

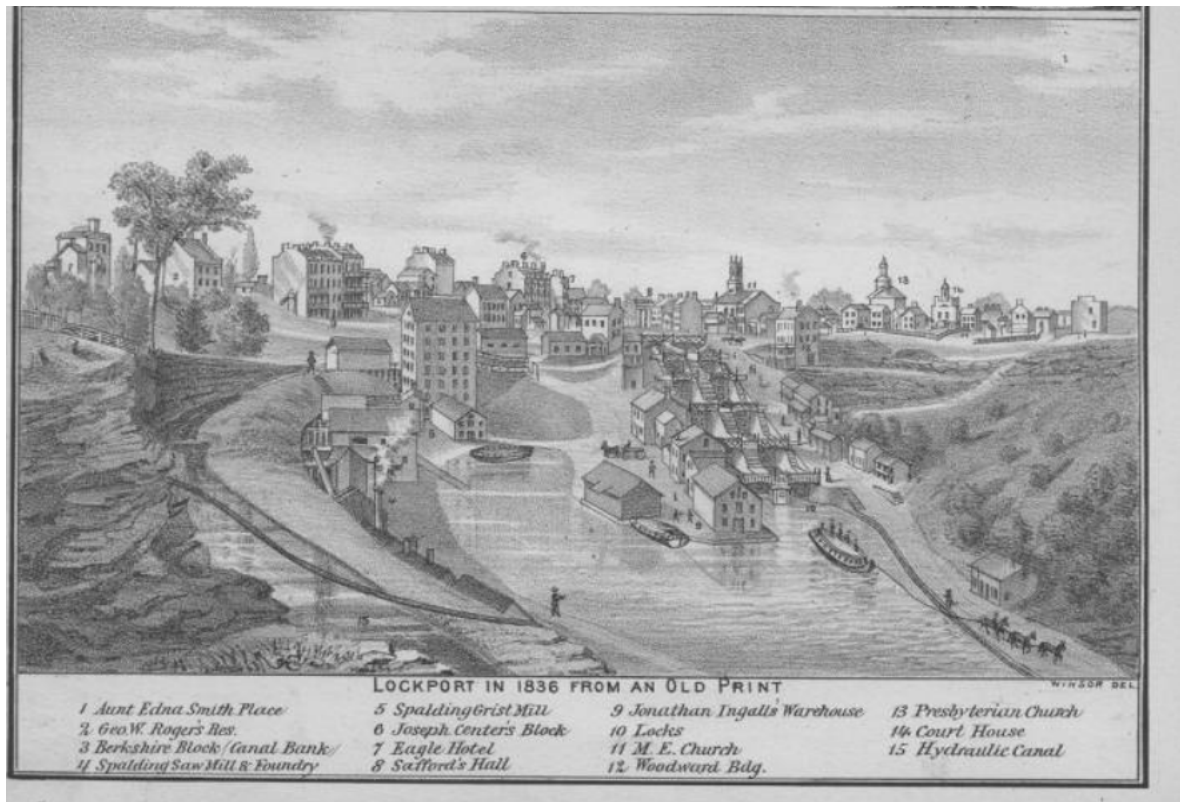


4th Grade

Why Did New York State and the American Nation Need the Erie Canal?

Supporting Questions

1. Where were people moving and settling in the aftermath of the American Revolution?
2. How were people moving and settling before the Erie Canal was built?
3. Who was moving and settling during this time?




Lockport from an old print, 1836, in History of Niagara County, N.Y., with illustrations descriptive of its scenery, private residences, public buildings, fine blocks and important manufactories and portraits of old pioneers and prominent residents, 1878 in New York Heritage: <https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/VVN001/id/840>



4th Grade Westward Movement and the Need for Improved Transportation

Why Did New York State and the Nation Need the Erie Canal?

<p>New York State Social Studies Framework Key Idea & Practices</p>	<p>4.6a Westward Movement and the need for improved transportation. Students will look at maps and census data of the United States and Lockport, NY ca. 1790-1850. Students will also look at primary sources from the NCHC to gain an understanding of how the changing landscape of American foreign and domestic policy, infrastructure, industry, and agriculture following the American Revolution impacted communities like Lockport, NY.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Chronological Reasoning and Causation ✔ Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence ✔ Comparison and Contextualization
<p>Staging the Question</p>	<p>Brainstorm: Why would people want to move westward at that time? Participate in a discussion about the movement of goods and people across distances, past and present. Option to use a QFT exercise with an item from the Primary Source Set.</p>

