



Lesson: Sheep and Stone Walls

(To follow Amplify CKLA K, Knowledge 5: Farms, Lesson 5: Everywhere a Baa, Baa)

At a Glance

In this lesson, students explore the historic stone walls that are found in New Hampshire's woods and discover their connection to raising sheep.

Primary Focus Objectives

- Students will analyze a photograph for evidence of sheep farming.
- Students will listen to and discuss non-fiction text about sheep farming in New Hampshire.
- Students will play a cooperative math game inspired by historic sheep farming practices.

Formative Assessment

- "Sheep Pen Shuffle" game

Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.1

Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners about kindergarten topics and texts with peers and adults in small and larger groups.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.K.5c

Identify real-life connections between words and their use (e.g., note places at school that are colorful).

Materials

- Image: Walls in Ransmeier Woods
- Focus Texts: [Grazing Sheep](#) and [Stone Wall](#)
- 6 sheep game pieces; 20 dominoes, small blocks, or pebbles; six-sided die; game directions

Time Needed

One 30-40 minute class session

Learning Activity

1. **Analyze the image.** Project the image and conduct a brief Notice and Wonder discussion about the details students observe. (*5 minutes*)
2. **Read the Focus Texts.** Project each selection and read aloud the text. Connect the facts to the image students analyzed. (*15 minutes*)
3. **Play the game.** Distribute the game materials to groups of two to four students and support them as they follow the steps to cooperatively play the game. (*15 minutes*)



Educator Rationale and Answer Guide

Connection to Amplify

In this lesson, students extend the knowledge of sheep developed in Amplify CKLA K, Knowledge 5, Lesson 5: Everywhere a Baa, Baa. A notice and wonder exercise using a present-day photograph introduces students to the history behind the stone walls that can still be found in the woods. Students listen to and discuss non-fiction text accompanying historic images to learn more about why sheep farming became such an important part of farming life in New Hampshire long ago. A cooperative math game reinforces the ideas that pens were needed to keep sheep contained on farms.

Analyze the image

This photograph shows the remnants of a stone wall in the woods in Hopkinton, New Hampshire. In the late 18th century, this land had been cleared for use as a farm. It is unknown if these walls were constructed during the Great Sheep Boom of the 19th century, but they are evidence that animals were pastured on the land. Use the notice and wonder method to help students make thoughtful observations about the image.

Students may not come to the conclusion that the forest was once farmland on their own. Ensure that students observe the size of the trees around the wall. The diameter of their trunks indicates that they are not extremely old; the oldest are 200 years old, and most are probably only 50 to 100 years old. This photograph is interesting because it shows a corner created by stone walls: it was the corner of a pen for grazing animals like sheep. Ask students what they think the space inside the wall might have looked like when the wall was first built. Help children understand that people changed the land in this photograph many times. It was originally forest, then cleared for farmland, and then allowed to regrow into a forest. Today the land is conserved, meaning it cannot be developed into housing, a road, or any other kind of building. It has hiking trails so people can safely explore the forest and enjoy its beauty.

Read the Focus Texts

These two selections are captioned images from the Learn It! section of Unit 8: Changing Times on the Farm. The short passages provide younger students with an appropriate amount of historical background to help them understand why stone walls were built and why the land looks different today. If time allows, consider doing a side-by-side comparison of the image of the wall in Hopkinton with the image of grazing sheep; giving students time to look at them will help them observe changes in the landscape over time. More information about the Great Sheep Boom is provided in [Unit 8: Changing Times on the Farm, Learn It! "Farming for the Market," pages 4–7](#).

Play the game

Prepare ahead by creating sets of six sheep cards for each group. Consider laminating or printing on cardstock to ensure multiple uses. Divide students into groups of two to four students. Explain that the goal is to be able to build a circular wall around the sheep without more than half of the sheep escaping. On a player's turn, they roll the die. If they roll a 2, 3, 4, or 5, that is the number of stones they place in the wall. If they roll a 1, one of the sheep escapes. If they roll a 6, a missing sheep comes back. This cooperative game gives students a shared goal, reinforces number recognition and one-to-one correspondence, and highlights the meaning of the word "pen" as it applies to this lesson.



