

The Stratford Devil ...?

a unit plan and notebook

integrating

Social Studies and Language Arts

designed by

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Proposal for Teaching History As A Dynamic Discipline

Purpose: This project connects students with the roots of Stratford, Connecticut. It gives an in depth view of the social, religious, economic, and cultural climate of early America. This unit is a dynamic opportunity to integrate Language Arts and Social Studies.

Project Description: Students will explore Stratford's early history while reading the novel *The Stratford Devil*. Topics include the geographical, cultural, economic, and religious mores of the early settlement of Sandy Hollow (later Stratford). In addition, students will develop vocabulary, identify novel elements, and research geographical locations.

History and other State/Local Content Standards addressed:

LA #1.1: Students use appropriate strategies before, during, and after reading in order to construct meaning.

LA #1.2: Students interpret, analyze, and evaluate text in order to extend understanding and appreciation.

LA 1.3: Students select and apply strategies to facilitate word recognition and develop vocabulary in order to comprehend the text.

SS #4: Students will recognize the continuing importance of historical thinking and historical knowledge in their own lives and in the world in which they live.

SS #1: Students will develop historical thinking skills including chronological thinking and recognizing change over time; comprehending and analyzing historical literature;

researching historical causation; and understanding competing narratives and interpretation.

SS #2: Students will use historical thinking skills to develop an understanding of the major historical periods, issues, and trends in United States history, world history, and Connecticut and local history.

Essential Questions and Understandings for Students:

Social Studies: EQ

1. What importance do traditions and symbols have in a community?
2. How does environment influence life?
3. What do people do in the name of religion?
4. How do beliefs affect behavior?

Social Studies: EU

1. The role of women in early America differs from the role of women in American Democracy today.
2. The structure (or government) of an area (community or state) reflects the beliefs and faith of its people.

Language Arts: EQ

1. How does the writer's word choice affect the reader?
2. How does a reader connect to a text?

Language Arts: EU

1. A writer uses literary devices and techniques to "hook" the reader's attention.
2. Active reading requires thought before, during, and after reading.

Learning Objectives: Students will be able to

1. identify novel elements;
2. recognize the geographical influence on the economic and social development of an area;
3. identify the effects of a religion on a society.

Description of Activities:

See Unit plan.

The project will be implemented to culminate with a visit from the author, Claude Clayton Smith. The author, recently retired, is available to speak to students at any school

that incorporates *The Stratford Devil* into its curriculum, whether in American Literature, American History, creative writing, etc. He can be contacted at c-smith@onu.edu.

Assessment with respect to learning objectives:

Assessments will include but not be limited to chapter quizzes, vocabulary tests, reading comprehension checks, map work, graphic organizers and projects.

Professional biography:

Claude Clayton Smith, author of *The Stratford Devil*, grew up in Stratford, Connecticut, attending both Stratford and Bunnell High School respectively. His ancestor Giles Smith came to Hartford as an indentured servant in 1635 and worked on the home of John Haynes, Governor of the Connecticut Colony, who tried Goody Bassett for witchcraft in Stratford, sentencing her to death by hanging.

Dr. Smith's books include *Quarter-Acre of Heartache*, a nonfiction account of the successful modern-day struggle of Chief Big Eagle of Connecticut's Paugussett Indians to preserve their reservation in nearby Trumbull from encroachment and termination. The Paugussetts are relatives of the native Americans in *The Stratford Devil*.

THE STRATFORD DEVIL

Take notes on the main characters as you read the text.

Ruth Paine:

Jonas Paine:

Widow Paine:

Nimrod:

Thomas Stanton:

Moses Wheeler:

Goody Blakeman:

Reverend Adam Blakeman:

John Blakeman:

Sergeant Nichols:

Pervis:

Charles Bassett:

Governor Haynes:

Name _____

Date _____

Character Identification in THE STRATFORD DEVIL

PART I: Stratford, 1640

Matching:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Ruth _____ | A. The Reverend |
| 2. Jonas _____ | B. announced: "My Ruth is gone..." |
| 3. John Blakeman _____ | C. The mother of six children |
| 4. Moses Wheeler _____ | D. brought news from the General Court |
| 5. Goody Blakeman _____ | E. killed by Indians |
| 6. Nimrod _____ | F. "Skinny as a swamp reed..." |
| 7. Rev. Adam Blakeman _____ | G. treated Ruth's wolf bite with cobwebs |
| 8. Captain Mason _____ | H. Took "a barrel of cider for a drinking |
| 9. Anna Paine _____ | I. Said to Ruth, "I want to be your friend." |
| 10. Sergeant Nichols _____ | J. "the Indian interpreter in these parts" |
| 11. Thomas Stanton _____ | K. "the last to see" Ruth "and the first to find her" |

