

Interview with Stacy Hoeflich
Fourth grade Teacher
John Smith Map

1. Meet the Map (1:05)

The source is John Smith's map of Virginia. John Smith was one of the seven men chosen by the Virginia Company of London to be part of the original Council for the 104 men and boys that went over to Jamestown—left in 1606, arrived in 1607. He's the only one of the seven who's not a nobleman by birth.

Well, nobody really liked John Smith, but John Smith was chosen to be part of the Council because he was the only one with any tactical experience interacting with natives and exploring and adventure. One of the things that he did is to explore and map the Chesapeake and the Chesapeake tributaries. John Smith left Jamestown in the winter of 1609 to go back to England for medical attention. This map is his work and was published in 1612.

This map is a good resource because it connects you to John Smith. It connects you to the Powhatan and how the Powhatan contributed to the survival of the settlement. They taught farming techniques and provided food and traded.

2. SOL Standards (1:51)

Out of 10, you're covering parts of four doing this lesson. Virginia Studies No. 1 covers that you're supposed to be able to look at and interpret maps.

VS.2 talks about identifying how the geography of Virginia affected the settlement patterns. Most of the settlements developed along the water.

The original settlers are using the waterways as their major form of transportation. When they reach the waterfalls that exist at the Fall Line between the Tidewater and the Piedmont, they couldn't really go any further. There were cities and trading centers that developed there between those two different elevations. Fredericksburg and Petersburg and Richmond—those cities are at the Fall Line.

Virginia Studies No. 3, which has to do with the Indians and the first settlement and where they chose their location. And then there's some interesting information and drawings on the map about the Powhatan and what those people look like.

The standard specifically mentions that the Indians saw the English as invaders who were just going to keep taking land. This is a really good map to point that out as well because you can see how many different Indian names there are on the map as opposed to the English names.

VS.3b talks about the reasons for the site choice for Jamestown . Today it's on an island, but at that time it was on a narrow peninsula. They thought they had a good supply of

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fresh water; that the water was deep enough to dock a ship. And they thought they could defend themselves easily from the Spanish.

Virginia Studies No. 4, which about the cultural landscapes. That particular standard talks about when people move somewhere, they take their culture with them and that culture is reflected in place names and churches and buildings. This is a really good map to point out the difference between those two specifically with the names, because you can see Jamestown is on this map as opposed to all of the Indian names. So it really helps them see that difference in the cultural landscapes.

3. Jamestown Background (1:18)

I spend September doing regions and geography. Once we get through all that, we start in with the charters and the exploration. And why would anybody want to get on a ship to almost sure death.

When I teach about Jamestown and 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, the conversation that I have with my students is a running commentary. They understand grades, so we grade the colony. We talk about how they got the money. They're starting out pretty strong. They're very creative in the way that they finance the settlement. They get somebody like John Smith. They get people to volunteer. So they start out at a pretty good "A."

They have the really bad luck of arriving at one of the worst droughts, heat waves, in the history of the United States. They didn't successfully plant crops when they arrived in May. They ran out of food very quickly. They have this class struggle between the noble, but not rich, gentlemen and the more "working class."

You can get the passenger list from the original 104. After their names, there'll be a comma and it'll say "comma gentleman," or "comma carpenter," "comma doctor," "comma mason." It will give their different occupations.

I've done activities where I've separated them into groups and had them debate with each other which is a good way to talk about John Smith's really strong leadership. He was pretty famous for saying if you don't work, you don't eat.

4. Virginia's Indians, Background (1:32)

We talk about the three different language groups of Virginia—from east to west—Algonquin, Siouxan, Iroquoian. And we talk about the different tribes. VS.2 specifically mentions the Indians and how they get what they need from the materials around them. Their shelters are made from what they find around them. Corn, beans, and squash. That what they eat and how they provide for themselves follows the seasons. Virginia has a mild climate that allows for a variety of vegetation, and so what you're eating and how you're living is dependent on your climate changes.

We teach that Powhatan is the chief of the 30 or so Algonquin-speaking tribes in this area, the chief of the Powhatan Confederacy.

Now we're going to introduce this new group that's coming over from England. I have collected some artifacts. A rabbit skin, a little piece of clay pottery, a bone needle. I have an iron S-hook that settlers would've used to hang a pot over the fire. I give them a musket ball. It always kind of changes depending on how many I need.

