

# Cabin Adventure

## THEME

The cabin was built in a time and manner shaped by its moment in history and the needs and resources of the people who built it.

## TIMELINE

- 1492 Columbus discovers America.
- 1776 America declares independence.
- 1797 Liberty is settled.
- 1805 Indian Land at end of Dry Creek opens for settlement.
- >1805 Cabin built sometime after this date and before 1830.
- 1838 Cherokee Removal (Trail of Tears).
- 1960's Butternut Valley deserted.
- 1947 Electricity on Dry Creek.

## ACTIVITY MATERIALS

Cabin and display

## INTRODUCTION

Introduce yourself and state the title of the activity. Preview the main points of the activity and give students an idea of what they will be doing. Conversationally state the theme and sub themes. Ask: **What is history?** Explain they are living in what will be history. Review the timeline so students can place the cabin in an historical perspective. Tell them to forget what is normal in their life (cell phones, computers, electricity, motors) and imagine the life of the people who lived in this cabin. Ask: **What do all human beings need to live** (food, shelter, clothing, water)? **Where did pioneers get these things** (pioneers had no stores and, at first, no neighbors to borrow anything)? Discuss how pioneers had to supply or make everything. Ask: **Why would this valley be a good place to settle** (fertile soil, water, and game)? Note that the cabin is built on a hill near, but not right next to the creek. Ask: **Why was it built like this** (protection against flooding but close to a water source)?

## ACTIVITY

The first pioneers had only the tools and supplies they could carry. They used all the materials that nature provided. Show students the adz marks on the logs of the cabin. The joints hold the logs together. Glass windows were not available so they used only shutters. Show students the saw over the fireplace and explain that it took two men 20 minutes to cut an eight foot log. Dried mud with hair or straw would have been the chinking. Since there was no electricity at the time, ask: **How was food cooked and stored?** Explain that meats were salt cured and then smoked. Pioneers could not go to the store for groceries, so their food came from wild animals first. Then after the land was cleared, gardens were built to

## Teacher's Corner

### Grade Level(s)

3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup>

### Grade Level Expectations

- 1.01: Understand the diversity of human cultures.
- 1.02: Discuss cultures and human patterns of places and regions of the world.
- 1.03: Recognize the contributions of individuals and people of various ethnic, racial, religious, and socioeconomic groups to the development of civilizations.
- 1.04 : Understand the contributions of individuals and people of various ethnic, racial, religious, and socioeconomic groups to Tennessee.

### State Performance Indicators

- Determine similarities and differences in the ways different cultural groups address basic human needs.
- Recognize some of the major components of a culture.
- Identify pre-Colonial Native American groups.
- Examine how Native American culture changed as a result of contact with European cultures.
- Identify various racial and ethnic groups in Tennessee at the founding of statehood.

## Cabin Adventure

### ACTIVITY (cont.)

grow food. Discuss the subsistence farmers' diet of corn, ham, game, and garden vegetables. Show the students around the cabin and explain that the fireplace was used for cooking. Ask: **For what were the two rooms used** (one for cooking and one for sleeping and general activities in the winter)? The dogtrot and porch were used for cooling. A root cellar under the floor was used to store foods.

The early pioneers had to make their own clothes. Ask: **How did they make their own clothes?** Explain that they grew cotton or used sheep's wool. With cotton, they pulled the seeds out and then combed the fibers. Those fibers were then twirled into yarn on a spinning wheel. Finally, the yarn was used to weave cloth using a loom or by knitting with needles. People were fortunate to have two changes of clothing because it was so time consuming to make and wash them. Encourage the students to imagine what it would be like to only have two sets of clothes.

### DISCUSSION

Explain the other artifacts within the cabin. End with the chamber pot and outhouse.

### WRAP-UP

Let the group know that the activity is coming to an end. Conversationally review the theme and sub themes. Give the teachers any of the materials that students are able to take home with them.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- Activity developed by Helga Thompson; April 2008.