

CCTI PROJECT-BASED-LESSON UNIT OVERVIEW / LESSON PLAN – (RE)VERSE INTO HISTORY: A COLONIAL CHARLESTON POEM

Class: English 3CP

Grade: 11th

Teacher: Dr. Trish Vicino

Topic: American Literature (Collection 2 - Colonial Period)

Duration: Three 90-minute class periods

Essential/Driving Question:

How can poetry influence perspectives into history?

Guiding/Focus Questions:

What does “A Description of Charles Towne in 1769” reveal about the city prior to the Revolutionary War?

How might bias influence an author’s perspective on Colonial Charleston?

What parallels can be drawn between Charleston in 1769 and 2022?

Project Summary:

This inquiry leads students through three lesson explorations focusing on the unique perspective and authorship of a colonial-era poem that offers a vivid and nuanced description of Charleston before the Revolutionary War. First focusing on the essential question that considers how poetry gives voice to history, students will then analyze “A Description of Charles Town in 1769” as a prescient reflection of its time and as complex social commentary on a dynamic yet challenging new city. Students will next consider the authorship of the poem and how it was mistakenly attributed for 250 years before careful historical research revealed its true writer. Students will finally consider parallels between Charles Town of 1769 and Charleston of 2022 as considered through the poem’s content and examination of relevant contemporary stories and statistics. As a culminating activity, using the poem as the anchor text and inspiration, student will express their own voices through the drafting of a similar contemporary piece that describes either modern Charleston or Summerville with original verse.

Standards & Skills Alignment:

English Language Arts

1.1 Gather information from print and multimedia sources to prepare for discussions; draw on evidence that supports the topic, text, or issue being discussed; develop logical interpretations of new findings; and restate new interpretations.

2.1 Analyze ideas and information from text and multimedia by formulating questions, proposing interpretations and explanations, and considering alternative views and multiple perspectives.

3.1 Gather ideas from texts, multimedia, and personal experience to write narratives that: g. use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters

3.2 Examine historical, social, cultural, or political context to broaden inquiry and create questions.

3.3 Gather information from a variety of primary and secondary sources and evaluate for perspective, validity, and bias.

4.1 Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance, premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.

4.1 Employ a critical stance to analyze relationships and patterns of evidence to confirm conclusions.

5.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain; investigate multiple supported academic interpretations.

6.1 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of a text including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis of the topic; provide an objective summary of the text.

8.1 Determine the figurative, connotative, or technical meanings of words and phrases; analyze how an author uses and refines words and phrases over the course of a text.

10.1 Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

12.3 Read and respond to grade-level text to become self-directed, critical readers and thinkers.

History (United States History and the Constitution)

Standard 1: Demonstrate an understanding of the influence of the Atlantic World on the regional and national development of republicanism and federalism from 1607–1815.

USHC.1. E Utilize primary and secondary sources to investigate the impact of the Atlantic influence in the regional and national development of Republicanism and Federalism.

21st Century Skills

Critical Thinking

Collaboration

Creativity

Reflection

Evaluation

Step 1: Desired Results

Students will be able to:

- Critically close read and analyze a poem that is a window into Charleston's Colonial period
- Infer and interpret the figurative meaning of certain parts of the poem
- Identify and analyze the author's perspective and potential bias toward the subject
- Discuss the positives and negatives of 1769 Charleston and compare them to modern issues
- Synthesize ideas about how poetry is used to express feelings and opinions within history
- Create an original poem based upon the original that considers the pros and cons of their region

Step 2: Assessment Evidence

Formative Activities / Assessments: Poem Close Read, Crossword Puzzle, Original Poem Draft

Summative Assessment: Original Student Poem (based on “A View of Charles Towne in 1769”)

Step 3: Lesson Activities

Project Kickoff: Students will complete a Quick Write (available at <https://www.noredink.com/s/3epw0sz>) on the following quote: *“Good literature has the power to help us better understand the human condition. Poetry and other creative writing evokes something deep in us; it widens our perspective and helps us connect with parts of ourselves (and others) that otherwise we wouldn’t have easy access to.”*

After responses are completed, the class will discuss ideas. They will then consider and discuss the essential question: **How can poetry influence perspectives into history?**

The teacher will ask students to consider and name modern problems connected with living in Charleston/Summerville. The teacher will also introduce some of the concepts and activities of the lesson series, including poem analysis, perspective and bias consideration, positive and negative comparison, time period juxtaposition, and poem drafting.

The teacher will then introduce the first lesson with particular focus on the first Guiding Question: **What does “A Description of Charles Towne in 1769”** reveal about the city prior to the Revolutionary War?