I give each pair one of these artifacts and the artifacts are distinctly either Indian or European. I say: "What do you think it is?" "Who do you think made it?" "What do you think that they used it for?" "What material is it made of?" "Can you draw a picture of it?" Have them investigate the artifact and then we all come together on the red carpet and share. And they're able to pretty quickly pick out—this is something that was manufactured, in a European style. And these things are much more nature oriented.

5. Lesson Expectations (2:05)

The things I want them to see are really basic. I want them to notice all the Indian names and the detail in the waterways. How does that apply to what John Smith is thinking and feeling? How does that apply to what the Virginia Company is thinking and feeling? How does that apply to what the Indians might be thinking and feeling? It's really simple that I want them to notice those two things.

We have done research already on the different Indian language groups and tribes. Monacan is a Siouxan-speaking tribe that they've already heard about. They know Powhatan. So finding names that you recognize. Finding names that you don't recognize.

Looking at the different water, looking at the different names. "What is that P right there?" If you take a really close look at it, there's different sizes of the letters. Some of the names are written in itty bitty print and some of the names are written in much bigger block print.

And then, Powhatan. There's a "P" that's a centimeter tall. And then down over here p-o-w-h-a. It's not a word altogether. So I might point out, "what's that 'W' and have them try and figure out why is there a gigantic "W" in the middle of nowhere.

I want them to see how important the Chesapeake Bay is and to talk about why the Chesapeake Bay is the center of that whole piece. They are required to know Atlantic Ocean, Chesapeake Bay, Potomac, Rappahannock, York and James. I want them to see how they all connect to each other, how they were used, follow it up through to the Fall Line. I want them definitely to get the idea that settlement is stopping at the Fall Line.

Settlement is developing along the rivers. I want them to notice the importance of the waterways to the people who were there at the time.

I might get them to connect to general map studies. Is there is a key? Is there a compass rose? Is there any information about who published the map? Get them to notice those things. I should note that when I actually used this map as an artifact, I cut off the top and the bottom so that it didn't say in gigantic letters "John Smith's map of Virginia 1612." It says it down here in funny script, but this little explanation at the bottom and this at the top weren't there, so the first time they looked at it, they really had to think and notice.

6. Lesson: Set-up (1:37)

In my classroom I have a lot of differences in reading levels. I have a really high ESL population, 20% of my students are special education students.

The great thing about maps is that you don't really have to read. You don't have to be able to read to know that these words look totally unlike anything that you see when you drive down the road with your mom and dad. You don't have to read to notice that there is a huge Indian over here in the right-hand corner and there's a picture of a clearly important Indian over here. So there's a lot that you can see and contribute.

You can recognize the shape of the Chesapeake Bay. They can recognize those things without needing English and being able to read, so this is something that they can feel really successful doing.

Because they're not worried about the reading, because they're stepping back and looking at the picture, they might notice something that somebody who's looking at the words might not notice.

In my class on a regular basis we have something called social studies buddies which is a high/low pairing. My highest readers with my lowest readers, second highest/second lowest, and then down in the middle I'll have two middle readers paired together. So instead of 18 students, I have nine different pairings. Also really helpful when you have just a few resources, so you don't have to try and have 18 of everything.

The other nice thing about buddies is they'll talk to each other a lot more directly when they think that I'm not listening. So I do a lot of teaching in my room in buddies and sometimes I even pretend to sit at my desk because they think I'm not paying attention. And so the students that would ordinarily not speak up will start to argue with the other person and they'll have these really intellectual arguments.

7. Lesson: Introduction (1:09)

We had already done a previous lesson using artifacts, so they had already all seen this map and touched it. But not all of them had a chance to really look at it as an artifact or a primary resource. I started the lesson by reminding them what a primary resource is—something that was created by somebody who was alive at that time, somebody who had seen and had participated in what was going on.

I wrote on the board one question that said: “What is important to John Smith?” And then underneath the word “important,” in parentheses, I wrote “valuable.” And in parentheses below that, I wrote “necessary.” And we talked to make sure they understood the nuances of those different words.

And underneath John Smith, I put “The Virginia Company.” So they could talk about the difference between John Smith and the colonists. What would be important to them as people who are in Virginia, versus what would be important to the Virginia Company of London who are interested in what’s going on in Virginia, but who are not there and who are not threatened or worried about their health and well being.

