

Lesson Design: Life on the Tennessee Frontier

1. Select the state standard that you wish to teach with this lesson.

4.53 Write a narrative piece summarizing life on the frontier of Tennessee and reasons why pioneers moved west, including: Cumberland Gap, Natchez Trace, Jackson Purchase, transportation, housing, food, clothing, gender roles, education, and entertainment.

I selected standard 4.53 because it is one of the standards that may be used as the basis for an extended response question on the state assessment. The standard also requires students to know about several aspects of frontier life. Therefore, it is perfect for creating a lesson using a variety of primary and secondary sources. Additionally, standard 4.53 asks students to write a narrative so it is perfect for creating a writing prompt.

2. Determine the outcome or goal of the lesson based on the standard.

I decided that the outcome of the lesson will be to have students analyze primary and secondary sources related to life on the Tennessee frontier. They will demonstrate mastery of the concepts by writing two to three paragraphs that cite evidence from at least three different sources including one text source.

3. Write prompt and guiding questions for the topic.

I reviewed the sample extended response item available from the state assessment website to make sure that the structure and format of my prompt and guiding questions aligned with the state's expectations. I also made sure to include the focus areas listed in the standard in the prompt to ensure that students mention those concepts in their papers.

Standard 4.53

4.53 Write a narrative piece summarizing life on the frontier of Tennessee and reasons why pioneers moved west, including: Cumberland Gap, Natchez Trace, Jackson Purchase, transportation, housing, food, clothing, gender roles, education, and entertainment.

Prompt and Guiding Questions for 4.53

Write a story of two to three paragraphs that uses examples from the sources to describe life on the Tennessee frontier and why pioneers moved west including: Cumberland Gap, Natchez Trace, Jackson Purchase, transportation, housing, food, clothing, gender roles, education, and entertainment.

4. Select primary and secondary sources for student analysis

The standard did not mention any specific people or dates, but the inclusion of the Natchez Trace and Jackson Purchase led me to believe that the focus should be on the early 1800s. I knew that the Jackson Purchase is named for Andrew Jackson so I wanted to select sources that mention him. I reviewed the TCAP Grade 4 ACH Blueprint to determine which types of sources should be included in the lesson. I chose to include one of each type of source to give the students more practice in analyzing sources.

Photograph- Artifact Activity Card : Virginia Road Wagon

I began by selecting a photograph to use in the lesson. I chose to begin with the photograph because I knew the source would have to be a photograph of an artifact as there are no photographs from that era. I selected the Artifact Activity card: Virginia Road Wagon available on the teachTNhistory.org website from the [East Tennessee Historical Society](http://EastTennesseeHistoricalSociety.org). The wagon image addressed the transportation aspect of the prompt.

Illustration- Artifact Activity Card: Betsy" David Crockett's First Rifle.

I selected the Artifact Activity card: “Betsy” David Crockett’s First Rifle available on the teachTNhistory.org website from the [East Tennessee Historical Society](http://EastTennesseeHistoricalSociety.org) as the illustration for the lesson. The image of David Crockett illustrated the type of clothing that was common on the frontier. The rifle and hunting dogs also illustrated the importance of hunting on the frontier.

Illustration/Primary Source- Artifact Activity Card: Little Greenbriar School.

As the second illustration, I selected the Artifact Activity card: Little Greenbriar School available on the teachTNhistory.org website from the [East Tennessee Historical Society](http://EastTennesseeHistoricalSociety.org). The card illustrated what early schools looked like and gave background information on frontier education. The card also contained a primary source quote.

Map/Primary Source –“ [Tennessee.](http://Tennessee.org)” from Tennessee State Library and Archives

Since the standard mentions Cumberland Gap, Natchez Trace and the Jackson Purchase, I wanted to find a map that identified all three. I could not find a map with all three geographic features, but I did locate a map titled “Tennessee.” in the [Historical Maps Collection](http://HistoricalMapsCollection.org) of the [Tennessee State Library and Archives](http://TennesseeStateLibraryandArchives.org) that showed the Natchez Trace and Cumberland Gap. The Jackson Purchase was essentially all the land between the western portion of the Tennessee and Mississippi rivers and can easily be pointed out by the teacher. Since the map was created in 1818, it is also a primary source.

Informational Text - [Natchez Trace and the Jackson Purchase](http://NatchezTraceandtheJacksonPurchase.org)

I selected a short content essay titled [Natchez Trace and the Jackson Purchase](http://NatchezTraceandtheJacksonPurchase.org) http://www.teachtnhistory.org/index.cfm/m/107/ETHS_Teaching_Materials as the informational text for this prompt. However, the *History Happens!* cards also have valuable informational text.

Informational Chart- Gender Roles on the Tennessee Frontier

I did not find an informational chart that addressed any of the subtopics identified in the standard. Therefore, I decided to create a chart that compared gender roles on the frontier. Since the sources I had already selected were weak



on the topics of work, food and entertainment, I decided to include information on those topics. The chart can be found at the end of this document.

Timeline- Early Tennessee Timeline

I did not find a timeline that addressed any of the subtopics identified in the standard. Therefore, I decided to create a timeline that listed six key events in Tennessee history. The timeline can be found at the end of this document.

5. Determine the order and structure of lesson activities.

Since standard 4.53 falls later in the curriculum, I built this lesson with the assumption that students have experience analyzing both primary and secondary sources. Therefore, they will not feel overwhelmed by the number of sources presented in this lesson. Similarly, I assumed that students have practiced writing shorter passages based on sources so that the lesson requirement of two to three paragraphs will not be overwhelming.

Activity 1 Review and discuss prompt and prior knowledge

Whole Class Activity

I decided to begin the lesson by showing the students the prompt and discussing the elements that should be included in the narrative. The term “gender roles” will likely need to be explained in detail if students have not encountered it before. Also, clarify with students that they will be writing a narrative or descriptive passage about life on the frontier.

Activity 2 Photograph- Artifact Activity Card: Virginia Road Wagon

Whole Class Activity

I decided to begin the lesson with examining the photograph of the road wagon to encourage discussion of the difficulty that early settlers had in reaching Tennessee and the challenges of moving further west. The topic of Cumberland Gap can also be introduced while viewing and discussing the wagon.

Activity 3 Informational Text - Natchez Trace and the Jackson Purchase

Map- – “Tennessee.” from Tennessee State Library and Archives



Partner Activity

I decided to have students read the informational text with a partner. As they read, students highlight locations with one color and people with another color. After students have read and highlighted the passage, pass out the 1818 Maps of Tennessee and have students find the Natchez Trace, Cumberland Gap and Jackson Purchase. Remind them that the Jackson Purchase is not identified on the map so they will need to locate it using the informational text. Discuss the connections between the wagon, Natchez Trace, Cumberland Gap and Jackson Purchase. Ask students to think about why Tennessee needed more land and why people continually wanted to move west.

Activity 4 Illustration- Artifact Activity Card: Betsy” David Crockett’s First Rifle. Illustration/Primary Source- Artifact Activity Card :Little Greenbriar School.

Small Group or Partner Activity

I decided to follow the map activity with the images since image analysis utilizes some of the same skills as map analysis. The students should describe Crockett’s clothing. Discuss the importance of hunting both as a source of food and for skins for trade and clothing. Ask students to read the informational text and the primary source quote on the back of the Little Greenbriar School card. Discuss the differences between frontier schools and modern schools.

Activity 5 Informational Chart - Gender Roles on the Tennessee Frontier

Small Group or Partner Activity

I created the chart to meet the requirement for an informational chart and to provide the students with information on gender roles, education and entertainment on the frontier. Ask the students to read the chart and compare it to the sources they have already analyzed. Have them highlight any facts on the chart that are supported by other sources. Remind them that while not every fact on the chart will be supported by a source in this lesson, it does not mean the chart is false.

Activity 6 Timeline- Early Tennessee Timeline

Small Group or Partner Activity

I created the timeline to meet the requirement for a timeline. In this lesson, the timeline serves as a reference that allows students to organize the other sources



they have analyzed for the lesson chronologically. Discuss their results with the class.

Activity 8 Prompt Review

Whole Class

Before students write, be sure to review the prompt and remind them to include information about each of the subtopics into their narrative. Students may need to complete a pre-writing activity to help them organize their thoughts.

6. Assessment

The writing prompt that will be used to assess mastery of the objective was created in step 3. Students will be instructed to write two to three paragraphs in response to the prompt. Because of the extensive preparation provided in the analysis activities, students should be able to complete the writing quickly. Using either the rubric created by the state or a modified version of it will streamline the grading process.



Gender Roles on the Tennessee Frontier

	Men	Women
Work	Men on the frontier cleared fields, cut trees, built cabins, hunted and planted and harvested crops, especially corn.	Women milked cows, gathered eggs, cooked meals, made cloth, cared for children and preserved food for winter.
Education	Boys were more likely than girls to attend school. Some boys were taught at home by their mothers. Many had no education at all.	Girls were less likely than boys to attend school. While some girls were taught to read by their mothers, many had no formal education at all. They learned the skills they needed at home.
Entertainment	Men attended horse races and dances. Many sang or played instruments like the fiddle. Some told tall tales.	Women attended dances, sang and played instruments. Women also told stories especially to their children.



Tennessee History