Lesson 1: The Poem and What It Reveals

Students will receive a copy of the poem and class members will each read a line. The teacher will then read the poem aloud so students can hear it again. The teacher will ask the class what the speaker is commenting on and the class will discuss the points of consideration. Students will receive the Close Read handout (formative assessment) to work with the text of the poem on a more substantial level. After class time to complete it, the teacher will lead a discussion on key points within the Close Read. Finally, the crossword (formative assessment) will be distributed, and students will have the remaining class time to begin working on it.

Prior to the start of the second lesson, the teacher will ask students to consider and then discuss the second Guiding Question: **How might bias influence an author’s perspective on Colonial Charleston?**

Lesson 2: The Writer of “A Description of Charles Towne in 1769” & Author Bias

After the initial discussion, the class will review key points of the previous day’s lesson and discussion. The teacher will then share the PowerPoint presentation called “A Description of Charles Towne in 1769: A Closer Look” to present poem authorship information and the Revere illustration. Students will also review the podcast article “Captain Thomas Hayward’s Poetic Description of 1769 Charles Town” to reinforce concepts and images in question. Next the class will be asked to consider and discuss how/why bias would have influenced the author’s perspective on Charles Towne during the Colonial Period. Finally, students will continue to work on completing the related crossword.

Lesson 3: Parallels & New Perspectives

Students will hand their completed crosswords in. Prior to the start of the lesson, the teacher will briefly review the previous lessons and conclusions and then consider the third and final Guiding Question: **What parallels can be drawn between Charleston in 1769 and 2022?**

Students will be asked to fill out a Microsoft Form (available at: <https://forms.office.com/r/cnwBce7mYe>) with their guesses for current Charleston demographics, namely population estimates, race, and median income (using <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/charlestoncountysouthcarolina> and <https://www.charleston-sc.gov/106/Demographics>). Answers will be reviewed to see which student is the closest to being correct. (Historical weather data can also be reviewed at <https://www.weather.gov/chs/chshistory> and <https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/datasets/GHCND/stations/GHCND:USW00013880/detail> while historical disease statistics can be reviewed at <https://www.sciencyclopedia.org/sce/entries/epidemics/> and <https://charlestoncitypaper.com/for-charleston-outbreaks-and-epidemics-are-a-key-part-of-history/> if time permits).

The class will then review sources and information for relevant elements of the poem, including weather, sickness, and economy. The teacher will lead students toward the idea that although statistics have shifted and many things have changed, certain elements revealed in the poem are relevant to both 1769 and 2022. Students will then be asked to turn their copy of the poem over and brainstorm a list of positive and negative elements that they could possibly mention in a modern version of “A Description of Charles Towne in 1769.” After completing this, stylistic guidelines for drafting a similar yet original poem (summative assessment) will be discussed and reinforced with the Poem Drafting handout.

Students will view the original poem next to a model version written by the instructor and focus on the stylistic similarities between them. On the back of the original copy of the poem (distributed during Lesson 1), they will brainstorm ideas for things to include in their own unique poems. Once they have some things written, they will begin drafting on the back of the Poem Drafting handout. The teacher will circulate to check drafts, discuss ideas, and provide encouragement.

Once drafts are completed, students will hand them in for teacher review and commentary. These drafts will be returned so students may make corrections or additions and finally receive instructor approval to begin typing their final version. This finished draft will be submitted for a major grade and displayed within the classroom with student permission.

Materials:

Laptop computer

Smartboard

[Charleston Poem](#) PowerPoint (“A Description of Charles Towne in 1769: A Closer Look”)

Poem Close Read handout (included below)

[Charleston Crossword](#) (PDF)

<https://forms.office.com/r/cnwBce7mYe> (“Modern Charleston Demographics Guesses”)

Poem Drafting handout (included below)

Poem Drafting rubric (included below)

Resources:

<https://www.ccpl.org/charleston-time-machine/captain-thomas-hayward-s-poetic-description-1769-charles-town>
(plus graphics)

https://www.postandcourier.com/columnists/gilbreth-column-historic-charles-town-poem-one-for-the-ages/article_05446fae-a795-11eb-9fcc-9393c2bf127e.html

[Charleston Colonial Descriptions](#)

[Hearty Damnations and Ordered Resistance - Charleston 1769](#)

“A Description of Charles Town in 1769”



Poem by the captain of a British warship, 1769.

Black and white all mix'd together,
Inconstant, strange, unhealthful weather
Burning heat and chilling cold
Dangerous both to young and old
Boisterous winds and heavy rains
Fevers and rheumatic pains
Agues plenty without doubt
Sores, boils, the prickling heat and gout
Musquitos on the skin make blotches
Centipedes and large cock-roaches
Frightful creatures in the waters
Porpoises, sharks and alligators
Houses built on barren land
No lamps or lights, but streets of sand
Pleasant walks, if you can find 'em
Scandalous tongues, if any mind 'em
The markets dear and little money

Large potatoes, sweet as honey
Water bad, past all drinking
Men and women without thinking
Every thing at a high price
But rum, hominy and rice
Many a widow not unwilling
Many a beau not worth a shilling
Many a bargain, if you strike it,
This is Charles-town, how do you like it.