Name _____

Date _____

THE STRATFORD DEVIL

PART I: Stratford, 1640

Sequence:

Number the following in the order in which they occurred:

_____ Ruth returns wearing a wolf's pelt.

_____ Ruth decides to "skip" church services.

_____ Jonas Paine was killed in a battle with the Indians.

_____ Nimrod takes Ruth away in a canoe.

_____ John Blakeman declares that he wants to be Ruth's "friend."

_____ Widow Paine bursts into the congregation to announce that Ruth is missing.

_____ Thomas Stanton leaves Ruth alone in the woods for a week.

_____ The search for Ruth is halted due to the death of Mary Nichols.

_____ Thomas Stanton and Nimrod have a fireside chat.

_____ Captain Mason arrives with news from the General Court.

_____ The cow's tail is mysteriously bobbed.

_____ A wolf bites Ruth's leg, leaving puncture wounds.

THE STRATFORD DEVIL

PART I: Stratford, 1640

Vocabulary

Chapter 1 The Terns

1. debris
2. delirious
3. buoyant
4. plagued (verb)
5. fortification
6. palisade

Chapter 2 The Scent

1. dominated
2. diminished
3. brackish
4. emitted
5. impervious
6. acrid

Chapter 3 The Meeting House

1. peril
2. chinks
3. thatched
4. abundance
5. notorious(ly)
6. provocation
7. hearsay
8. barren
9. abet
10. congregation

Chapter 4 Nimrod

1. gunwale
2. bestowed
3. deftly
4. formidable
5. globules
6. carcass
7. incisions

8. venison
9. embers
10. devoid
11. mutual

Chapter 5 Captain Mason

1. linger
2. turmoil
3. fervently
4. postern
5. adversity
6. scabbard
7. monotones
8. brig (brigantine)
9. tribulation
10. hostile

Chapter 6 Thomas Stanton

1. tripod
2. rancid
3. excursion
4. plague
5. hamper(ed)
6. massacre
7. sachem
8. campaign

Chapter 7 Discussions in Darkness

1. corselet
2. pike
3. grievance
4. ashen
5. unkempt
6. pallet
7. indignantly
8. virtuous

Chapter 8 Signs and Symbols

1. contentment
2. deliberate
3. excavate
4. forage

5. dispersed
6. extinguish(ed)
7. dispatch

Chapter 9 The Return

1. retreat
2. mechanically
3. arsenal
4. spectacle
5. sassafras
6. prophet
7. tomahawk
8. forlornly

Chapter 10 The Eyes in the Woods

1. unscathed
2. thrive
3. heathens
4. skiff
5. adorn
6. sobriety
7. tallow
8. pestle
9. linger
10. materialize

THE STRATFORD DEVIL

PART I: Stratford, 1640

Read Comprehension ... a check for reading

Chapter 1 The Terns

1. Describe Ruth's unique habit (touching tongue to nose).
2. Why did Ruth not go to the Meeting House?
3. Where is Ruth's father?
4. Why had the people built a palisade for their settlement?
5. Describe the setting in Chapter 1.

Chapter 2 The Scent

1. What new character is introduced?

Chapter 3 The Meeting House

1. How do the settlers mark (keep track of) time in the Meeting House?
2. How do the settlers' seats reflect their status?
3. Connect the settlers' seating arrangement with a seating arrangement in our society.
4. What is the relationship between Goody Blakeman and Moses Wheeler?
5. What does *Goody* mean?
6. What accusation is made about Widow Paine?

Chapter 4 Nimrod

1. Identify who is transporting Ruth.
2. How is Ruth being transported?
3. Describe how Ruth's wounds are being treated.
4. Describe the only nourishment that Ruth takes.
5. What decision or truce is made at the end of the chapter?

Chapter 5 Captain Mason

1. What announcement does Widow Paine make at the Meeting House?
2. How do the roles of women, children, and men differ at this time of crisis?
3. What was Sandy Hollow renamed?
4. Why did Captain Mason sail to the settlement?
5. What does young John Blakeman find?

Chapter 6 Thomas Stanton

1. Describe Thomas Stanton
2. How are Indians and wolves similar? Identify at least two qualities that Indians and wolves have in common.
3. Explain Thomas Stanton's role and nickname.
4. What connection does Ruth make to Thomas Stanton's story about a battle with the Pequots?

Chapter 7 Discussions in Darkness

1. Describe the purpose of the Indian mound (mound of shells).
2. Why do the Pequannocks have to pay tribute (\$) to the General Court in Hartford?
3. Why do Goody Thomson and Goody Blakeman visit Widow Paine?
4. Describe Widow Paine's reaction to the visit.
5. What would *you* say to these visitors if you were in Widow Paine's place?

Chapter 8 Signs and Symbols

1. Describe Ruth's activities in the week that Thomas Stanton left her.
2. What evidence does Ruth find from her nighttime visitor?
3. What event suspended the search for Ruth?
4. How do the settlers interpret the cow's missing tail?
5. Describe the settlers' plans and activities as the result of finding the cow.

Chapter 9 The Return

1. Who returns with Ruth?
2. What expectations does Ruth give as to where she has been and where the pelt came from?
3. Describe the symbol that the settlers use to denote Ruth's disappearance and return.
4. What does Ruth suggest as an explanation for what happened to the cow's tail?
5. Why would Ruth's opinions of Indians differ so much from the others?

Chapter 10 The Eyes in the Woods

1. In your own words, restate Reverend Blakeman's sermon on the day that Ruth returns.
2. What is Jane Blakeman's opinion of Ruth's appearance?
3. Describe some of the Ruth's discoveries now that she has more freedom to wander.
4. What was Ruth's reaction to her mother giving John Blakeman a firearm? How would you feel if something like that happened to you?
5. Describe John Blakeman's feelings for Ruth.

THE STRATFORD DEVIL

PART II: Stratford, 1650

Vocabulary

Chapter 11 Mr. Bassett

1. cattails
2. forge (blacksmith's)
3. tiller
4. bulbous
5. knell

Chapter 12 The Agreement

1. doused
2. misdemeanor

3. reformation
4. confinement
5. distinctive
6. implusive

Chapter 13 The Lecture Day

1. mastiffs
2. marauders
3. defiantly
4. desolation
5. devour
6. grievous
7. waif

Chapter 14 Mr. Pervis

1. tentative
2. grist mill
3. cargo
4. prance
5. winced

Chapter 15 The Wolf Man

1. shammy
2. burlap
3. vicious
4. oil cloth
5. woolsey
6. ferocious

Chapter 16 The Pit

1. methodically
2. britches
3. abomination
4. gaze
5. venture
6. oaf

Chapter 17 The Bounty Hunt

1. forecast
2. reeked
3. brandishing

4. manure
5. flayed
6. renegade
7. hobbled
8. poker
9. snare
10. bedraggled
11. rabid
12. loathsome

Chapter 18 A Christmas Surprise

1. vehement
2. essential
3. pungent
4. furred
5. ruckus
6. constitution (not in a political sense)
7. pompous(ly)
8. palpitation
9. dour
10. blasphemous

Chapter 19 The Windsor Witch

1. guise
2. pagan
3. inquisitive
4. scrutiny
5. warranted

Chapter 20 The Dutchman

1. precarious(ly)
2. heathen
3. spastic
4. writing
5. quicken
6. apparitionis
7. balm

Chapter 21 Snow and Silence

1. aloof
2. haughtiness
3. disconcerting

4. oblivious
5. wench

Chapter 22 Joan of Arc

1. angular
2. thongs
3. infamous
4. muffler
5. revelations
6. perceptive

Chapter 23 *Nux Vomica*

1. indistinguishable
2. dormant
3. sodden
4. depleted
5. implore
6. distracted
7. inaudible

Chapter 24 Goody Bassett

1. poised
2. banishment
3. mentor
4. dawdle
5. provision

Chapter 25 The Pestle

1. magistrate
2. aloft
3. squabble
4. quivered
5. viper
6. contorted

Chapter 26 The Stratford Devil

1. restrain
2. sentinel
3. afflicted
4. jovial

5. diligent
6. condemnation
7. gnawing
8. embossed
9. purged
10. dispatch
11. gesture

