The Great Lakes Fur Trade
Dear Educator,

Thank you for scheduling this History Live video conferencing lesson. This Teacher Guide will walk you through optional activities that you may use to enrich and extend your video conferencing experience.

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Vocabulary

Vocabulary Activity Suggestions
The following activities will get students thinking creatively, working together, and making personal connections to these new vocabulary words.

**Worksheet: What’s the Word?**
Match it, write it, use it!

The fur trade vocabulary words have been chopped in half!
Students put the words back together and use them in a sentence.

**Lights, Camera, Vocab!**
Get on your feet and collaborate creatively!

1. Write the vocabulary words on the board for the students to copy, or print and distribute the *Fur Trade Vocabulary* worksheet.
2. Divide students into groups and secretly assign each group one of the vocabulary words to look up and define.
3. Instruct groups to plan a short skit for the class that represents their word *without speaking the word*. Give the students time to prepare.
4. The class must try to guess the vocabulary word being performed. When they guess correctly, the group shares the definition for the class to record.

**Know & Tell**
Help them make a personal connection!

1. Assign each student a vocabulary word or let them pick.
2. Instruct each student to look up their word at home, and take/draw a picture or write a short story that represents the word.
3. Students can either hand in their projects or present them to the class.
## Fur Trade Vocabulary Words

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<td><strong>TRADING POST</strong></td>
<td>a store where local products can be traded for goods brought from distant places</td>
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<td><strong>TRADER</strong></td>
<td>a wealthy man in charge of a trading post</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL STATUS</strong></td>
<td>the position or rank of a person in society</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GLOBAL TRADE</strong></td>
<td>a system of buying and selling things around the world</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>VOYAGEUR</strong></td>
<td>a workman who performed the physical labor of the fur trade</td>
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<td><strong>CLERK</strong></td>
<td>a man who usually managed the day-to-day business at a trading post</td>
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# Fur Trade Vocabulary

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What’s The Word?  Name:

The chart below contains fur trade vocabulary words that have been cut in half! Find the matching pieces and write the complete words in the answer spaces.

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**Answers**

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<th>TRADER</th>
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**Use It:** How many of these words can you use in *one* sentence? Write down your sentence below.
Historical Context

Historical Context Activity Suggestions
The following activities will encourage students to think chronologically, work together, and analyze important events in their own lives.

15-30 MIN.

Worksheet: *Time Travel*
Think critically about your own experiences!

Students identify important events from their own lives, and construct their own timeline.

45-60 MIN.

Our Top Five
Cooperate, analyze, organize, and present!

1. Divide students into groups, and give each group one copy of the *Time Travel* worksheet.
2. Instruct each group to work together to identify five important events they have experienced together at school, and write them into the timeline.
3. Each group then presents their timeline to the class, explaining which events they chose and why.

TAKE HOME

What’s Your Story?
An Introduction to Oral Histories

1. Instruct students to ask at home about important events from a family member's life.
2. Students then use the *Time Travel* worksheet to make a timeline of the family member's experiences.
1670 - Ojibwe become the main suppliers of fur to Europeans.

1776 - The United States issues the Declaration of Independence from Great Britain.

1803 - The United States purchases the Louisiana Territory from France.

1808 - The United States signs treaties with the Ojibwe and Dakota American Indians to gain land in Minnesota.

1804 - John Sayer travels to what is now Minnesota to build a North West Company trading post.

1784 - The North West Fur Company is formed in Montreal.

1776 - The United States becomes the 32nd state.

1837 - Minnesota becomes the 32nd state in the United States.

1804 - John Jacob Astor forms the American Fur Company.

1660 - French spend the winter with the Dakota American Indians in what is now Minnesota.

1803 - John Sayer travels to what is now Minnesota to build a North West Fur Company trading post.

1808 - The United States signs treaties with the Ojibwe and Dakota American Indians to gain land in Minnesota.

Timeline of Fur Trade
Important things that have happened:

Name: ___

Pick 5 events on your list and write them into the timeline below in the order that they happened.

Make a list of important things from your life.

Time Travel
Historical Analysis

Historical Analysis Activity Suggestions
The following activities will help students think critically and creatively, and give them tools to analyze historical primary sources.

Worksheet: What Do You See?
John Sayer's Journal, 1804-1805

Students examine real entries from fur trader John Sayer's 1804 journal. Teacher's answer key provided.