Supporting Question 1
<p>Where were people moving and settling in the aftermath of the American Revolution?</p>
Formative Performance Task
<p>Identify and compare changes in land boundaries of the United States from 1783-1815, as well as changes in New York State land boundaries.</p>
Featured Sources
<p>Source A: US Census data in 1790-1850</p>  <p>https://www.census.gov/history/www/through_the_decades/fast_facts/1790_fast_facts.html</p>

Supporting Question 2
<p>How were people moving and settling before the Erie Canal was built?</p>
Formative Performance Task
<p>Identify modes of transportation and communication before and after the construction of the Erie Canal</p>
Featured Sources
<p>Source A: Images of overland travel by horse and oxcart: "Emigration to the Western Country" from Lossing, Benson John.</p>

Supporting Question 3
<p>Who was moving and settling during this time?</p>
Formative Performance Task
<p>Describe the kinds of people moving into places like Lockport, NY before and during the construction of the Erie Canal. What did they need to survive?</p>
Featured Sources
<p>Source A: Broadside advertising Sale of NY Canal Lands:</p>

Source B:

Data compiled from U.S. Census reports 1810 to 1850 in the collection of the Niagara County Genealogical Society, Lockport NY

Town/County Established	1810	1820	1830	1840	1850
Canada (CATTARAUGUS)	24,000	33,500	47,700	60,000	70,000
Allegany (CATTARAUGUS)	14,000	19,000	27,000	35,000	40,000
Putnam (CATTARAUGUS)	8,000	10,000	13,500	17,000	20,000
Niagara (CATTARAUGUS)	6,000	8,000	10,500	13,500	16,000
Washington (CATTARAUGUS)	4,000	5,500	7,500	9,500	11,000
Letchworth (CATTARAUGUS)	3,000	4,000	5,500	7,000	8,000
Saratoga (CATTARAUGUS)	2,000	2,500	3,500	4,500	5,000
Gettysburg (CATTARAUGUS)	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000	3,500
Genesee (CATTARAUGUS)	1,000	1,500	2,000	2,500	3,000
Westfield (CATTARAUGUS)	500	700	900	1,100	1,300
Total Population	64,000*	79,000*	108,000*	138,000*	160,000*

(click the image to enlarge)

Source C:

Maps showing changes in American land boundaries after the 1783 Treaty of Paris, 1787 Northwest Ordinance, and 1803 Louisiana Purchase.



<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3701sm.gct00483/?st=gallery> (1783 Treaty of Paris map)

1787 Northwest Ordinance map



<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3701sm.gct00482/?sp=20>

1803 Louisiana Purchase map



EMIGRATION TO THE WESTERN COUNTRY.

http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/mssc/eriecanal/lossingimages/lossing_our-country-v2-opp%20p1180_emigration-western-country_oxen-pulling-wagons.pdf

Oxcart used by early settlers of Minnesota



<https://www.loc.gov/resource/fsa.8b28218/> and,

Source B:

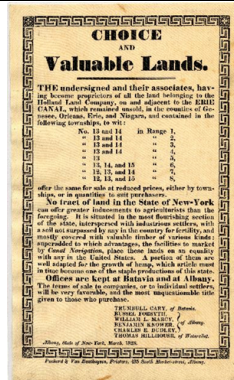
Letter from 11 year old Jane Taft to her sister Frances Taft Root in 1838 Niagara County Historical Society



(click the image to enlarge)

Source C:

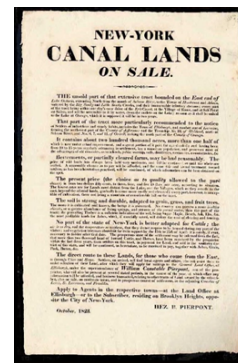
Excerpts of recollections from printed sources:
from the "Autobiography of Delilah Wisner Merritt (1813-1899), A Town of Newfane Pioneer," Newfane Historical



<https://nysl.ptfs.com/data/Library5/111091.PDF>

Also,

broadside from NYS Archives:



<http://www.archives.nysed.gov/education/broadside-advertising-new-york-canal-lands-sale-1823>

Source B:

"A Pioneer's Clearing" oil painting by E.A. Philleo of the Town of Somerset, Niagara County, done from memory in 1885. The scene is nine miles from Lockport but in which direction is not specified. Niagara County Historical Society, Art Collection



(click the image to enlarge)

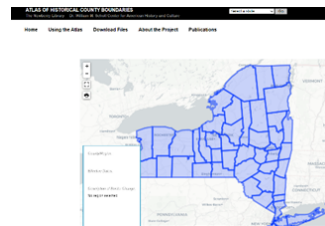
Source C:

<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3300.ct001126>

Source D:

Maps showing changes in New York State boundaries and growth of counties and municipal areas.

Newberry Atlas Map (NYS):



<https://publications.newberry.org/ahc/bp/map/map.html#NY>

Western NY land claims:



<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3802n.ct005648>

Society Publication, Star Printing Incorporated, Newfane, NY, 1975

"The Ridge road was just being cut through & often they [her parents] had to stop & wait or take hold & help before they could proceed...Thus they progressed slowly toward their destination in the wilderness where they built a shanty, moved their household goods & commenced living... At that time the Lake Road was not laid out east of Father's [cabin] in its present place but they began to alter it as people began to settle & Father began to think of building on the Road & he could get sawing done as he had previously had to hew out his flooring & make his own shingles...In the fall of 1823 Mother went east to visit her parents & took my youngest sister & myself with her. I thought that the first great event of my life. I was 10 years old then & had never been out of the county. We went with a horse & wagon. I think we were four or five days on the road as Mother made visits on the road among relatives & acquaintances..."

(click the image to enlarge)

Descriptions of early overland and water travel through New York State from History of Niagara County monograph (page 92):

<https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/VVN001/id/768>

And, [Recollections of Lockport resident Laura Colton.pdf](#) Niagara County Historical Society, Lockport NY

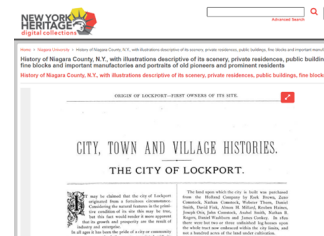
1845 Map of the Village of Lockport:



<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3804l.wd000572/>

Source D:

Description of occupations of first settlers in Lockport, NY: (begins p. 165)



<https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/VVN001/id/841>

Source E:

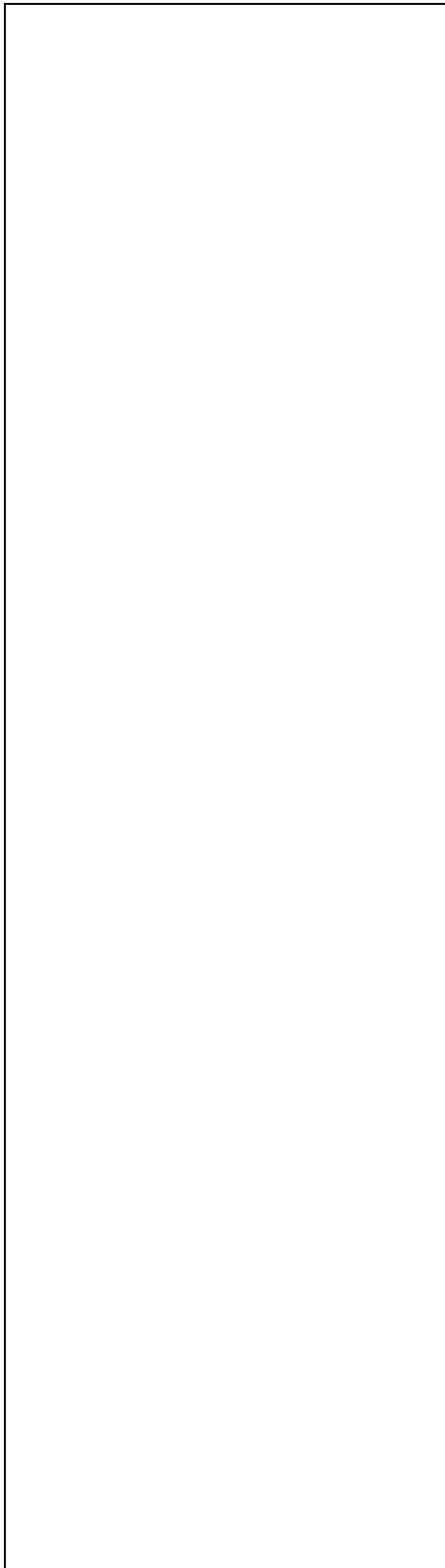
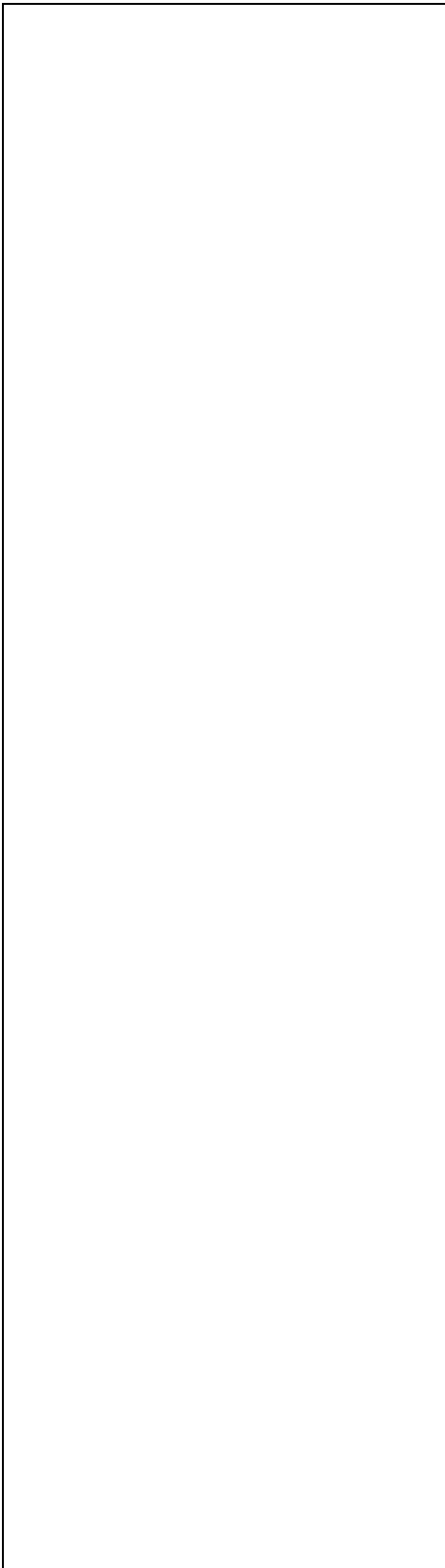
Stone boat on skids for removing rocks and stones from land to facilitate plowing and planting; example of early plow inside boat