Chapter 27 The Lesson

1. exuberant
2. taunt
3. defiance
4. banishment
5. stocks
6. precedent

Chapter 28 The Granite Ledge

1. wrenched
2. resistance
3. hornblende

Read Comprehension ... a check for reading

Chapter 11 Mr. Bassett

1. What new occupation does Moses Wheeler have?
2. What great excitement is caused by Goody Thomson's announcement?
3. How does Anna Paine compare herself to Goody Thomson?
4. What thoughts does Ruth have concerning her parents?
5. Charles Bassett, the new schoolmaster, gives Ruth a nickname. What is it?

Chapter 12 The Agreement

1. Describe the Indian troubles.
2. Whose name does Ruth recognize on the document?
3. Before the document is removed, what does Ruth do?
4. Why do you think Ruth does this?

Chapter 13 The Lecture Day

1. What happens to the settlers' mastiffs?
2. What does the wolf symbolize to the settlers and Reverend Blakeman?

3. Explain the significance of the following: “Learning is not necessary for women. The skills of the home be more than enough.”

Chapter 14 Mr. Pervis

1. How does the plantation of Stratford hope to solve the problem of wolves?
2. Who said “Work is the way of preventin’ loneliness” and what does it mean?
3. What does Moses Wheeler tell Ruth about the “soft spot” in his heart?
4. What is Ruth’s opinion of John Blakeman?
5. Identify Mr. Pervis and his role.

Chapter 15 The Wolf Man

1. What does Pervis admire in Widow Paine’s cabin?
2. From whom does Pervis bring a greeting for Ruth?
3. What affect do you think this greeting has on Ruth?
4. Describe what two things Ruth find on the nail keg.
5. What two things does Pervis give to Ruth (or intend to give) for staying at the cabin?

Chapter 16 The Pit

1. Describe how the settlers prepare for winter.
2. What discovery does Ruth make about Pervis while he is bathing?
3. What comparison does the Reverend make to the pit with the dead wolf?

Chapter 17 The Bounty Hunt

1. What does Pervis fear more than wolves?
2. Ruth asks Pervis many questions concerning what?
3. The Reverend and his family view the dead wolves daily—why?
4. How does Mr. Bassett regard Mr. Pervis? Or, what does Mr. Bassett think of Mr. Pervis and his bounty hunting?

Chapter 18 A Christmas Surprise

1. What is the relationship between Pervis and Moses Wheeler?
2. Why was there a sudden halt to the success of Pervis’ bounty hunting?
3. Describe the new bait that Pervis uses.
4. What is the settlers’ reaction to the new bait?
5. What surprise announcement is made at the Meeting House?
6. What excuse does Ruth use not to accept Mr. Bassett’s invitation to Christmas dinner?

Chapter 19 The Windsor Witch

1. What is discovered in Windsor?
2. What punishment does Reverend Blakeman order for Moses Wheeler?
3. Explain Ruth's actions toward Moses Wheeler.

Chapter 20 The Dutchman

1. Pervis makes an unusual demand that someone find a _____ for him.
2. Describe Pervis' new bait.
3. Describe Ruth's encounter with a wolf.
4. What happy occasion ends Chapter 20?

Chapter 21 Snow and Silence

1. Why does Pervis need, yet, another method to kill wolves?
2. Why does Ruth not attend the services at the Meeting House?
3. When will Pervis be "on his way"?

Chapter 22 Joan of Arc

1. How does Anna Paine spend most of her time?
2. According to Mr. Bassett a person is either a. _____ or b. _____.
3. Who holds Pervis hostage in the loft?

Chapter 23 Nux Vomica

1. Who is the newest citizen of Stratford?
2. Who shows up at the Paine cabin and demands to see Pervis?
3. Who has vanished?
4. Explain the new rumor being spread around Stratford.

Chapter 24 Goody Bassett

1. What is the significance of the statement, "the children were unable to sit still"?
2. Explain the news (and its importance) in the letter received by Mr. Bassett from his mentor.
3. Why had Pervis been "hired" by Plymouth?
4. Explain why Ruth sobs for days.

