Lesson 9.1 "A Citizen's Primer"

Unit 9: Reforming New Hampshire

Lesson Objectives

- Students will analyze historic objects and documents related to education in 19th-century New Hampshire.

- Using close-looking techniques, students will explore the meaning of community and how civic values are taught from one generation to the next.

- Students will reflect in writing about the connection between a historic object or document and a feature of 19th-century education.

Lesson Competencies

- I can analyze primary and secondary sources and draw appropriate conclusions. (Moose SS)

- I can identify, explain, and analyze the core civic practices and foundational principles that guide governments and communities. (Moose SS)

- I can develop my ideas using sources to gather concrete details, facts, quotes, and other information related to my focus. (ELA 5)

Essential Questions	How has New Hampshire come to be the way it is? How has New Hampshire been shaped by many voices?
Focus Questions	How did the education reform of the 19th century impact New Hampshire's people?
Estimated Time	Three or four 40-minute class sessions
Materials & Equipment	Class set of "Comparing Classrooms: Then and Now" worksheet "Candia School: 19th Century" image for projection White board or chart paper "New Hampshire Article 83," pre-cut Class set of "What does it mean to be a good citizen?" mind map Class set of "What do people need to know to be good citizens?" mind map "Hannah Foster's Sampler" image for projection "Children's Primer Alphabet," "Boy's Picture Book, Railroads," "Boy's Picture Book, Top and Boat," and "Children's Primer Drummer Boy" for printing or projection Quick Connect handout for printing or projection "Table of Contents" printed out "Alphabet Book Brainstorm" printed out Class set of "Note Page for a Classroom Primer" worksheet Scratch paper, pens, pencils, and markers

Construction paper, scissors
Educator Introduction & Rationale

The educational system we have today has its roots in the 19th century, although much has changed in the classroom over the years. Today, learning is much more structured, with defined grades that separate children by age—rather than grouping children of varying ages together into one schoolroom—and teachers have a variety of resources to teach a number of different subjects.

Many of these reforms emerged after the American Revolution and over the course of the 19th century. The birth of a new nation prompted a specific educational goal—children must be raised to be good citizens capable of someday governing themselves, and, in school, they should be taught American ideals and the story of America's past. For the sake of the community, republicanism—or the practices, behaviors, and values of living in a self-governing republic—had to be learned by each new generation if the American experiment in democracy was to survive. No nation in the world was governed by the people at that time, and the nation's leaders knew that future generations must be as committed to citizenship as they were. These traits and values were woven throughout school materials like readers, primers, and other children's books, all of which used stories, poems, songs, and illustrations to teach students about America's history and heritage while promoting patriotism.

This is the first lesson in Unit 9: Reforming New Hampshire. In it, students explore some of the differences and similarities in schooling between the 19th century and today by examining a photograph of students in a 19th-century New Hampshire classroom and looking at pages from 19th-century educational resources like primers or readers. Students then discuss the qualities of good citizenship and how these qualities can be taught. Familiarity with the foundational principles of democracy, which are covered in lesson 6.2 "Foundational Principles," and the behaviors associated with good citizenship, which are covered in lesson 18.9 "Good Citizenship and Civic Engagement," are helpful but not required. Collectively, students create a classroom primer to celebrate America. If desired, educators may select a smaller community to celebrate, such as a school, neighborhood, or town.

Teaching tip: Primers were produced for children of all ages. Please decide which level of complexity is best suited for your students, considering the amount of time available for this lesson. The class's primer could be as simple as an alphabet book or a picture book geared toward younger students, or it could include more complex material like stories, songs, and poems intended for older students.

Reinforcement activities are provided through differentiation of the lesson. Three extension activities are suggested for students who are ready to move beyond the goals of the lesson. Please adapt all the material in this lesson, as necessary, to meet the needs of the students in your classroom. Please note, lesson vocabulary and definitions are at the end of this document. You may wish to preview these with your students.