Ransmeier Woods, Hopkinton, New Hampshire





Grazing Sheep



Source: New Hampshire Historical Society



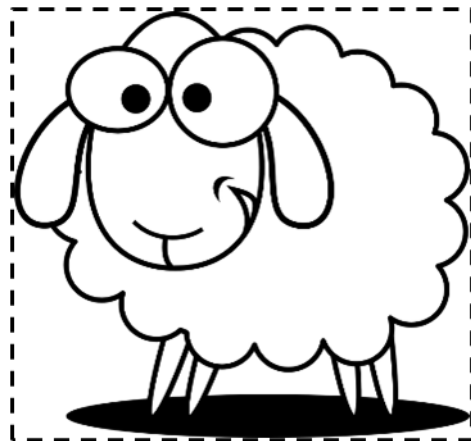
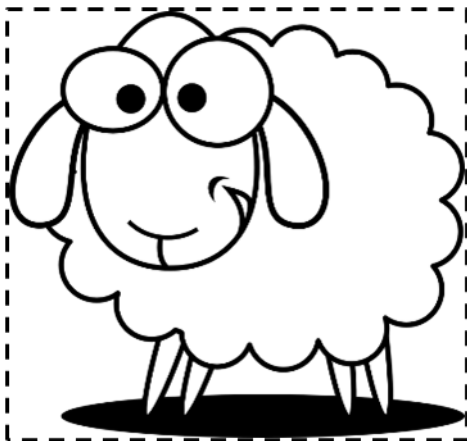
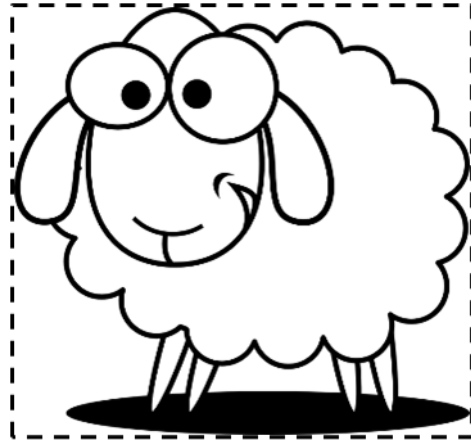
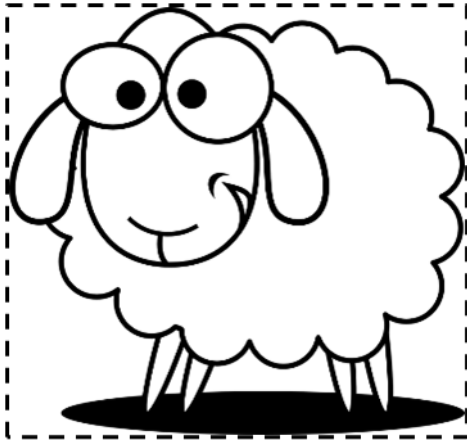
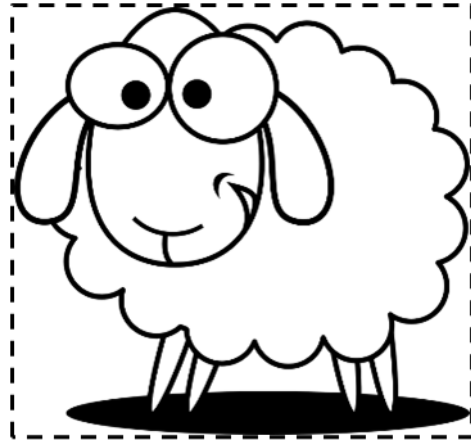
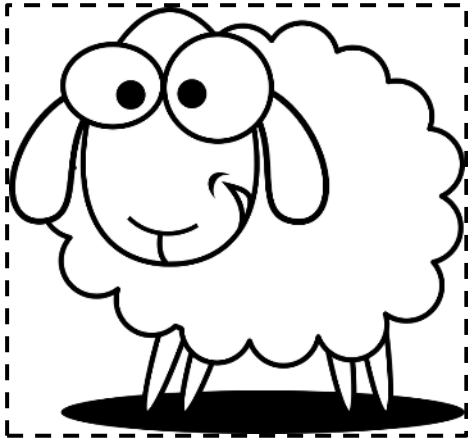
Stone Wall



Source: Adobe Stock



Game Pieces for “Sheep Pen Shuffle”





Sheep Pen Shuffle – Directions

Materials: Each group needs six sheep cards, 20 “stones” (like dominoes or pebbles), one six-sided die.

Object: Build a sheep pen with all 20 “stones” around the sheep without losing half (3 or more) of the flock.

Steps:

1. Place the six sheep in the middle of the playing space.
2. Place the 20 “stones” in a pile nearby.
3. Each player takes turns rolling the die. Here is what happens for each number:

1 = A sheep ran away! Take a sheep card out of the middle and set it aside.

2 = Add two “stones” to the wall around the sheep.

3 = Add three “stones” to the wall around the sheep.

4 = Add four “stones” to the wall around the sheep.

5 = Add five “stones” to the wall around the sheep.

6 = You found a missing sheep! Put it back in the middle with the other sheep. If you roll a six and there are not any missing sheep to find, nothing happens. Move on to the next player.

The game ends when all 20 “stones” are placed in a ring. If four or more sheep remain, the group wins!