By Capt. Martin, captain of a Man of War

“A Description of Charles Town in 1769” **Close Read**



Black and white all mix'd together,
 Inconstant, strange, unhealthful weather
 Burning heat and chilling cold
 Dangerous both to young and old
Boisterous winds and heavy rains
 Fevers and rheumatic pains
Agues plenty without doubt
 Sores, boils, the prickling heat and gout
 Musquitos on the skin make blotches
 Centipedes and large cock-roaches
 Frightful creatures in the waters
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 The markets dear and little money
 Large potatoes, sweet as honey
 Water bad, past all drinking
Men and women without thinking
 Every thing at a high price
 But rum, hominy and rice
 Many a widow not unwilling
 Many a beau not worth a shilling
 Many a bargain, if you strike it,
 This is Charles-town, how do you like it.

What does this tell you about the population of Charleston in 1769?

boisterous:

rheumatic:

ague:

gout:

As you read, circle words spelled or written differently than in modern times.

As you read, underline the speaker's complaints about Charles Towne.

What words gives this piece an informal tone?

In what context is the word dear being used here?

What does this line mean to you?

hominy:

beau:

Use three adjectives to describe the speaker's tone:

Now rank the following issues from the poem based on how problematic they are in modern times. Be prepared to discuss your rankings:

_____ mixed population

_____ palmetto bugs

_____ unpredictable weather

_____ sharks and alligators

_____ sickness

_____ bad water

_____ mosquitoes

_____ high prices

Now read the following quotes about the poem and answer the related questions that follow:

Description: "...a diverse and **sarcastic** description of Charleston..."

Question: What does sarcastic mean? How/where can the poem be viewed as "sarcastic, and why?"

Description: "Its popularity no doubt stems from the poem's **brisk**, modern **cadence** and **straightforward** language that provides a vibrant snapshot of life in the colonial capital."

Question: What do brisk and cadence mean, what two lines reflect this description, and why? What does straightforward mean, and where does the poem show "straightforward language?"

Description: "The author succeeded in painting a colorful picture of Charleston within a compact frame, making reference to such diverse topics as the climate, wildlife, health, foodways, social life, **demographics, commerce, and infrastructure.**"

Question: Where in the poem does it mention the following things? Quote references to each:

climate:

wildlife:

health:

foodways:

social life:

demographics:

commerce:

infrastructure:

Description: “After **enumerating** the town’s faults and follies, the poem pivots to the reader and boldly asks his or her opinion of this imperfect colonial outpost.”

Question: Look up the word enumerating and then discuss where the speaker is addressing the city’s faults:

Question: In your opinion, what is the effect of the poem “pivot[ing] to the reader and ask[ing] his or her opinion of Charleston at the very end?”

On a scale of 1 (least) to 10 (most), please rate your current understanding of the poem after this close read:

Name: _____

**Original – “A Look at Charles Towne in 1769”
(Heyward)**

**Modern – “A Look at Charleston in 2022”
(Vicino)**

Black and white all mix'd together,	a	Natives and transplants co-mingle	
Inconstant, strange, unhealthful weather	a		
Burning heat and chilling cold	b	Mostly married; few are single	
Dangerous both to young and old	b		
Boisterous winds and heavy rains	c	Humid cold and stifling heat	
Fevers and rheumatic pains	c		
Agues plenty without doubt	d	Those who like their bourbon neat	b
Sores, boils, the prickling heat and gout	d	Hurricanes that blast the shores	
Musquitos on the skin make blotches	e		
Centipedes and large cock-roaches	e	Pineapples above the doors	
Frightful creatures in the waters	f		
Porpoises, sharks and alligators	f	Heatstroke from the blazing sun	
Houses built on barren land	g	d	
No lamps or lights, but streets of sand	g	Swat mosquitos: more will come	
Pleasant walks, if you can find 'em	h	d	
Scandalous tongues, if any mind 'em	h	Fire ants pour from silty nests	
The markets dear and little money	i	e	
Large potatoes, sweet as honey	i	Copperheads and stinging pests	
Water bad, past all drinking	j	e	
Men and women without thinking	j	Houses built too close together	
Everything at a high price	k	f	
But rum, hominy and rice	k	Roofs replaced from angry weather	
Many a widow not unwilling	l	f	
Many a beau not worth a shilling	l	Marsh grass green and pluff mud odor	
Many a bargain, if you strike it,	<u>m</u>	g	
This is Charles-town, how do you like it?	<u>m</u>	Boiled peanuts, Cheerwine soda	
		g	
		Potholed roads that cars adorn	
		h	Smile and
		don't use your horn!	h
		Shrimp and grits on every menu	
		i	
		A well-stocked bar at every venue	
		i	
		Flooding streets during most high tides	j
		Graveyard tours and carriage rides	
		j	
		High church steeples, low terrain	
		k	
		Stifling drought and constant rain	
		k	
		Gracious manners: few are rude	
		l	
		Sandy beaches, world-class food	
		l	
		Many come but few then go	
		m	
		Back to the North or Ohio!	
		m	