Worksheet: Map and Tell
Tracing Global Trade

1. Instruct students to complete the Map and Tell worksheet at home. NOTE: Students will need a world atlas or online map tool to complete the worksheet.

2. Students will bring an object and the completed worksheet back to school. When they do, you may complete the following:
   • One at a time, have students show and describe their object.
   • Instruct each student to mark where it came from on a large or projected world map (with a post-it or masking tape).
   • Ask the students to keep a list of the distances. This list can be used to determine greatest, smallest, average, median, and total distances the objects traveled.
John Sayer's Journal, 1804-1805

Thursday 11th April 1805
A sultry calm day. Heat as yesterday. No fish in the nets. Little Horn's family camped here. They report that the Beaver Hunters with their wives went off 3 days ago, from which I expect a great hunt. Sha-go-bay traded 3 gallons of rum for canoe bark.

Friday 12th April 1805
A very hot day. Thermometer peaked at 105 degrees. We took 3 fish in our nets. Mr. Bellaux shot a goose and a small duck. Indians traded more bark and a keg of Maple Sugar.

Saturday 13th April 1805
Warming weather. Wind NE. We took 2 fish in our nets. This afternoon 2 of the XY Fur Company's men appeared in a small canoe with a pack of blankets and silver in hopes of trading for some beavers with my hunters. It is my job to prevent their success.
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NOTE: John Sayer's Snake River Journal, 1804-1805 is available at the MN Historical Society's Online Store: http://shop.mnhs.org
Map and Tell

Find an object in your home that was made in another country. Use a world atlas or an online map to answer the questions below. Bring your object and completed worksheet to school to share!

1. On the map above, write the letter “B” on your home, and the letter ”A” on the country your object came from. What is the distance between these two places?

2. How many different modes of transportation would be needed to transport your object from where it was made to your home? What are they?

3. What are three reasons that your object may have been brought here from another country and not made here?
Reflection Time

Reflection Time Activity Suggestion
The following questions will help students empathize, draw connections, and relate to people of the past.

45-60 MIN.

My Time, Your Time
Reflection Time Q & A

1. Assign each student a Reflection Time Question from the following pages.
2. Instruct each student to read and answer their question for the class.
Reflection Time Questions

1. Fur traders often traveled long distances to trade with American Indians.
   What is the longest distance you have ever traveled?
   List 3 reasons that you might travel far away.

2. Fur traders would often ask the American Indians what they thought the best location was, before building a new trade post.
   If someone new came to your town and asked you where the best place to build a house was, where would you tell them to live?
   If you moved to a new town and wanted to live in the best location, who would you ask for help?

3. Some fur traders wore a wool hat called a “toque.” Wool is very warm and dries quickly, but it can be very itchy and uncomfortable.
   Have you ever had to wear an uncomfortable piece of clothing?
   Describe the clothing and why you wore it.
   If you had to choose one piece of clothing to wear for an entire winter of working in the snow, explain the clothing you would wear and why.

4. Some of the customs of the American Indians and the fur traders were very different from one another.
   Have you ever been in a situation where the people around you were behaving differently from you?
   What did you do?
   Why do you think your behavior was so different from theirs?

5. A fur trade clerk had to trade for enough food to feed his voyageurs, or workers, all winter long. If he did not, they could starve.
   Describe a time when you felt like everyone was counting on you.
   Describe a time when you were counting on someone else.
   Which situation would you rather be in and why?

6. Fur traders built their trade posts out of logs and mud, because these resources were free and available to them.
   What resources come from your town?
   What is your home made out of?
   Why do you think these materials were chosen for your home?
7. Sometimes, fur traders would burry food and supplies underground to keep them hidden and safe until they were needed. Describe something you needed to hide or keep secret. How did you hide it? What was the hardest part of keeping your secret hidden?

8. Voyageurs all shared one small bedroom in the trade post. It was very crowded, but helped keep them warm on cold winter nights. Have you ever had to share a bedroom? If so: What were two good parts and two bad parts of sharing a bedroom? If not: What are two reasons you would like to share your room and two reasons you would not like to share your room?

9. John Sayer built his North West Company fur post in a long line with the shop at one end, the his room in the middle, and the voyageurs’ room at the other end. If you were in charge of designing a building to be your home and your store, how would it look? How would people know which part was your home and which part was your store?

10. For 250 years, Europeans thought animal furs were one of the most important resources in North America. What do you think the most important resources in North America are today? What resources are most important where you live?

11. From the 1600’s to the 1800’s, animal furs were the most popular material to make hats out of. What are the most popular clothes made out of today? What other materials have replaced animal furs today?

12. The Ojibwe American Indians would follow the resources that were available each season. What is your favorite season? Why? What are some things that you can only buy at a certain time of year? What are some activities that you can only do at a certain time of year?

13. Fur traders often hunted or gathered food and cooked over fires. Have you ever cooked food outside over a fire? Where were you, and why were you cooking outside?
14. Fur traders were only able to get new trade goods for their shops once a year.
How often can you go shopping?
How would your life change if you could only get new things once a year?
What are 3 things you would not want to run out of before your next trip to the store?

15. Fur traders had very little room to bring their belongings in the canoes.
If you were going away from home for the whole winter, and you could only bring one thing with you, what would you bring and why?
What would you add if you could bring 3 things?

16. Fur traders often spoke French or English, and the American Indians spoke the Dakota and Ojibwe languages. This made translators very important.
Can you speak a different language?
What languages do you hear spoken in your town?
If you could wake up tomorrow and know how to speak 3 more languages, which 3 would you pick and why?

17. One of the reasons people became fur traders was to seek challenge and adventure.
Where would you like to go to seek adventure?
What is the biggest challenge you have ever faced?
What do you think is the most challenging and adventurous job that people work today?

18. When trade was slow, a trade clerk’s job could get very boring. Sometimes they would write in a journal to help pass the time.
Do you write in a diary or journal?
Describe the most boring time you remember.
What are 3 things you do to keep from getting bored?

19. Fur traders had to spend the winter at their trade posts because the lakes and rivers that they traveled on would freeze during the winter.
Have you ever been in one place for a long time?
Why were you there?
Was it good or bad to be there, and why?
20. Although American Indians had everything they needed, some of the tools the fur traders brought to trade made life easier. Can you think of two different tools that do the same job today? If you had to pick just one of these tools to do the job, which would you choose, and why?

21. Because trader John Sayer wrote in his journal every day, we can use his writing to learn what life was like for him over 200 years ago. How will people be able to learn about your life 200 years from now? What are the three most important things you would want someone in the future to discover about you?

22. Fur trader John Sayer stopped writing in his journal for a while because something was wrong with his eye, probably an eye infection. Have you ever had to miss something because you were sick? Describe your illness and what you had to miss. What did you do to get better?

23. Different fur trade companies were in fierce competition. If a trader got too close to another company’s post, he could be in danger. Have you ever had to go to a place where you felt unsafe? Have you ever had to go to a place where you felt welcome? Why did you go to this place?

24. It took fur traders more than a month to paddle their canoes from the big city of Montreal to Fort William in what is now Minnesota. Describe the longest trip you have ever been on. How many modes of transportation did you take? How long was the trip? If you could travel to any place in the world, where would you go and why?

25. Sometimes, a fur trader’s canoe would tip over. When this happened, all of the supplies in the canoe were lost. What is the most important thing you have ever lost? Why was it so important? Did you ever find it? If so, where?

26. Fur traders often had to leave their homes and their families, and live in a distant place for most of the year. Have you ever lived in a different country, state, town or home? If you could immigrate to any other country where would you move and why?
27. Workers in the fur trade used canoes to get to their post. If the water was too rough or too shallow, they would have to carry the canoe and walk. How many different modes of transportation can people use to get to your town? Which way is your favorite? Which do you think is used the most and why?

28. When fur trader John Sayer came to what is now Minnesota in 1804, the fur trade was the biggest business in North America. What are the biggest businesses in the United States today? Why do you think it is such a big business? What are the most important businesses in your town? Why do you think these are such important businesses?

29. Each fur trade company wanted to collect the most furs and the best furs. They would do anything they could to out-trade the competition. Describe the toughest competition you have been a part of. What was the hardest part? If you wanted to organize a giant competition, what prize would you offer to get people involved?

30. By the mid 1800’s, settlers began to buy the land for farms and the fur trade came to an end. How do you think the United States will be different in 200 years? Name 2 things might be gone in 200 years? What new things might be around in 200 years?