Yates Barn, Niagara County Historical Society, Lockport NY



(click the image to enlarge)

c. 1810 Grain bin made from c. 200 year old Buttonwood (Sycamore) tree
Yates Barn, Niagara County Historical Society, Lockport NY



(click the image to enlarge)

Recreation of the interior of a c. 1830 cabin in Niagara County
Niagara County Historical Society



(click the image to enlarge)

Recreated Blacksmith Shop
Yates Barn, Niagara County Historical Society



(click the image to enlarge)



Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT Make a claim about the importance of a reliable overland route to the west in America around 1810. What factors led to the decision to build the Erie Canal in New York State? Construct an argument that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and evidence.
	EXTENSION Write an advertisement, enticing people to move west.
Taking Informed Action	<p>UNDERSTAND Collect data about how greater access to markets enhances economic growth</p> <p>ASSESS Brainstorm ideas about how to “market” the Erie Canal today in New York and the nation</p> <p>ACT Create a public service announcement to promote the importance of the Erie Canal to people in New York</p>



Overview

Inquiry Description

This inquiry leads students through an investigation of why the Erie Canal was critical to the growth of both the State of New York and to the United States in the time following the American Revolution. Through examining the events following the American Revolution, when the new nation of states was struggling to survive and build its national economy, students will be prepared to develop arguments supported by evidence that answer the compelling question “Why did New York and the Nation Need the Erie Canal?” Subsequent inquiries could be developed around other “internal improvements” across the country over time (the National Road, Transcontinental Railroad, Interstate Highway System, even the Internet) and their impact on New York and the nation. In addition to the Key Idea expressed earlier, this inquiry covers the following Conceptual Understandings:

- (4.6b) How physical geography determined where to build the canal; impact on Native Americans and; how the canal created communities and how it was used to transport local products across the state and country.
- (4.6c) How improvements in the technology of transportation, manufacturing, and communication affected communities in New York and the nation, including
- (4.6f) How the Erie Canal led to increased industrialization in New York and the Nation

NOTE: This inquiry is expected to take five to six 30-minute class periods. The inquiry time frame could expand if teachers think their students need additional instructional experiences (i.e., supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and sources). Teachers are encouraged to adapt the inquiries to meet the needs and interests of their particular students. Resources can also be modified as necessary to meet individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 Plans for students with disabilities.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question “Why Did New York and the Nation Need the Erie Canal?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and sources in order to construct an argument supported by evidence while acknowledging competing views.

Staging the Compelling Question

To begin the inquiry, teachers might introduce the core concept of movement of goods and people across distances in the past and today (Amazon, FedEx, USPS, UPS), including asking: Who decides what gets moved where? And, “what factors improve movement of goods and services? What would hinder such movement? Students begin to understand there are people making decisions about what gets moved where and how. Stakeholders compete in this process from the standpoint of being producers and consumers, not just of goods and services, but also of the infrastructure needed to make movement possible. This was also true when the new American nation was establishing its economic and political foothold in the nation and abroad. The reason for building the Erie Canal across New York State at that time was not just a matter of geographic feasibility, but of other considerations as



well. This activity takes students into a deeper dive of the events surrounding the building of the Erie Canal and its impact on American westward expansion, as well as the expansion of federal authority in political and economic events.