So we talked about the question and I said, “I want you to look at this map and I want you to try and answer this question, all the different parts of this question.” And I just gave them the map.

8. Lesson: Activity (1:07)

They had time to look at it, crinkle it. It’s old. It’s “fake old.” It smells like vinegar. It looks like old parchment. So they smelled it and played with it and enjoyed that.

When I hand them the maps, they’re not having a conversation about John Smith. They’re saying, “Look at this, check this out.” I’m really happy if they’re saying, “What is that thing up there? Well, why is that there?” If they’re just looking at it and talking about it.

I walked around while they were talking to each other. Listening and trying not be too invasive, but every once in a while saying, “Do you know what it is?” Or, “Have you seen that?” Or, “Take a look up here on the right hand corner. What is that?”

Most of the time I don’t ask any specific questions. I might’ve said, “Can you find Jamestown?” because I definitely want them to notice that. Because they’re used to seeing Virginia turned this way, it’s a little bit hard for them to find Jamestown.

There’s a little key for the different symbols that are on the map: “king’s houses” and “ordinary houses.” Which some of my students interpret to mean the difference between a village with a chief or a higher ranking person versus a regular village.

9. Lesson: Map Today (1:37)

This map comes with our Virginia textbook series. I asked them to look at both. .

They’ve noticed the Chesapeake Bay on the John Smith map. The Chesapeake Bay is very clear here on this map although they can easily notice that there’s a difference in orientation. The desk map orients more traditionally. North is up. And on this one, up would be west and north would be to the right.

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They notice the Chesapeake so they talk about the water. And they're able to notice all the tributaries that go off of the Chesapeake.

Very confusing to try and follow the tributaries on the desk map, partially because they have all the counties delineated. Partially because there's lots of highways—95, 60, 66. So there's all these red squiggly lines. And 95 follows down the Fall Line exactly so it's really hard to follow the water past the Fall Line.

And that goes back to the Standard talking about how they settled and why would that be important to them. And we talk about transportation—that there weren't any railroads, there weren't any airplanes, there weren't any cars. That their primary source of transportation was water.

So you can talk about water being the center of all of the development and all of the settlements. The John Smith map makes that really clear because there's such exquisite detail about the waterways. There isn't here at all. And they're quick to notice that there are these highways here which are not on this map and cities.

Going back to the cultural landscape—you have Manassas, Roanoke, but for the most part, Richmond, Newport News, these are not Indian.

10. Lesson: Sharing (1:24)

I have a rug in my room. I have them all come back to the rug together and we answered the questions. I said, "okay, tell me what you discovered." And we went around and everybody got a chance to present what they noticed.

They notice that there are interesting pictures of Indians. They notice that there are a whole lot of different Indian names.

Powhatan seems to hold a place of honor. The letters are bigger and there's some pictures of Powhatan. They notice all of the other names and that they are not names that they can easily pronounce which we then figure out are not European names.

They are able to, with a little bit of help, find Jamestown on the map. It's interesting to note that this map is oriented differently. North on this map is to the right, so it's turned sideways. And you can see the Chesapeake Bay is front and center in this map and we talk about why that happens.

They're quick to understand Indians are clearly very important on this map. Indians are important to John Smith. Why would Indians be important on this map to John Smith? And this goes back to VS.3. The Indians had food. What else might be important about Indians?

And they were able to tease out that they were afraid of the Indians because we had talked about some of the different conflicts that had happened. So it's important to know

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where the people who can help you are. It's also important to know where the people who can hurt you are. Even if the people who can help you and the people who can hurt are the same people. You need to know exactly where they are and there's a lot of really good detail about it.

11. Important to John Smith (0:52)

When I bring them back together and say, "tell me what you saw," I'm not asking them to tell me what's important to John Smith. I ask them to tell me what they see. And if you write it all on the board, "What do you see?" Indians and water. What's important to John Smith? Indians and water.

And if they don't see it, then you say, "Look at what's written on the board. Does anybody see a pattern? How do we put these things into groups?" Most of what they're going to write down are things that you can connect to either Indians or water. The map does it for you.

I say, "What is this sentence? What do these words mean? Okay. I want you to think about that. Now, here's the map. Look at it. Talk about what you see and then we're going to talk about what this means." And they're very excited to tell you; it's like a game. Call on me so I can tell you something that nobody else saw.