Learning Activity

Activation

Classrooms: then and now. Distribute or project "Candia School, 19th Century." Tell students it is a picture of children in their classroom in Candia, New Hampshire, over 100 years ago. Ask students to identify similarities and differences when they compare the classroom in the image to classrooms or spaces where they learn. Give students a few minutes to complete the task, possibly using the provided template.

Student Reading

Education reform in New Hampshire. Before moving into Direct Instruction and Discussion, have students read Unit 9: Learn It! "Reforming Education," pages 1 to 8.

Direct Instruction & Discussion

Why do we go to school? Discuss the lists created during activation about what has changed and what has stayed the same in the classroom.

During class discussion, explore questions such as:
- Why do you think children were required to go to school in the 19th century?
- Why do you think children are required to go to school now?
- What subjects did children study then, and what subjects do they study in school now?
- What was school supposed to prepare kids for in the 19th century?
- What does school prepare kids for today?

Throughout the discussion, keep a record of student ideas on a white board or chart paper in the same template as the similarities and differences discussion, perhaps even on the same paper.

Remind students that although a lot has changed about going to school, the basic ideas have stayed the same: kids go to school to learn how to function as adults. Lots of students will say they are studying to go to college and/or training to get jobs, but point out that the other important reason to go to school is to become good citizens so that they can make decisions for our democracy.

Distribute "What does it mean to be a good citizen?" mind map and ask students what from the previous chart is part of becoming a good citizen. Give students time to brainstorm about what it means to be a good citizen. Distribute "What do people need to know to be good citizens?" mind map and give students time to brainstorm. Then discuss as a class, noting in particular how school helps teach students these things.

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Guided Practice	**Legal protection for education.** Distribute "New Hampshire Constitution Article 83" as cut up slips of paper to pairs of students.

Tell students that they are holding part of Article 83 of the N.H. Constitution. New Hampshire's founding fathers thought education so important in maintaining a free government and creating qualities that contribute to good citizenship that they included it in the state constitution. Instruct each pair of students to read their part of Article 83 and see if the idea behind it is on the brainstorm chart about good citizenship. Where is it? If it's not on the chart, do they think it should be added?

Have pairs of students present to compare ideas about education and discuss them together as a class, amending your class ideas as appropriate.

Teaching tip: This is a good spot to pause if you will divide the lesson between teaching periods.

Discussion

Explore 19th-century primers. Explain to students that today we have lots of different ways to learn things, but back in the 19th century, schools didn't have as many resources.

Project the image "Hannah Foster's Sampler" and discuss with students how girls tended to learn the alphabet and numbers while also learning to sew by creating samplers.

Then project "Children's Primer Alphabet," "Children's Primer Drummer Boy," "Boy's Picture Book, Railroads," and "Boy's Picture Book, Top and Boat." Primers became popular in the 19th century, and lots of students only had this one book from which to learn the basics of what they needed to know. Since the point of education was also to become good citizens, primers encouraged students to learn about the history and traditions of the United States and cultivated a sense of patriotism. Use prompts from the Quick Connect handout to encourage students to look closely at the pages of the primer. As appropriate for your class, divide them into small groups to look at different pages or have them walk around the classroom to look at the pages museum-style.

Discuss with your students what type of things kids seemed to be learning (vocabulary, reading comprehension, history, music, civics) and how they learned these things in the primer (stories, poems, songs, illustrations).

Guided Discussion

Creating a class primer. Explain to students that the class will be creating its own primer to celebrate the community and help kids learn the basics of education. Each of them will be contributing a page or two to the primer.

Decide which kind of primer is best suited for your classroom project. A primer can be simple or complicated, based on the amount of time available for this lesson and the interests and abilities of the students. The alphabet book is preferred for students who need structure and succeed best following specific directions. The illustrated narrative primer might appeal to students who are storytellers; encourage them to think creatively about what kind of story they can write for this time and topic. Primers can also mix these ideas if students in your class are working at different levels.