Chapter 25 The Pestle

1. Describe the wedding of Ruth and Mr. Bassett. Where did it take place? Who performed the ceremony? Who were the guests?
2. Who does Goody Bassett visit right after her marriage?
3. Explain why Nimrod had come to the settlement.
4. How did Charles Bassett spend his wedding night?

Chapter 26 The Stratford Devil

1. Explain the charges against Ruth.
2. Describe Anna Paine's reaction and actions.
3. Why does the Reverend order Ruth to be stripped?
4. Who is ordered to examine Ruth?

Chapter 27 The Lesson

1. What method does the Governor order for Goody Bassett's death?
2. What does Goody Blakeman discover about Ruth?
3. What is the last request made by Ruth?

Chapter 28 The Granite Ledge

1. Where is Ruth Paine executed?
2. How does she face her death?
3. What is the result of her very last action?

Essays and Prompts

Short answer—at the end of the novel.

1. If you could meet any character in the book, who would it be and why?
2. If you could be any character in the book, who would you be and why?
3. If you could rewrite any part of the book, what section would it be and what changes would you make?
4. Compare the characters of the following pairs:
 - a. Goody Blakeman and Goody Thomson
 - b. Nimrod and Reverend Blakeman
 - c. Moses Wheeler and Nimrod
 - d. Pervis and Charles Bassett
5. Explain the progression of John Blakeman's feelings for Ruth.
6. According to the novel, what human characteristics seemed to be highly valued by the settlers? (Use information from the text to support your answers, and cite the pages on which it is found.)
7. Predict what probably would have happened if Pervis returned.

8. After reading this novel, explain why you would or would not like to be part of this Stratford settlement.
9. If you believed that Ruth was innocent of all charges against her, would you have been willing to stand up against her? Why or why not? Explain with details.

Project Ideas

1. Diorama of a scene in the story
2. A 3-D model of the Stratford settlement
3. Design a new cover for the book—both the front with a picture and the back with a description.
4. Write a journal for Ruth—at least eight entries of one page each.
5. Write a journal for Reverend Blakeman— at least eight entries of one page each.
6. Create a correspondence between Ruth and Pervis of at least two letters from each (total of four).
7. Create and illustrate a time line of 12 events from the story.
8. Create a newspaper for the period: include 8 articles with headlines, 2 pictures, and a name for your paper.
9. Personality portrait: choose a character from the novel. Put his/her name on the top of the page. Add a picture from a magazine that matches the character or draw one yourself. Then add a statement from the novel that best describes this character. End with a statement of your opinion of this character.
10. Biography: Choose a character from the novel and write a paragraph that includes his/her age, physical description, personality, likes/dislikes, hopes/dreams. Conclude with your opinion of this character.
11. Combine #10 and #11, putting the biography on the back of the page.
12. Obituary: Write an obituary for Goody Bassett. Include such information as place of birth, daughter of, wife of, essential facts of her life, cause of death, etc.
13. News release! Write a newspaper article about the circumstances surrounding the death of Goody Bassett. Be sure to include details specifying who? what? when? where? why? Give your article an appropriate headline.

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SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL FOR THE STRATFORD DEVIL

NOTE: the following social studies materials, prepared by Jackie Partridge and Angela Capozzi, are available in hard copy by request from Claude Clayton Smith, author of The Stratford Devil (c-smith@onu.edu).

1. Map of Stratford, Connecticut, showing original town bounds and parishes.
2. Map of Stratford by W.H. Wilcoxson showing homelots, 1639-1660 (on which the map in The Stratford Devil is based).
3. Plan of Cupheag Plantation (later Stratford) 1639-1650 (on which the map in The Stratford Devil is based).
4. A tour of Old Stratford on a hand-drawn modern map.
5. A Stratford Settler's Map, also available at
http://www.rootsweb.com/~ctfairfi/pages/stratford/stratford_settlers.htm
6. A detail (closer view) of the map in #5, also available at
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ctfairfi/medi/settler.gif>
7. List of the first settlers of Stratford, also available at
http://www.rootsweb.com/~ctfairfi/pages/stratford/stratford_settlers.htm
8. A Picture Book History of Stratford by Olivia Gombar of Chapel Street School, 380 Chapel Street, Stratford, Connecticut (a hand-drawn book with text suitable for elementary and middle school students, dedicated to the children of Stratford on the occasion of the town's 350th birthday)
9. Evidence from the Past: Information on the Indians of New England during the Colonial Period