

1. Have the students analyze the images one at a time without the support of the text. Use questions to get at the meaning of the image. Who or what is featured in the image? What action is taking place? What is the mood represented in the image and what specifically is creating that mood? After students have made their initial observations provide them with information that will allow them to modify their answers, such as, “In the first panel the men with hats are Quaker colonists and the ones the on the right are American Indians.” Unfamiliar vocabulary, such as wampum, can also be addressed.

2. Have the students create word or thought bubbles for the characters illustrated in the images based on what the students can infer from the image and the text.

3. As students move through the story, have them predict what will be illustrated on the following page based on the evidence from the preceding pages. Have them justify their reasoning based on evidence.

These are just a few ideas for the many ways to use *Ghost River* to teach students about this specific period in American history as well as create a better overall understanding of the changing world that American Indians faced in colonial Pennsylvania.

References

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Gorlewski, Julie, and Joanna Schmidt. 2011. “Research for the Classroom: Graphic Novels in the Classroom: Curriculum Design, Implementation, and Reflection.” *The English Journal* 100, no. 5 (2011): 104–107.

Paivio, Allan. 1986. *Mental Representations: A Dual-Coding Approach*. New York: Oxford University Press.

LESSON 1 OVERVIEW

Students will read a secondary source that provides historical context for a selection of six images from the eighteenth century. They will then carefully examine each image, using the questions on an activity sheet to interpret the images. Their knowledge will be demonstrated through the completed activity sheets, class discussion, and a written response.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of written text and image-based evidence
- Summarize the essential message of a visual primary source
- Draw conclusions based on direct evidence found in a visual primary source

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- To what extent did fear of Native Americans develop into racial hatred on the Pennsylvania frontier?
- To what extent can the rhetoric of fear entice a population to violence?
- To what extent did fear shape colonial perceptions of Native Americans?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Paxton murderers struck Conestoga Indiantown at dawn on December 14, 1763. “Fifty-seven Men, from some of our Frontier Townships, who had projected the Destruction of this little Commonwealth,” Benjamin Franklin wrote in his *Narrative of the Late Massacres*, “came, all well-mounted, and armed with Firelocks, Hangers [a kind of short sword] and Hatchets, having travelled through the Country in the Night, to Conestogoe Manor.” Only six people were in the town at the time, “the rest being out among the neighboring White People, some to sell the Baskets, Brooms and Bowls they manufactured.” The Paxton murderers killed these six and burned their settlement to the ground.