Some ideas for the pages to include in a primer include:

- **Alphabet**: A page for each letter of the alphabet, decorated, with an illustration or image and explanatory text; use the "Alphabet Book Brainstorm" to design the book with your class
- **Stories**: Short vignettes or stories that explore episodes from America's past or illustrate some virtue or trait that provides an example of good citizenship
- **Poems**: Any form of poetry that, like the stories, highlights a historical event or models the values necessary for democratic government
- **Illustrations**: Pictures or other forms of artwork that follow this same theme
- **Cartoons**: A visual means of storytelling about America's past or an opportunity to offer a patriotic moral
- **Maps**: Graphic representations of historical moments

Other ideas for pages in the primer could be brainstormed by the students, possibly by studying the 19th-century primers presented earlier in the lesson.

Primers could be focused on a specific historical era, theme, or event, or they could be general expressions of patriotic sentiments. Throughout the 2020s, the celebration of America's 250th birthday—and all the associated events—provides many timely opportunities to explore patriotic events from America's past.

Teaching tip: If the classroom primer will be geared toward younger students, consider working with a colleague who teaches that grade to have your students share their work with the younger students.

Independent Practice

Making the pages. Once decisions have been made about the type of primer the class will create, write out a title or brief description for each page on the "Table of Contents" handout and assign students to specific pages. Post this list in your classroom so students can see who is working on what and coordinate their efforts when possible.

Give students time in class to plan and complete their projects. Some of the work may also be done at home. Give students access to the unit images for their projects through the Moose on the Loose Find It page for this unit; think also about allowing students to create their own images or search for other public domain images online.

Best practice is to have students make drafts of their pages and get feedback before creating the final version. All of the pages for the final version should be on the same size and type of paper, preferably a heavy paper like construction paper, so the primer can be assembled after viewing.

Teaching tip: Pause lesson activities between class periods as appropriate for your class.

Reflection

Learning then and now. Post the pages around the classroom and ask students to compare all the different ways they learn things now versus the ways available for students in the 19th century. Using the same handout as in the activation activity ("Comparing Classrooms: Then and Now"), ask students to chart what is the same and what is different about learning and then discuss as a group.

Possible prompts include:
- What is different about the primers students used in the 19th century and the books, workbooks, handouts, and videos that students use today?
- What is the same about them?
- Do you think it would be harder to learn from 19th-century primers and books than from modern ones? Why or why not?
- What lessons about citizenship could students learn from your classroom primer?
- What other ways could you teach students about good citizenship?

After students have reflected on this lesson, gather the pages of the primer and combine into a "book," either by stapling, using clips, or three-hole punching and placing in a binder.

Reinforcement	Provided through differentiation of project.

Extension

1. **Try a 19th century-style lesson**. Explore the University of Pittsburgh's 19th-Century Schoolbook Collection, available through their digital library, and select some of the pages for your students to read and work through. Ask them to reflect on the experience. What did they learn? What was similar or different about the tasks in the old schoolbooks compared to the materials they use today? Look particularly at pages that focus on pronunciation and ask students why such material would be important to include in times past. Is this topic still covered today? Or is it covered in a different way today? Go to digital.library.pitt.edu/collection/19th-century-schoolbooks.

2. **School reforms today.** Just as school changed from the 19th century to today, it is in the process of changing again to something different because of the pandemic. The ability to learn in a "virtual classroom" using platforms like Zoom and Google Meet became a necessity during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure that all students continued to have access to a safe education. Ask students to write an opinion piece about the advantages and disadvantages of learning virtually. Do they think a virtual option should be a permanent part of children's education? Why?

3. **Penmanship**. All students in the 19th and 20th centuries studied penmanship and learned cursive writing, and most primers included instructions and models for students to copy. Identify a few short, simple sentences that students could copy in cursive and let them try it. Conversely, ask students to read a couple of short, simple sentences in cursive and see if they can decipher it. Discuss with students why penmanship would form an important part of the educational experience in the past and why it is rarely taught in schools today. What has replaced it in the curriculum?

