COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG STORY IDEAS

Education for Citizenship

Through engaging educational and entertaining programs, plays, presentations and vignettes, Colonial Williamsburg educates young and new Americans in participatory government. By conveying a clear sense of citizenship and a close linkage between the 18th and 21st centuries, guests learn the importance of appreciating our roles as Americans and the privileges of the democratic process. Education for Citizenship answers questions such as what constitutes a good citizen, what is an engaged citizen, how do we keep our democracy healthy and what is the individual’s role?

The Revolutionary City

For two hours over two days, Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area offers guests expanded programming in support of the Foundation’s education initiative, Education for Citizenship. Each day will consist of a two-hour interactive program, focused on select events that portray Colonial Americans’ crucial transition from subjects to citizens. “Revolutionary City: The Collapse of Royal Government” features the clash of wills as King George III and Parliament attempt to rein in their unruly colonies by depicting pivotal events during 1774 to 1776, including British Royal Governor Lord Dunmore’s dismissal of the House of Burgesses and the convening of the first Virginia convention. “Revolutionary City: Citizens at War” spans July 1776 – September 1781, beginning with the Declaration of Independence and including the British occupation of the city.

Nation Builders

Colonial Williamsburg’s Nation Builders program recognizes that the Founding Fathers such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry stood on the shoulders of other 18th-century residents such as Gowan Pamphlet, an enslaved preacher, and Lydia Broadnax, the enslaved cook of George Wythe who was a College of William and Mary law professor and Thomas Jefferson’s friend and mentor. Washington, Jefferson, Henry, Pamphlet and Broadnax worked together as they built this great nation that we now call the United States of America.

The Road from Slavery to Freedom

Colonial Williamsburg’s Great Hopes Plantation invites guests to become a part of the experience of most 1770s enslaved African Virginians and middling white planters living and working in rural areas. Back in town, in the backyard of the Peyton Randolph House, urban slave life is explored
through participatory programs. Colonial Williamsburg presents events and exhibits that tell the stories of blacks, both free and enslaved, art, music, religion, hardships and heroism with rare and compelling realism.

**Peyton Randolph Urban Plantation**

Colonial Williamsburg’s Peyton Randolph Urban Plantation gives Foundation staff new venues in which to interpret the lives of 18th-century enslaved residents who lived and worked on the extensive urban plantation. Colonial Williamsburg interpreters have a rare opportunity to delve even into the daily lives and activities of these slaves—counted among the enslaved 52 percent of Williamsburg’s population—and their relationships with the law, society, other slaves and whites, as well as their master.

**The Museums of Colonial Williamsburg**

Colonial Williamsburg operates the Museums of Colonial Williamsburg: the Public Hospital, which provides exhibits that document the treatment of mental illness from the hospital’s founding in 1773 to its destruction by fire in 1885; Bassett Hall, the Williamsburg home of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Rockefeller Jr.; the DeWitt Wallace Decorative Arts Museum that displays the Foundation’s exceptional collection of British and American decorative arts; and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Museum in expanded quarters adjacent to the Wallace Museum with 11 galleries in 10,400 square feet of exhibition space.

**“Spinning Stories/Spanning Time: A Weekend of Stories Old and New”**

In September, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation hosts nationally acclaimed storytellers during its third annual Storytelling Festival. Storytellers entertain and inspire with stories and songs from a variety of American traditions. In addition, Colonial Williamsburg’s own storytellers also will be featured.

**Just for Kids**

Bring your children to the Historic Area, and they may not want to leave. In our wide-open streets, they can march with the colonial militia, attend a spirited performance by the Fifes & Drums, get locked in the stocks and pillory, or strike up a conversation with one of the People of the Past. At various sites they can play colonial games or help care for a colonial garden. And as they tour the town, they can even put on a colonial costume and pretend to be children of 18th-century Williamsburg. Special family programming is offered during the summer and the holidays.

