorm the logic behind this act and why the lawmakers thought it was necessary.

Project the Famous Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania image for the students to view. Allow the students a moment to look at the image in silence. Discuss with the students their reactions to the image. [What do you think led these citizens to act in the way that they did? What could they have done instead?]

Project the Thomas Gaddis House image for the students to view. Encourage the students to visualize the reaction to the taxation on whiskey to determine how the citizens were feeling and reacting. Next, project the image of Braddock's Battlefield. Have the students view this primary source and analyze the thoughts and actions they associate with the rebels preparing for their march. After discussing, give the students the choice to either write a journal entry, pretending to be a citizen attending the rally at the Thomas Gaddis house and aiding in the erection of the Liberty Pole or a citizen gathering at Braddock's Battlefield to attend the march on Pittsburg.

Split the students into groups for a project. In this project instruct students to brainstorm another possible solution to America's post-Revolutionary War economic problems. Instruct the students to explain and advertise their solution on a poster board. Also, encourage students to explain how it would help solve the problem as well as how they predict the American citizens would react to this solution. What are the pros and cons of this solution? After completing the project, have students present their ideas to the rest of the class.

If time allows, organize a field trip to visit the Bradford House. Before the trip, show the students The David Bradford Building photo and discuss the life of David Bradford. After the trip, have the students complete a research project about his involvement in the Whiskey Rebellion.

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS [PERFORMANCE TASK AND RUBRIC]

During the lesson observe the students, noting active participation in the discussion and activities. Monitor student input and provide feedback as needed. Look for understanding of:

- the reasoning behind the Excise Act
- the effects of the 1791 Excise Act
- the reactions of citizens involved in the Whiskey Rebellion
Use the following rubric to assess the group project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Class Time</strong></td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Focused on getting the project done. Never distracted others.</td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Usually focused on getting the project done and never distracted others.</td>
<td>Used some of the time well during each class period. There was some focus on getting the project done but occasionally distracted others.</td>
<td>Did not use class time to focus on the project OR often distracted others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Required Items</strong></td>
<td>All required items are included on the poster.</td>
<td>All but 1 of the required items are included on the poster.</td>
<td>Several required items were missing.</td>
<td>Several required items were missing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehension</strong></td>
<td>Student is able to accurately answer almost all questions posed by classmates about the topic.</td>
<td>Student is able to accurately answer most questions posed by classmates about the topic.</td>
<td>Student is able to accurately answer a few questions posed by classmates about the topic.</td>
<td>Student is unable to accurately answer questions posed by classmates about the topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RELATED MATERIALS & RESOURCES:**

The Bradford House website: http://www.bradfordhouse.org/


*See also Primary Source Bibliographic Organizer*
Teacher’s Name: Megan Bell

Lesson Title: Western Pennsylvania and the Whiskey Rebellion

The Whiskey Rebellion

The Whiskey Rebellion began nearly twenty years after the beginning of the Revolutionary War. In need of more revenue, Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton proposed an excise tax on whiskey produced in the United States, and, in 1791, Congress passed the proposed tax into law. The citizens of the United States, not pleased with the idea of taxation on whiskey, reacted violently to this institution. Residents of western Pennsylvania took up arms and attacked and destroyed the home of a tax collector. This action eventually led President George Washington to send a force of about 13,000 troops to suppress the rebellion.

Historical Background

While the American colonies won the Revolutionary War, the citizens of the new Confederation were uneasy with the idea of a federal government. Many saw the federal government as merely a new form of the monarchy which they had just rid themselves of. This tension made it difficult for the already limited federal government to exercise its will. Yet the newly formed United States was in desperate need of money to pay off its debt, and, in order to get that money, it needed to tax.

Treasury Secretary Hamilton, well aware of the tension, decided an excise tax on locally produced whiskey would provide much needed funding without increasing the price of more important goods. As whiskey was not, strictly speaking, a necessity, Hamilton reasoned that a tax on it would increase the revenue without too much of an increase in the tension. Yet farmers who distilled their own whiskey relied on that income as much as any other and were vocal in their opposition to the tax. Many simply refused to pay it, and, in doing so, set the stage for one the first tests of the new federal government. As tax collectors demanded payment, citizens reacted violently, and repeated attempts at collection and law enforcement led to open rebellion in many areas.

