

## Listening for Voices: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga

Donna Sharer

This unit introduces students to the massacre of the Conestoga people in Pennsylvania (1763) through the examination of related primary sources and a close reading of *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*. This graphic novel blends history based on primary documents with indigenous history. Rather than a linear retelling of the past, the graphic novel's time is cyclical, moving between the past, present, and future. The unit follows the Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL) framework. Because students may have limited background knowledge of the Conestoga massacres and eighteenth-century Pennsylvania, they will connect to their prior knowledge and acquire background knowledge before reading *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*. Background knowledge is the focus of "Preparing the Learner." Students will engage with the core text—*Ghost River*—during "Interacting with Texts." The unit concludes with "Extending Understanding," which asks student to apply what they have learned and to generate new understandings.

### Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will understand and compare information from historic maps to achieve shared knowledge.
2. Students will analyze historic paintings by interpreting the point of view to build a shared knowledge.
3. Students will collaboratively interpret the graphic novel by analyzing the text and images and the cyclical presentation of time.
4. Students will collaboratively make a claim supported with evidence.

### Essential Questions:

- How might a people survive and grow in the face of evil and injustice?
- Why are multiple voices and perspectives important when learning about history?
- Should frontiers/borderlands be walls to keep people out or places for people to meet?
- Is history complicated? Is violence simple? (paraphrasing quote from *Ghost River*)

### Grade Level:

- Grade 6-11
- English Learner levels 1.5 - 2

### Standards:

- **CC.8.5.9-10.D:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.1:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.3:** Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.
- **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- **C3 D2. His.1.9-12.** Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts

### Historical Background:

In 1701, William Penn promised a diverse group of Native Americans (Susquehannock, Seneca, Delaware, and Shawnee) that they would have a home in Pennsylvania. The agreement with the people who became known as the Conestoga included 500 acres along the Susquehanna River in southwestern Lancaster County. That territory came to be known as Conestoga Manor (sometimes called "Conestoga Indiantown"). Some sixty years later, on December 14, 1763, the "Paxton Boys," a group of former militiamen, rode to the territory and murdered six Conestoga people and burned their longhouses. The local government moved the survivors to a workhouse (also called the "poor house") for protection. Instead, on December 27, the Paxton men returned and killed the remaining 14 Conestoga men, women and children. In early 1764, several hundred Paxton men marched east toward Philadelphia. They were met by Benjamin Franklin in Germantown, just north of Philadelphia, who convinced them to return home. None of the "Paxton Boys" were arrested or tried for the massacre of the Conestoga. The massacre led to an extensive debate amongst European-descended Pennsylvanians, some critical of the Paxton Boys and others quite sympathetic.

### Reference Materials:

- Andrew Newman, "Treaty of Shackamaxon," *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*.
- Daniel Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Timothy Shannon, "Native American-Pennsylvania Relations, 1754-89," *Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia*.
- Patrick Spero, *Frontier Country: The Politics of War in Early Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016.

**Student Materials (in order of application):**

- Penn's Treaty with the Indians (1771-72)
- Penn Wampum Belt (1682 Shackamaxon treaty)
- Conestoga Manor (1717)
- A Map of Philadelphia and Parts Adjacent (1753)
- A Map of the Province of Pennsylvania (1756)
- To the Honorable Thomas Penn and Richard Penn (1770)
- A Plan of the City and Environs of Philadelphia (1777)
- Conestoga Indian Town Historical Marker (1924)

## Lesson 1: Preparing the Learner

Introduce five key terms / concepts for the lesson. State the term and ask students to repeat the term (2 - 3 times). Have students complete the Knowledge Rating to assess if they understand the terms. Students understanding and use of the terms will increase as they use them throughout the unit. A Vocabulary Jigsaw is included to review the terms at the end of the unit.

NOTE: The Knowledge Rating includes cognates. For students whose first language (L1) is not Latin-based, the teacher may choose to provide a translation of the term.) In the eighteenth-century, "frontier" was defined as a vulnerable, militarized boundary, not an area for expansion (Spero). In Spanish, "frontera" is a term for a national border.

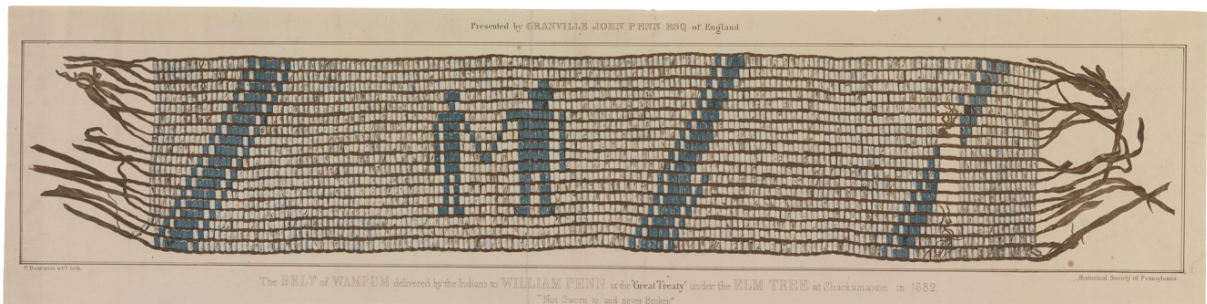
### Materials

- Knowledge Rating
- Primary Source Analysis Tool
- Reproductions of Materials
- Vocabulary Jigsaw

### Analyze Benjamin West Painting



1. Use the Primary Source Analysis Tool to model analysis of the Benjamin West's *Penn's Treaty with the Indians* (1771-72).
2. Distribute reproductions of the painting and the Primary Source Analysis Tool.
3. Have students complete the tool in pairs or triads.
4. As a class, share summaries about what they learned from the painting. What is the message? What may be misleading about the paintings? (buildings, clothing, position of people, etc.) Is the painting a primary source document? (No – it's an artist's rendition of an event created nearly 100 years after it occurred and it was commissioned by Penn's son, Thomas Penn.)
5. Ask students what the painting tells people about the relationship between European settlers and indigenous peoples?



The belt of wampum delivered by the Indians to William Penn at the "Great Treaty" under the Elm Tree at Shackamoxon in 1682. "Not Sworn to and never Broken."

*Optional:* Project Penn Wampum Belt (1682 Shackamaxon treaty). The belt was given to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania by William Penn's great grandson in 1857. Ask students to consider whether or not it is a primary source and what it might tell us about contact between European settlers and indigenous peoples.

### **Analyze historical maps of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Conestoga Manor**

1. Students will analyze 5 historical maps of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Conestoga to locate the Conestoga Indiantown in relation to Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and the colony of Pennsylvania.
2. Model using the Primary Source Analysis Tool to analyze A Map of the Province of Pennsylvania(1756)
3. Divide the class into groups of 4 students. This is the "home group."
4. Give each member of the "home group" a different map. Tell students they will be responsible for teaching one map to other members of their home group.
5. Break into "expert groups." Each member of the "expert group" has the same map. Students should complete the Primary Source Analysis Tool for their map.
6. Return to the "Home Group." Each student will report their findings of the map.
7. As a class, discuss the summary of their findings about the maps.



### Summary Quick Write

Project the Conestoga Indian Town Historical Marker and read the marker text:

"About one mile eastwards stood the Conestoga Indian Town. Its peaceful Iroquoian inhabitants were visited by William Penn in 1701 who made treaties with them. In 1763 they were ruthlessly massacred by a frontier mob called the Paxtang Boys."

Students will summarize the historical maker: who, what, where, when.

1. Model who (Iroquoian inhabitants, "Paxtang Boys").
2. Ask students to find what, where, and when with a partner. (Students may benefit reading the text with the bold, italicized and underlined information.)
3. Review the summary.
4. Quick Write: What will be read in *Ghost River*? (In *Ghost River*, we will read about...)

