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Frontier Vocabulary Grades 3-5

Words to be familiar with:

William Penn – an Englishman who came to the colonies to create a place where people could practice any religion they wanted free from persecution. He named it Pennsylvania (“Penn’s Woods”), after his father.

Wood - was used by the farmers to make a variety of goods including shelter for their families, barns for their livestock, furniture, handles for their tools, and even as fuel to heat their clothes and cook their food.

A Cooper – a skilled artisan that made barrels by trade.

Grist Mill – a place that farmers could go to grind large amounts of grain into flour to be sold at market.

Waterwheel – its buckets were filled with running water causing the wheel to turn thus providing energy to the mill.

Bartering – the exchange of goods and/or services towards a debt owed. This practice was commonplace during the Colonial period and into the 1800’s.

Frontier Roads – these “roads” were nothing more than wide, dirt paths that made the journey very long and unpleasant.

Monocacy Trail – this was the most traveled frontier road which connected Pittsburgh to Philadelphia. (Now Market Street)

Conestoga wagon – a specially designed wagon that was made to carry freight over dirt roads. The wagons were special because their flared bottom helped cargo from falling out the back and its large wheels could move through muddy trails and streams.

Gardens – many frontier people kept these as a supplier of fresh fruits and vegetables for their families because the transportation of food to them could take weeks and would often spoil.

Taverns – during the Colonial period, they served as restaurants, bars, and hotels.

Kettles – were made of iron and were hung over the fire and used for cooking.

Colonial Clothing – consisted of both wool and linen all made by hand from scratch. Only the wealthiest of colonialists could afford store-bought clothing.

Bedwarmer/Footwarmer – filled with hot embers from the fireplace and placed underneath the covers in order to heat up the sheets during the cold winter months.

Continental Congress – first met in York, Pennsylvania after George Washington lost to the British in the Battle of Philadelphia and were forced to retreat out of Philadelphia in order to escape treason charges. They remained in York for nine months until it was safe to return to Philadelphia.

Articles of Confederation – were written in York and were the first set of laws until the Constitution was created in 1789.