**Rare Breeds Program**

Colonial Williamsburg began its Rare Breeds program in 1986 to preserve genetic diversity in livestock. Some of the selected breeds represent animals that could have been present in Williamsburg during the 18th century according to historical research. The program complements Colonial Williamsburg’s living history interpretation by portraying another aspect of daily life in colonial Virginia. Animals represented in the program include Leicester Longwool sheep, Hog Island sheep, American Cream Draft horses, America Milking Red Devon cattle, Ossabaw Island hogs and Randall Lineback cattle.
Historic Trades

The purpose of Colonial Williamsburg’s trades program is to present and demonstrate early technology and its relevance to 21st-century guests. The tradesmen and women of the program are professional, full-time artisans dedicated to specific trades, including brickmaking, culinary, carpentry, apothecary, gunsmith and saddlery. To ensure that skills are passed on, the trades have a formal training program. Tradesmen begin in an apprentice position to develop basic skills. Upon completion of the six- or seven-year program, the apprentice becomes a journeyman or journeywoman. The most skilled artisans are masters. Guests can witness these artisans at work in Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area.

Flowers, Ornamentals, Herbs and More

Colonial Williamsburg boasts more than 100 gardens in the Historic Area and other nearby properties. The ornamental and utilitarian gardens give guests a true sense of 18th-century Williamsburg residential gardening. The untold story of Williamsburg’s 18th-century professional gardeners is the focus of the Colonial Nursery near Bruton Parish Church. Here costumed colonial gardening staff members go about their day-to-day chores while educating guests on 18th-century Virginia gardening, tools and techniques. The site also sells licensed historical gardening tools and heritage seeds.

Colonial Performances

As the capital of colonial Virginia, Williamsburg had an 18th-century reputation as the cultural center of the colony. Colonial Williamsburg continues that tradition today. Guests enjoy evening events that can be seen nowhere but here. Music, colonial dancing, dramas and plays are offered at various locations throughout town.

Walking Tours

Colonial Williamsburg’s guests have the opportunity to get an intimate picture of the 18th-century capital of Virginia through a variety of walking tours. Tours include the:

- **Orientation Walk** that provides an overview of 18th-century Williamsburg to the Restoration;
- **Bits and Bridles** that takes guests through Colonial Williamsburg’s stable and carriage facilities to see some of the animals in the Rare Breeds program, and view the vehicles owned and operated by the Foundation;
- **Necessities, Niceties and Luxuries** that explores how people in the capital city let everyone know of their success by what they possessed;
- **Rubbish, Treasures and Colonial Life: The Archaeology Labs** that discusses how artifacts are processed and then interpreted to add to our understanding about the 18th-century community of Williamsburg and Virginia; and
- **Behind the Scenes Tour at Bruton Heights** that examines the campus of the Foundation’s research and preservation facilities and speak with the experts about the work that is involved in accurately re-creating this colonial city.
Christmas Comes but Once a Year

Here in Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area candles flicker in the windows. Grand Illumination, held the first Sunday in December, signals the beginning of the holiday season. Carolers gather on the streets. And holiday traffic amounts to a horse-drawn carriage and colorful Fifes and Drums. Kids discover a world full of music and singing, special shows, and engaging sports and games they never knew existed. With its white lights, natural greens and fruit decorations, feasts and 18th-century merriment, the Christmas holidays are a tradition known far and wide for its yuletide splendor.

Shop to Your Heart’s Content

Re-create 18th-century elegance in your home or office with WILLIAMSBURG® licensed products. From gift shops at the Visitor Center and authentic 18th-century shops in the Historic Area to specialty stores such as the Craft House™ Merchants Square, Williamsburg Celebrations™ and Williamsburg At Home®, Colonial Williamsburg retail stores offer a variety of reproduction home furnishings and accessories, mementos and apparel. Learn about the origins of early American products and their continual presence in today’s home.

Historic Area Dining

There’s nothing like a candelelit dinner in an 18th-century tavern to take you away from 21st-century worries. In the heart of the Historic Area, enjoy a taste of history in one of Colonial Williamsburg’s dining taverns, complete with costumed interpreters who offer guests an experience common to 18th-century patriots and loyalists who argued revolution over a hearty meal or a pitcher of ale. Indulge in a more formal experience in the elegant Regency Room in the Williamsburg Inn. New in 2007, the restaurant and lounge open in the renovated and expanded Williamsburg Lodge and Conference Center to serve regional favorites from the Chesapeake and local markets.

