Student Handout 1: Women in Colonial America

Directions: With your partner, you will visit several stations where you will investigate information about women in Colonial America. You will be using images, diaries, letters, websites, and text to find information. As you and your partner examine the resources, answer the questions below. After you complete each section, bring this sheet to your teacher to be checked.

Station 1: Martha Ballard Diary
Go to the bookmark: “Martha Ballard Diary”. (http://dohistory.org/diary/themes/money/index.html)
Read through the excerpts from the diary and answer the following questions:
1. Sometimes Martha Ballard traded with currency, such as shillings, pence, and pounds. Other times she and her neighbors traded for other items. List at least 10 other items that were traded:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
2. Martha’s main job was being a midwife. In the first 15 entries, how many times does Martha mention helping delivery a baby? ________________
   How much detail does she use in describing the births? Why do you think this is the case?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
3. In addition to being a midwife, Martha also does lots of other work. As you read the journal entries, list at least 5 other types of work or chores that she does: __________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
4. What do you think was the purpose of this diary? Why do you think so? Use evidence from the diary to support your answer. __________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
5. What did you learn about women in colonial America from reading this diary? ______________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Station 2: Images of Slavery
First, read “Introduction to African-American Life in Colonial America”. Next, look carefully at the images, discuss them with your partner, and answer the questions.
6. Image 1: What details do you notice in the picture? What do they tell us about this woman’s life?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
7. Image 2: What is taking place in this picture? How do you think the woman feels about what is happening? Why?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
8. Image 3: How does the ad describe the “Negroes for Sale”? _____________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
What does the ad tell us about how slave traders viewed slaves? __________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

9. Image 4: What seems to be different about this woman from the other images of slaves you have
looked at? ____________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

10. Using the images and the reading, how would you compare the lives of enslaved African-
Americans with the lives of free African-Americans? _________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Station 3: Letter from Elizabeth Sprig, an indentured servant
11. What is the date of the letter? ___________________________ Where does Elizabeth live?
_____________________ Where does Elizabeth work? ____________________________
12. Elizabeth says that she is “suffering” and “unhappy”. Why? Give specific examples.
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

13. How does Elizabeth compare her life to the life of a slave?
______________________________________________________________________________

14. What does Elizabeth want her father to send her? _________________________________

15. What questions do you still have about the letter or Elizabeth’s situation? ______________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Station 4: Diary of Elizabeth Fuller
16. As you read through the diary, write down all the jobs or chores that Elizabeth writes about:
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

17. Other than chores, what other activities does Elizabeth mention?
______________________________________________________________________________

18. How would you describe Elizabeth’s life? _________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

19. What does the diary tell us about the lives of colonial women?
______________________________________________________________________________

20. What questions do you still have about the diary or Elizabeth’s life?
______________________________________________________________________________
Station 5: Lady Randolph (Secondary Source)
Go back to the Colonial Williamsburg website: “Meet the People”. Click on the link to Lady Susannah Beverly Randolph and read the information about her.
21. How would you describe Lady Randolph’s social status? ____________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

22. What were some of Lady Randolph’s duties on the plantation? _______________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

23. What were some of the things Lady Randolph did for fun or enjoyment? ______________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

24. How do you think Lady Randolph’s life was different from the lives of the other women you have learned about? ________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
Student Handout 2: Colonial Woman’s Pocket

In colonial times, pockets were not built into women’s clothing as they are today. So women had pockets that could be tied on and removed, much like an apron. In their pockets they kept important tools and supplies that they used regularly.

You are going to make a colonial woman’s pocket that will help show what you have learned about the lives of women in Colonial America.

Directions:
1. Use the pocket pattern to cut out a pocket, using a large sheet of construction paper.
2. Look back at handout 1 and your answers to the questions about the jobs women performed. Brainstorm a list of tools or supplies that women would have needed to use while doing these jobs and chores. Think about any items that were mentioned in the diaries or images.
3. After you have completed your list, start making the items. Use construction paper to draw and cut out the items. Make sure the items will fit in the pocket!
4. Glue the items to the pocket.
5. Punch holes in the top of the pocket and string yarn through the holes. These will be the strings to tie on the pocket.
Colonial Pocket
**Student Handout 3: Writing for Understanding**

**Directions:** You will be writing a dialogue, or conversation, that might take place between at least two of the women that you have learned about. You may choose any two of the following: Martha Ballard, Elizabeth Sprig, Elizabeth Fuller, Lady Randolph, or an enslaved or free African-American from one of the images we looked at (you may make up a name for these). Use your notes from Student Handout 1 and what you have learned in class to complete the assignment. If you wish, you may include more than two women in the conversation.

Your dialogue must:
- Include at least 5 spoken statements from each woman, for a total of at least 10 statements.
- Include descriptions of the types of work performed by each woman.
- Include where each woman lives and what kind of life she has.
- Describe challenges faced by each woman, as well as things they enjoyed about their lives.
- Show how life was similar and different for different groups of women in colonial America.

An excellent written dialogue will:
- Include evidence from the primary sources
- Be interesting and creative
- Include the points-of-view of different women
- Have correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar