

## Lesson Plan for the Introduction of the History of Springfield and Its Connection to the Springfield Armory

**Grades: Elementary**      Regions, Local History, U.S. History

**Time Allotment:**              Suggested time 5 class periods

**Curriculum Areas:**              Social Studies, Reading, Art, Technology

**Rationale:** History and technology are a major factor in our lives today. We use technology more and more in our daily lives, but rarely do we stop to think that the basis for these inventions came from our own “back yard”. The Springfield Armory was an integral part of this development. Today, interchangeable parts are part of our daily lives from LEGO’s to automobiles.

**Goal:** The goal of this lesson plan is to introduce children to the history of Springfield and its connection to American technology.

**Objectives:** The students will read, have a visual tour of the Armory Museum, view the developed website, and have hands on experiments to enable them to make connections between past, present, and future technological development.

### **Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks Standards:**

**Social Studies:** Standard 3.9 Identify historic buildings, monuments, or sites in the area and explain their purpose and significance.

Standard 5.21 Describe Shay’s Rebellion of 1786-1787 and explain why it is one of the crucial events leading to the Constitutional Convention.

**Language Arts:** Reading Standard 8 Students will identify basic facts and main ideas a text and use them as a basis for interpretation.

Reading Standard 9 Students will deepen their understanding of literary or non-literary works by relating it to its contemporary context or historical background.

### **Activity 1**

Introduce the Unit with a PowerPoint presentation slide show of the Armory Campus as it exists today. We must set the setting of our unit since our children have never visited this area of the city, nor are they familiar with the history of this area. Question – Can you identify any of these places and how can or do they affect us today?

**Concept and Skill Grades 3 and 4 Frameworks:** Observe and describe local or regional historic art facts and sites and general questions about their function, construction, and significance.

### **Activity 2**

Materials

Booklet entitled *A Little History of Springfield, Massachusetts*.

Have them read and enhance this booklet with art materials. Brainstorm predictions for some of the questions asked and stimulate interest and excitement for the coming experiments.

### **Activity 3**

The Little Dig

Prepare pans with hidden materials and have small rakes, shovels, and paintbrushes available. We have included balls from muskets, spent balls, shards of pottery with Native American designs, horseshoe nails, a horseshoe, a simulated badge from an Armory employee, etc. Have the children make a grid on the pans using masking tape. As they uncover their “finds” have them draw a picture of the object. Students will then try to identify and label each object. Keep their finds in a journal.

**Composition Standard 24:** Students will gather information from a variety of sources, analyze and evaluate the quality of the information they obtain, and use it to answer their own questions.

### **Activity 4**

Make arrangements with the Instrumental Music Teacher to display 2 identical musical instruments. Then have the teacher demonstrate the interchangeability of their parts. Have students list the things in their lives that have interchangeable parts. Perhaps a discussion of “throw away” products could be introduced at this time.

### **Culminating Activity**

Prepare puzzles for each child. We used Dr. Seuss’s “Cat in the Hat”. To demonstrate the limits of hand made products have each child cut the puzzle up into 6 pieces and then try to exchange a part with another student.

To demonstrate the interchangeability of parts give each child the identical puzzle that has been cut up using machine cut puzzles (paper cutter). Again exchange pieces.

Discuss and list conclusions.

**Options:**

This activity can be done in many different ways. If you have a die cutting machine in your school, you can use it to cut identical pieces that can be interchanged.

Use the ballpoint activity that is listed on the website.