Rhyme key: regular letters are direct rhyme, bolded letters are off rhyme, and underlined letters are repetition

- _____ All 13 couplets are either direct rhyme or off rhyme
- _____ All lines contain between 7-9 syllables
- _____ All lines reference local elements/weather/food/etc.
- _____ The final poem is 26 lines long
- _____ All 13 couplets are either direct rhyme or off rhyme
- _____ All lines contain between 7-9 syllables
- _____ All lines reference local elements/weather/food/etc.
- _____ The final poem is 26 lines long

Now use the checklist to proofread the original modern version of the poem that you just drafted:

- _____ All 13 couplets are either direct rhyme or off rhyme
- _____ All lines contain between 7-9 syllables
- _____ All lines reference local elements/weather/food/etc.
- _____ The final poem is 20-26 lines long
- _____ The poem has been proofread and corrected

AFTER TEACHER REVIEW AND APPROVAL, YOU ARE NOW READY TO TYPE YOUR FINAL VERSION

Poem Drafting Template for “A Look at Charleston in 2022” (using “A Look at Charles Towne in 1769” as a model)

If you carefully look over the original poem, you will notice the following important stylistic elements:

- 26 lines with pairs of two end-rhymed lines (couplets) for a pattern aabbccddeeffgghhijjkkllmm
- 7, 8, or 9 syllables per line
- A variety of subjects/observations included (weather, sickness, pests, animals, houses, gossip, economy, food, and water)

Now draft your own original version of the poem (minimum of 20 lines, maximum of 26 lines) by carefully following the stylistic elements noted above:

1 _____ a

2 _____ a

3 _____ b

4 _____ b

5 _____ c

6 _____ c

7 _____ d

8 _____ d

9 _____ e

10 _____ e

11 _____ f

12	f
13	g
14	g
15	h
16	h
17	i
18	i
19	j
20	j
21	k
22	k
23	l
24	l
25	m
26	m

Summative Rubric for Original Student Poem: “A Look at Charleston in 2022”

CATEGORY	Exceptional (25)	Good Work (20)	Developing (15)	Beginning (10)
Focus on Assigned Topic & Guidelines	The entire poem is related to the assigned topic and follows the provided guidelines (7-9 syllable lines, 20-26 lines long, rhyming couplets, topic-appropriate).	Most of the poem is related to the assigned topic and follows the provided guidelines with some exceptions (7-9 syllable lines, 20-26 lines long, rhyming couplets, topic-appropriate).	Some of the poem is related to the assigned topic but does not generally follow the provided guidelines (7-9 syllable lines, 20-26 lines long, rhyming couplets, topic-appropriate).	No attempt has been made to relate the poem to the assigned topic and it does not follow the provided guidelines (7-9 syllable lines, 20-26 lines long, rhyming couplets, topic-appropriate).
Creativity	The poem contains many creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has vividly and imaginatively painted a picture of modern Charleston with words.	The poem contains creative details and/or descriptions that contribute to the reader's enjoyment. The author has vividly painted a picture of modern Charleston with words.	The poem contains a few creative details and/or descriptions, but they may be off-topic or distracting. The author has attempted to paint a picture of modern Charleston with words.	There is little to no evidence of creativity in the poem. The author has not attempted or succeeded in painting a picture of modern Charleston with words.

Spelling, Grammar, Punctuation, and Usage	There are no spelling, grammar, punctuation, or errors in the final draft. Words are used appropriately and skillfully.	There are a few spelling, grammar, punctuation, and usage errors in the final draft. Most words are used appropriately and some skillfully.	There are many spelling, grammar, punctuation, and usage errors in the final draft. Some words are used appropriately or skillfully.	There are multiple and sustained spelling, grammar, punctuation, and usage errors in the final draft. Words are not used appropriately or skillfully.
Poetic Devices and Vocabulary	The poem contains imagery, tone, and other sound devices that add to its rhythm and flow. The piece reads and sounds like a poem.	The poem contains some imagery, tone, and other sound devices that add to its rhythm and flow. The piece reads and sounds like a poem.	The poem contains little imagery, tone, or other sound devices and is lacking in rhythm and flow. The piece does not generally read or sound like a poem.	The poem contains no imagery, tone, or other sound devices and does not have rhythm and flow. The piece does not read or sound like a poem.

Total:

Comments: