

# The Peppermint King and the Erie Canal

Grades 4-8

## OBJECTIVES

- Students will explore the history of trade and commerce along the Erie Canal in 19<sup>th</sup> century New York.
- Students will engage in math, science and arts related activities during the videoconference that will enhance their understanding of the impact of the canal on businesses.

## PROCEDURE

1. Students will be introduced to Cooperstown and the Fenimore Art Museum through images of the town and museum placed on the document camera. They will then be introduced to Hiram Hotchkiss, played in authentic clothing by a museum educator. Hotchkiss will discuss his peppermint oil factory in Lyons, NY, during the second half of the 19th century.
2. After Hotchkiss has talked about his factory, he will discuss the Erie Canal and its importance to his business. He will ask students questions regarding the canal to see what information they already know about the canal.
3. Hotchkiss will begin the mathematics portion of the program. Using primary source documents (bills of lading, newspaper clippings, employee pay stubs), students will work out a series of math problems, presented to them on the document camera. These math problems will reinforce the historical, scientific, and artistic elements integral to the overall program.
4. Once the math problems have been solved, the discussion will turn to the art used in Hotchkiss's advertising. The symbols in the labels will be compared to symbols found in American money and other places in America's democratic system of government. We will discuss the impetus for these symbols (the Roman government system) and how they have become important to our culture.

## LEARNING STANDARDS (Elementary/Intermediate)

### *The Arts*

- Be knowledgeable about and make use of the materials and resources available for participation in the arts in various roles.
- Respond critically to a variety of works in the arts, connecting the individual work to other works and to other aspects of human endeavor and thought.
- Develop an understanding of the personal and cultural forces that shape artistic communication and how the arts in turn shape the diverse cultures of past and present society.

### *Social Studies*

- Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the US and New York.
- Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live - local, national, and global - including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surface.

### *Mathematics, Science, & Technology* (Elementary/Intermediate/Commencement)

- Use mathematical analysis, scientific inquiry, and engineering design, as appropriate, to pose questions, seek answers, and develop solutions.
- Understand and apply scientific concepts, principles, and theories pertaining to the physical setting and living environment and recognize the historical development of ideas in science.
- Apply technological knowledge and skills to design, construct, use, and evaluate products and systems to satisfy human and environmental needs.
- Understand the relationships and common themes that connect mathematics, science, and technology and apply the themes to these and other areas of learning.

# THE ERIE CANAL

Population of Cities by Year  
Taken from Census and Local History Sources

	1820	1830	1840
Albany	12,630	24,209	33,721
Utica	2,972	8,323	12,782
Rochester	1,502	9,201	20,191
New York City	123,706	202,589	312,710

## VOCABULARY

Durham boats  
Hoggee  
Bill of Lading  
Packet boat  
Lock  
Canal  
Bullhead  
Peppermint

### On a Separate sheet of paper answer the following

From these figures you can see that the population of these cities are increasing. The Erie Canal played a large role in the growth of these communities. In what way do you think the Canal helped these city to grow?

What new occupations or jobs could the Canal provide?

What would be the easier way to move goods and people; by boat or by road, why?

Some people did not want the Erie Canal to come through their communities. They did not feel that the benefits would out weigh the negatives. What might be some of the negatives of living near the canal? Make a chart and compare all the positives and negatives you feel the canal would have brought to a community.

### Vocabulary Unscramble the Words

<b>admaah utbro</b>	one of the earliest canal boats
<b>leadh bul</b>	a type of canal boat with a cabin-like cover over the full length of the deck
<b>naalc</b>	man-made waterway
<b>geehgo</b>	a young boy who drove the mules that towed the canal boats.
<b>kolc</b>	a way to raise or lower a boat on a canal. A lock holds or releases water so that the water will flow to the desired level
<b>kac abtptoe</b>	passenger boats that traveled the Erie Canal. They were the fastest on the canal.
<b>rppnptmeei</b>	Native to Europe an aromatic herbaceous plant of the mint family, source of peppermint oil.
<b>lgloi alb dnfl</b>	document giving proof that particular goods have been loaded on a ship. The person to whom the goods are being sent normally needs to show the bill of lading in order to obtain the release of the goods.

## The Peppermint King and the Erie Canal Post-Program Activities

1. Now that you have done the “The Peppermint King” have your students review their answers to the following questions. Ask them if they would change any of their answers. Ask them to explain their reasons for the changes if any.

From these figures you can see that the populations of these cities are increasing. The Erie Canal played a large role in the growth of these communities. In what way do you think the Canal helped these cities to grow?

What new occupations or jobs could the Canal provide?

What would be the easier way to move goods and people; by boat or by road, why?

Some people did not want the Erie Canal to come through their communities. They did not feel that the benefits would outweigh the negatives. What might be some of the negatives of living near the canal? Make a chart and compare all the positives and negatives you feel the canal would have brought to a community.

2. Have them find some other uses for peppermint oil not mentioned during the program. They can also find some of the uses for some of the other oils mentioned during the program. (Oil of Spearmint, Oil of Pennyroyal, Oil of wintergreen and Oil of Cloves) Have them compare and see if many of these oils are used for the same types of things.