### Think/Write/Pair/Share

1. What did you learn about Pennsylvania, Philadelphia and Conestoga Indiantown based on the information on the maps? (I learned...)
2. What is the connection between the paintings, historical marker, and the maps? (The connection is...)
3. What did you learn from the historical marker? (We learned...)

## Lesson 2: Interacting with Texts / Concepts

Students will read *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga* multiple times. Before reading, project Penn Wampum Belt (1682 Shackamaxon treaty). How might the image in the wampum belt relate to the paintings? Is it a primary source? Tell students the belt was given by William Penn's great grandson to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1857 and that historians do not know if the belt and date are accurate. Legend has it that the Lenapes and William Penn signed the "Great Treaty" in what became Philadelphia. The site is now called Penn Treaty Park and includes a statue of William Penn.

Wampum was used for peace treaties, political agreements, historical events and ceremonial gifts. "[W]ampum beads, strings, and belts [were] integral to much of (the Iroquoian) religious and political life" (Richter 45).

### Materials

- *Ghost River: The Fall and Rise of the Conestoga*
- Knowledge Rating
- Guiding Questions

### Multiple Readings of *Ghost River*

1. Initial read: Teacher Think Aloud focused on the images.
2. Review the Knowledge Rating vocabulary terms / concepts. Students will encounter additional terms / concepts in the text.
3. Echo read: Teacher reads text and students echo the reading. (Teacher may opt to have groups rotate the echo read. For example, group 1 echoes chapter 1, group 2 echoes chapter 2, etc.)
4. Read with Guiding Questions.
5. Divide the class into groups of 3 - 4. While reading, students will answer the guiding question in a double entry journal. Teacher may select to jigsaw the text. Each group will read and answer the guiding questions for one chapter.
6. Have students share responses on chart paper or smart board. Re-read the chapter, students share responses, and the class agrees/disagrees with the responses.

### Lesson 3: Extending Understanding

#### Option 1: Collaborative Poster (Groups)

Materials include chart paper and 4 color markers. Students work in teams of 4. Each team will create a poster to address ONE essential question and support their argument:

- How might a people survive and grow from evil and injustice?
- Why are multiple voices and perspectives important when learning about history?
- Should frontiers/borderlands be walls to keep people out or place for people to meet?
- Is history complicated? Is violence simple? (to paraphrase *Ghost River*)

Each team member will use one color as evidence of their contribution to the poster.

1. Write the essential question in the center of the poster.
2. Make a claim that answers the question. Put the claim under the question
3. Include evidence to support the claim. Include: 1 quote; 2 original sentences; and 1 symbol to answer the question.
4. Each team member will share why they selected the question (e.g. why the question is important to them) when they present their poster to the class. Each student will present what they contributed to the poster.

#### Option 2: Gallery Walk / Exit Ticket (Individuals)

Students will display their posters. Ask students to look for common claims and unique evidence as they walk around and read the posters. (Provide students with paper to record their findings.)

Individually, students will complete an exit ticket:

- Common claims include...
- Unique evidence is...
- After looking at the other posters, I will keep / change my claim / evidence because...

#### Option 3: Historical Marker (Groups)

In 2013, an event and conference commemorated the 250th anniversary of the Paxton massacres. In Lancaster, PA, an additional historical marker was created, reading: "The Lancaster jail was located a half block to the north from 1753 to 1851. The last remaining Conestoga Indians were held here in protective custody in 1763. They were killed by a vigilante group, the Paxton Boys. No arrests were made." Ask students to review the Pennsylvania historical marker for the "Conestoga Indian Town." Students will rewrite the marker based on what they learned from *Ghost River*. In groups, students will create 3 markers:

- What happened in 1763?
- What is happening to Native Peoples after 1763?
- What are Native Peoples doing today?

Students may submit their revised historical marker and/or make suggestions for a new historical marker to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.