Lodging

The perfect way to unwind after spending a day starting a revolution is to relax in an official Colonial Williamsburg property. Each distinctive hotel is within walking distance of the Historic Area, so guests can spend their vacation experiencing history and having fun while the car stays parked. A leader in the hospitality industry, Colonial Williamsburg’s accommodations include the landmark Williamsburg Inn and Colonial Houses, both on the National Trust’s list of Historic Hotels of America. The Williamsburg Lodge completed a two-year renovation in early 2007, with 323 guest rooms, classic American furnishings, a new restaurant and bar and 45,000 square feet of meeting space. The Woodlands Hotel & Suites, built adjacent to the Visitor Center in 2001 amid acres of pine trees, is a great family retreat that offers a complimentary breakfast for guests. Other lodging includes the economical Governor’s Inn.
Meetings and Conferences

The Williamsburg Lodge and Conference Center includes a new 12,000-square-foot ballroom, aptly named the Virginia Room, which overlooks the Colonial Parkway, a 24-mile scenic drive connecting Jamestown, Williamsburg and Yorktown. A second ballroom, 28 meeting rooms, an executive board room, four outdoor function areas, retail shopping and a dramatic new restaurant featuring regional cuisine provide conference attendees impeccable service and a generous helping of Southern hospitality. The Conference Center is located adjacent to Colonial Williamsburg’s Historic Area and across the street from the Golden Horseshoe Golf Club, which features 45 championship holes of golf, and newly opened, The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg, with a full menu of spa and fitness services.

18th Hole, 18th Century

The Golden Horseshoe Golf Club will host the 2007 NCAA Division I Men’s Championship May 30, 2007. The Golden Horseshoe Golf Club combines a world-class golf experience with living history, museums, shopping, children’s activities and a full range of recreational activities such as tennis, swimming, lawn bowling, croquet, a full-service spa, fitness trails, biking and more. Experience the legendary Golden Horseshoe Gold and Green Courses, complemented by an impressive array of resort activities and amenities.

The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg

The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg: A Continuum of Wellness offers a full menu of services with historical roots spanning five centuries. A team of world-renowned experts collaborated to create a spa that exudes Southern charm, harmonizes with its historical surroundings, reflects its colonial heritage and honors traditions of health and wellness throughout American culture. Extensive research into healing methods practiced by Native Americans, English settlers, African Americans and immigrants from near and far influences the 21st-century treatments designed to soothe, refresh and calm. The Spa of Colonial Williamsburg is open to guests of the resort and to day visitors.

18th Century Meets 21st Century

Live Broadcasts and Downloadable Podcasts

In support of its educational mission “…that the future may learn from the past,” Colonial Williamsburg offers a distance learning experience for students nationwide. Using satellite technology, seven live interactive educational programs about all aspects of 18th-century American history and the American Revolution are broadcast each school year. Electronic Field Trips cover a wide range of stories from African American life to early industry in America, rare breeds, archaeology, exploration and more. EFTs are broadcast live at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., EST, in the Lane Auditorium of the Bruton Heights School, and are free and open to the public. The Colonial Williamsburg Web site offers podcasts – downloadable interviews with interpreters, curators, tradesmen, gardeners, program directors, musicians, animal caregivers and many, many more – thus allowing 21st-century technology to bring history alive to Web visitors.
America’s 400th Anniversary

Colonial Williamsburg’s Visitor Center is the official regional welcome center for the Historic Triangle in connection with the commemoration of America’s 400th Anniversary. New or modified signs have been installed on routes leading to the Visitor Center and prominently located interior displays provide regional information as soon as guests enter the Visitor Center. Information about the historic sites of Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown are available at the center, as well as information about additional regional attractions, including beaches, theme parks and museums. Ticketing for all three locations, transportation information and lodging reservations services are also provided.

Media contacts:
Tom Shrout
Jim Bradley
Barbara Brown
Penna Rogers
(757) 220-7286
01/07