



Women in the Trades Map

Introduction

A common misperception is that women did not hold many jobs in the 18th century, and that they only stayed home and cared for the family and the garden. However, there were no laws against women working, and although it wasn't commonplace, women held many of the same jobs men did. In this lesson, students will use a map of the Colonial Williamsburg historic area to predict where women would have been able to be employed in the eighteenth century. Then, they will use historical accounts of women in trades to challenge their initial assumptions and make new observations about work for women in colonial America.

Objectives

In this lesson, students:

- Identify trades that were not open to women
- Identify trades that women participated in during the eighteenth century
- Determine the trades that were more typical for women to participate in, and those in which women were rare
- Evaluate roles of women in the eighteenth century to dispel misconceptions

Materials

- Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area Map (printed or photocopied to 11 x 17, one for each group)
- Trade Cards (one set per group)
- Colored pencils

Strategy

1. Divide students into groups of 4. Give each group a copy of the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area Map. Give students a couple of minutes to examine the map.
2. Ask students to find the map key. If necessary, define terms from the map key.

3. Explain to students that the year is 1760. Ask students to draw a star next to each map key item if they think a woman could get a job at that location. They should draw an X next to the map key places they believe would not hire a woman.
4. Give each group a packet of Trade Cards. One person in the group should choose a card and reads it to the group. The group should then match the card to the appropriate location on the map. Groups should repeat this procedure, with a different student reading the card each time, until all the cards have been placed.
5. Ask groups to compare the stars and Xs they drew on their map key with the information they learned from the Trade Cards. Ask students to draw new stars and Xs on their map key in a different color to reflect the information on the Trade Cards.
6. Discuss the map.
 - a. Did anything surprise you about women in the workplace during this time?
 - b. Were there any jobs that women didn't have in the eighteenth century? Do women hold those jobs today?
 - c. What were some of the reasons women were working in jobs outside the home? Compare these reasons to reasons why women work today.
 - d. Clarify for students that even though women held these jobs, many were not commonplace. Women were much more likely to hold jobs like milliner, shopkeeper, mantua-maker, and tavern keeper than gunsmith, blacksmith, or printer.
7. Have students answer this question on a piece of paper and turn this in as an exit slip: What are the three most important ideas that you would want people to know about women working in trades/jobs during the 18th century?

Lesson Extensions

- Discuss how women's roles in the workplace have changed in the twenty-first century.
- Ask students what they would like to be when they grow up. Did those jobs exist in the eighteenth century? Were there restrictions on who could perform them?
- Use Colonial Williamsburg's history website, [history.org](http://www.history.org), to explore the trades and tradespeople of eighteenth-century Williamsburg.
- Watch this vodcast on women in the trades and project it for the class:
<http://www.history.org/media/videoPlayer/?cat=vodcast&file=WomeninTrades>

This lesson was written by educators Dee Besl, Cincinnati, OH, and Sharon Sobierajski, Buffalo, NY, for the March 2012 *Teacher Gazette*.

MAP CARDS

<p>Christiana Campbell learned how to be a tavernkeeper because her father was one. She opened her own tavern. George Washington stayed here many times.</p>	<p>Elizabeth Butler of Charles Town, South Carolina was a barber.</p>	<p>Clementina Rind of Williamsburg was “unhappily forced to enter business” after her husband died. She continued printing his newspaper, The Virginia Gazette, and was awarded the government contract to be the public printer.</p>	<p>Mary Wilson of Norfolk, VA was a shoemaker, probably taking over the business after her husband died. Many times women learned trades by marrying someone who taught them the necessary skills.</p>
<p>In 1738, Mistress Strapp of Williamsburg started a business where she sold foods such as calvesfoot jelly, mackaroons, biscuits, and sweetmeats.</p>	<p>Martha Logan was from South Carolina. Advertisements suggest that she sold seeds, roots, and plants for a living. She probably started this business on her own.</p>	<p>Jane Burgess of Maryland continued the blacksmith business that her husband had before he died.</p>	<p>Jane Massey inherited a gunsmith business from her husband. She put an ad in the newspaper asking customers to please continue to come.</p>
<p>Many women were brickmakers. This was a relatively unskilled job. Women often became involved in this trade when they married their husbands.</p>	<p>Jane and Margaret Hunter were milliners in Williamsburg. Both received training through formal apprenticeships in London. Jane ran the business, but when she married, the financial and legal control went to her husband.</p>	<p>Paul Revere’s mother ran the silversmith’s shop until Paul was old enough to take over. There are some questions about whether she actually did any smithing. However, Jane Inch was a skilled silversmith in the 18th century.</p>	<p>Katharine Hebden was from Maryland where she was paid for doctoring skills. Unlike today, your ability to do this job was based more on natural ability rather than specialized training and education.</p>
<p>While some women taught dance or music or taught younger children, women would not have been teaching at the College of William and Mary or other colleges.</p>	<p>Women would not have been ministers in the 18th century.</p>	<p>In order to be a member of the House of Burgesses, you had to be a free white male, age 21, who owned property and belonged to the Anglican Church.</p>	<p>Women would not have been lawyers or judges in the 18th century.</p>

- A Apothecary
- B Blacksmith
- C Brickyard
- D Bruton Parish Church
- E Capitol
- F Christiana Campbell's Tavern
- G College of William and Mary
- H Courthouse
- I Gunsmith
- J Milliner
- K Nursery (plants)
- L Wigmaker
- M Printer
- N Shoemaker
- O General Store
- P Silversmith

