

Ohio Historical Center, School Days! Workshop

Required Pre-visit Activities

BERRY INK (IT IS REQUIRED TO BRING BERRY INK TO THE WORKSHOP!)*:

Introduction: Most students in the 19th century would bring their own bottles of ink from home for their writing lessons. Inks were made from a variety of materials: berries, roots, nutshells and even chimney soot.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup berries (blackberries, raspberries or elderberries give the best color, in winter frozen berries can be used)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon vinegar

Utensils:

- Measuring cup and spoon
- Strainer (a metal strainer is good but it must be fine mesh)
- Bowl
- Wooden spoon
- Small jar with a tight fitting lid

Directions:

1. Fill the strainer with the berries and hold it over the bowl. Using the wooden spoon, crush the berries against the strainer so that the juice drips into the bowl. Continue to add berries until all the juice is out of all the berries. Throw away the pulp (that is what is left in the strainer).
2. Add the salt and vinegar and stir well. The vinegar will keep the ink from fermenting or molding. If the ink is too thick add a tablespoon of water. Don't add too much water, as the ink will get pale.
3. Store the ink in small jar with a tight fitting lid. Keep the lid closed when it is not being used.

* Adapted from *Kids' America* by Steven Carrey.

COPY BOOK (IT IS REQUIRED TO BRING COPYBOOKS TO THE WORKSHOP!):

Introduction: In the 1800's, when students practiced their writing and penmanship they would often write their letters in a "copy book". Occasionally the teacher would provide one for each student. Most often, the students would make his or her own.

Materials:

- Construction paper (8 ½ x 11) for the cover (one sheet for each book)
- Unlined paper (8 ½ x 11) for the center (two sheets for each book)
- Heavy thread or thin string
- Needle with large eye (tapestry needles work well)
- Pencil

A piece of Styrofoam or several layers of cardboard (this is to lay underneath the book while sewing)

Directions:

1. Lay two sheets of center paper on the construction paper
2. Fold evenly in half so that book measures 8 ½ x 5 ½
3. Open the book and place three dots on the inside centerfold, one exactly in the middle and the other two 2 inches on either side of the center. All dots should be on the fold.
4. Repeat this on the outside fold.
5. Thread the needle with a single thread, pulling the tails of the thread till they are even. Do not knot the threads.
6. Place the book open on the Styrofoam or cardboard layers with the inside fold facing up.
7. Begin on the inside center dot and push the needle through to the outside, leaving three inches of tail on the inside.
8. Turn book over and push needle through the one of the other dots.
9. Turn book over and go back through the center dot.
10. Turn book over and go through the last dot.
11. Turn book over and tie the ends together.

19th CENTURY LUNCH IS PART OF THE WORKSHOP LUNCH:

Introduction: In the mid-nineteenth century, students brought their lunch to school. The meal might have included cheese, bread, apples, cold sliced porridge, hardboiled eggs, cold baked potatoes, and a cookie. The drink would be water. Drinks will not be available at the schoolhouse so please have students remember to bring their own. We suggest juice, water, or root beer. **Note:** Children would have carried their lunches to school in a basket, cloth bundle, or tin pail; foods were wrapped in brown paper and tied with a string.

Lunch Ideas:

Meat sandwiches, Jelly sandwiches (peanut butter had not been invented yet!),
Homemade bread with butter, Johnny Cakes (recipe below)
Fruit (fresh or dried), Raw vegetables, Cheese
Beef jerky, Pickles, Doughnuts, Hardboiled eggs
Cookies/cupcakes (brownies were not invented yet)

JOHNNY CAKES:

Introduction: Johnny Cakes were originally an Indian food known as Shawnee Cakes. Sometimes they were known as “Journey cakes” because travelers often took packages of them on long trips.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup white corn meal
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 ¼ cups boiling water

Directions:

Combine corn meal, salt, and sugar. Stir in water until mixture is smooth but very thick. Drop by tablespoons onto a well-greased griddle and fry over moderate heat for six minutes. Turn and cook the second side for five minutes. Makes 8-10 cakes. You can bring these in lunches to eat cold, use them like bread with butter or jelly or eat them just as they are.

COSTUME GUIDELINES:

Introduction: Students can create their own Nineteenth Century-style clothes to wear to the schoolhouse program:

Girls: Plain leather shoes (no sandals please)

White, knee-high stockings or tights

Mid-calf length or longer skirts (no neon colors, please)

Long sleeve blouse or shirt (no neon colors & no midriffs, please)

Broad-brimmed straw hat or cloth bonnets

Shawl or cape for cold days

Aprons or pinafores are also appropriate

Boys: Plain leather shoes (no sandals please)

Socks (knee high if wearing knickers)

Pants or knickers (knee length pants)(no jeans please)

Braces (Suspenders)

Plain long sleeved shirt with a bow tie (a piece of plain 1-2 inch wide ribbon works well)

Vest (optional)

Cloth coat for cold days