While President Washington was sympathetic to the rebelling farmers' concerns (he was himself a farmer and distiller), he could not let the rebellion succeed or it would destroy the new government. His response was to send a diplomatic party to attempt peaceful negotiations while also raising a militia detachment to march on
the affected areas of Western Pennsylvania. The diplomatic effort was unsuccessful but the rebellion dissolved under the threat of force. With order restored, many of the organizers of the rebellion were arrested, charged, and ultimately pardoned by President Washington in order to show the government's power without alienating sympathetic citizens.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thumbnail Image of Primary Source</th>
<th>Collection Title/Primary Source Title with MLA Citation and Permanent URL/Digital ID</th>
<th>Annotation – How are you planning to use this primary source instructionally?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Thomas Gaddis House" /></td>
<td>&quot;Thomas Gaddis House, 300 yards east of old U.S. Route 119 near intersection of Route 859, Uniontown, Fayette County, PA&quot; Historic American Buildings Survey. Thomas Gaddis House, 300 yards east of old U.S. Route 119 near intersection of Route 859, Uniontown, Fayette County, PA. Library of Congress. Web. 20 May 2012. <a href="http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/pa1916.photos.134271p/">http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/pa1916.photos.134271p/</a>.</td>
<td>Thomas Gaddis's home (AKA &quot;Fort Gaddis&quot;) is the oldest known building in Fayette County. It was probably designated as a site for community meetings and shelter in time of emergency. During the Whiskey Rebellion, a Liberty Pole was erected at the house during a rally in support of the Rebel cause. I would use this primary source to help the students brainstorm what they think happened the day of the rally. They could visualize the reaction to the taxation on whiskey to determine how the citizens were feeling and reacting. After discussing, I would give the students the choice to either write a journal entry, pretending to be a citizen attending the rally that day and aiding in the erection of the Liberty Pole or complete the following activity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Braddock's Battlefield" /></td>
<td>&quot;Braddock's Battlefield&quot; Graham, A. W. Braddock’s Battlefield. 23 November 1908. Library of Congress. Web. 20 May 2012. <a href="http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2006677780/">http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2006677780/</a>.</td>
<td>This scene, near Braddock, Pennsylvania, was the meeting place of the Whiskey Rebels and the Pennsylvania Militia before their march on Pittsburg on August 1, 1794. I would provide a link to this primary source on my class site. After discussing the thoughts and actions associated with the rebels in the &quot;Fort Gaddis&quot; primary source picture, I would have my students view this primary source and analyze the thoughts and actions they would associate with the rebels preparing for their march. After the class discussion, the students could choose between writing the journal entry associated with the &quot;Fort Gaddis&quot; primary source, or they could write a journal entry as a citizen attending the march on Pittsburg.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Source</td>
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<td>&quot;Famous Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania&quot;</td>
<td>This primary source depicts the insurrection of many upset citizens of the United States. There is a large mob of rebels formed around a tax collector, tarred and feathered, being carried on a rail. After showing this primary source to my students, I would lead my students in a discussion about all of the events and causes leading up to this large act of rebellion. I would encourage them to think about what led these angry citizens to act in the way that they did. I would pose the question: How would you act in this situation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;The David Bradford Building&quot;</td>
<td>This photo shows the Bradford house, owned by David Bradford from 1788 to 1794. David Bradford was involved in the Whiskey Rebellion, but Bradford and his family fled upon hearing that he would be arrested. He was one of the citizens who was eventually pardoned for his role in the Whiskey Rebellion. If possible, I would take my students on a field trip to visit the Bradford House. Before our trip, I would show this photo to my class and discuss the life of David Bradford. I would have my students complete a research project about his involvement in the Whiskey Rebellion.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;First Congress. Sess. III. Ch. 15. 1791.&quot;</td>
<td>This document is the 1791 Excise Act outlining the taxation of locally produced distilled spirits. I would provide a copy of this document to my students for them to read over. Then, I would have the students summarize the act in their own words: [Who would be affected by this act? How would they be affected?] Next, I would encourage the students to brainstorm the logic behind this act and why the lawmakers thought it was necessary.</td>
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