Your job is to put it up so that they can look at it and reflect on it and say, "What did we just discover about this map?"

12. Important to VA Company (1:01)

I would get them to think about perspective. Why are the Indians there? Why are the Indians so prevalent? They can kill us and they can give us food. They know those two things.

Why does the Virginia Company care about those things? They're really clear—Virginia Company's all about money. We're all about stockholders, selling shares of stock and trying to get rich. Trying to return the investment to the stockholders. They would talk about resources. Look at the trees. Maybe we can chop down the trees and send them over. What are the Indians hiding from us that we could use? That would just be part of my wrap-up. I wouldn't belabor that when I'm just handing it out at the very beginning.

I had them do a simple t-chart: what's important to John Smith and what's important to the Virginia Company.

What's important to John Smith? The Indians. Where the Indians are. He wants to trade goods with the Indians. He wants to use the waters to transport four ships. What's important for Virginia Company? They want money, gold, and power. They're really clear on that. They want to use the water for transportation.

13. Homework (1:37)

I'm a big fan of writing things from a different perspective. Pretend that you were John Smith and you're reporting back to the Virginia Company of your explorations. Write a letter. Pretend that you are a settler and you're trying to pick a place to stay. Pretend that you're a settler during the starving time and you want to go out to one of these villages and ask for food. Describe the route that you would take to get there and what happened. Create a diary entry. Imagine the conversation that you had with the Algonquins.

Graphic organizers are really good because they're less language intensive. T-charts are really good comparing what the Virginia Company is interested in versus what John Smith is interested in.

You can have them pretend to be a colonist who's writing a letter back home to his wife, who's describing the new house or home that he's going to set up. Oh I'm going to set up some place along the river because that way it'll be easier to get back and easier to send things.

You can talk about the cities that develop along the Fall Line. They specifically have to know Fredericksburg on the Rappahannock, Richmond on the James, and Petersburg, which is on a tributary of the York.

Make a clay map. Make the Chesapeake, make the Atlantic. Have them roll the four main rivers and try and get some of the tributaries out there so they can see all the different waterways.

Connect it to workers, to indentured servants and slaves. Africans are coming in 1619. You can connect the water to the development and go up through into the plateau and all the tobacco plantations. You need a large labor force.

Draw a map of your school. Draw a map of your own neighborhood. I actually have a satellite photo of the neighborhood around my school, so it's really fun to look at it and try and find where we are and what the main roads are.

14. Historical Fiction (1:01)

There are some really good books that you can use that will flesh this out from a human perspective.

The Colonial Leaders Series. There are usually five to six chapters. These are for stronger 4th grade readers. You could do a John Smith biography.

My America is the lower reading level compared to *Dear America*. These I could do with lower 4th grade/higher 3rd grade readers. And there are two books about the same girl, *Elizabeth's Diary* and *Elizabeth's Diary Book Two* and she's making it through the starving time.

A Lion to Guard Us. These children are on the ship trying to meet their father who's in Jamestown and they get shipwrecked in the Bahamas in 1609.

I've read hundreds of biographies of Pocahontas. This is by far the best one. It's really tough for 4th graders, but it's worth it to read aloud. It really does a good job of showing how Pocahontas was stuck straddling these two cultures.

15. Teaching Suggestions (1:18)

My advice for any teacher doing any lesson for the first time that is anywhere out of your comfort zone is think of the absolute smallest bite. Here's the whole plate of everything that they need to know. Imagine yourself with a fork stabbing one pea. What's the one piece of this that you could do to be sure that you felt absolutely successful so that you can build on that?

This sounds really big and involved. It doesn't have to be. It can be, "Here's this map. What do you see?" Notice the water. Just because this map covers all these SOLs, doesn't mean you have to try and teach all these SOLs with this one map. If you're just trying to teach about the Indians seeing the English as invaders, take one little piece. If it feels good and they like it and you feel like you accomplished your goal, you can take it out again the next day or the next week. Or you can think: next year I'm ready to expand that.

This really big, elaborate lesson plan and it fails or is hard, then you're not going to try it again the next year. You're going to put the maps in the closet or give them to somebody else. So try and do the littlest grain that you can do. And you can feel good about it. They're going to get that one nugget that you're trying to get them to get.