Supporting Materials

New Hampshire Historical Society Resources

1. Candia School, 19th Century, Object ID: 07.02.01.034

2. Hannah Foster's Sampler, Object ID: 1944.005

Other Resources

• Children's Primer Alphabet, from *The United States School Primer, or, the First Book for Children* (New York: George F. Cooledge, 1800), at the Internet Archive archive.org/details/unitedstatessccho00unse/page/6/mode/2up

• Boy's Picture Book, Railroads, and Boy's Picture Book, Top and Boat, from *The Boy's Picture Book* (Concord, NH: Rufus Merrill, 1843), at the Internet Archive ia803204.us.archive.org/16/items/McGillLibrary-PN970_M477_B6_1843-1283/PN970_M477_B6_1843.pdf

• Children's Primer Drummer Boy, from *The Illustrated Primer, or, The First Book for Children* (New York: George F. Cooledge and Brother, 1844), retrieved from the Library of Congress www.loc.gov/resource/rbc0001.2016juv84724?sp=21

Standards

"Moose on the Loose" Content:

✓ Students will understand that after the revolution, the United States of America established a federal government; colonies established state governments. They will understand that the New Hampshire State Constitution established the basic structure of government for the state and created laws to protect the people and interests of the state. (3-5.T3.2)

"Moose on the Loose" Skills:

✓ Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence (3-5.S1.1)
✓ Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions (3-5.S2.2)
✓ Effective Historical Thinking (3-5.S3.1)
✓ Understanding and Participating in Government (3-5.S6.1, 3-5.S6.2)

New Hampshire Social Studies Frameworks:

✓ Civics and Governments: The Nature and Purpose of Government (SS:CV:4:1.1)
✓ US / NH History: Social/Cultural (SS:HI:4:5.3)

NCSS Themes:

✓ Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
✓ Theme 10: Civic Ideals and Practices

C3 Frameworks:

✓ Construction Compelling Questions (D1.2.3-5)
✓ Constructing Supporting Questions (D1.3.3-5)
✓ Determining Helpful Sources (D1.5.3-5)
✓ Civic and Political Institutions (D2.Civ.2.3-5, D2.Civ.6.3-5)
✓ Participation and Deliberation (D2.Civ.7.3-5, D2.Civ.8.3-5)
✓ Change, Continuity, and Context (D2.His.2.3-5)
✓ Perspectives (D2.His.6.3-5)

Common Core ELA Grade 3:

✓ Craft and Structure in Informational Text (RI.3.4)
✓ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas in Informational Text (RI.3.7)
✓ Production and Distribution of Writing (W.3.4)
✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.3.1, SL.3.1b)

Common Core ELA Grade 4:

- ✓ Key Ideas and Details in Informational Text (RI.4.3)
- ✓ Craft and Structure in Informational Text (RI.4.4, RI.4.5)
- ✓ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas in Informational Text (RI.4.7)
- ✓ Production and Distribution of Writing (W.4.4)
- ✓ Research to Build and Present Knowledge (W.4.9)
- ✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.4.1)

Common Core ELA Grade 5:

- ✓ Craft and Structure in Informational Text (RI.5.4, RI.5.5)
- ✓ Integration of Knowledge and Ideas in Informational Text (RI.5.7)
- ✓ Production and Distribution of Writing (W.5.4)
- ✓ Research to Build and Present Knowledge (W.5.9)
- ✓ Comprehension and Collaboration in Speaking and Listening (SL.5.1)

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Lesson Vocabulary

citizen   (noun) A member by law of a nation or group

citizenship   (noun) The position of belonging to a nation or group by law

civic disposition (noun) Having the traits necessary to take on the responsibilities of citizenship in a community

civic virtue   (noun) Actions citizens do and qualities citizens have that benefit their community

community   (noun) A group of people living together or having something particular in common

democracy   (noun) A government ruled by majority vote of the people

democratic process (noun) When citizens participate in governing their community

good citizenship (noun) Actions people take to appropriately behave as a member of a community, such as civic duty

literacy   (noun) The ability to read and write

primer   (noun) A type of book used in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries that teaches the basics of reading, writing, and math

reform   (noun) A change made to improve something

republicanism   (noun) A belief in a form of government where the people choose representatives to make decisions for them

sampler   (noun) A piece of needlework made to show sewing skills and display basic literacy knowledge

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