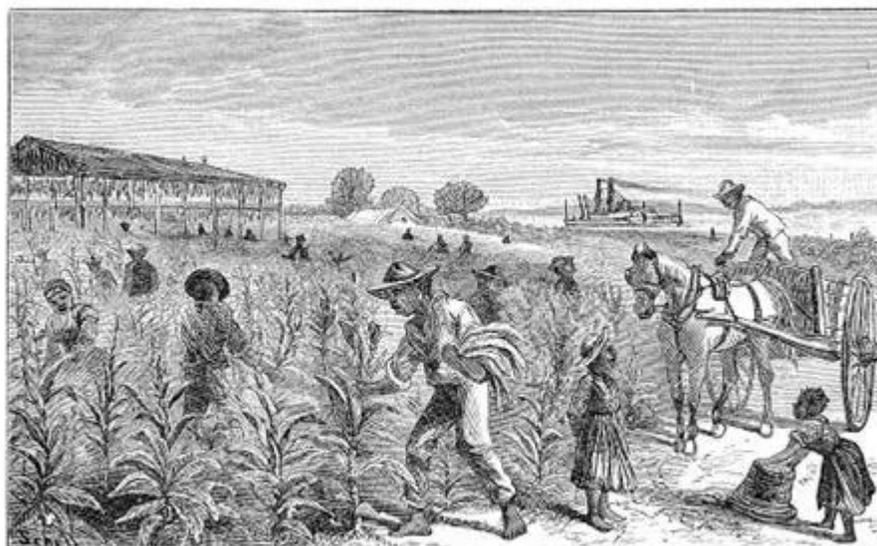


Fundamentals of Agriculture on a 19th Century Farm
Teacher's Guide

Reporting Category: Agriculture in Virginia History



Tobacco.

Topic: Agriculture through Virginia History from Colonial times through reconstruction

Primary SOLs: ES.8, VS4, US1, Skills 1 and 2

Materials: Interactive Video, Discussion Questions and Activities below.

Directions:

Students will watch an educational video that provides a brief background of the role of agriculture in Virginia and Prince William County history, specifically at Ben Lomond Historic Site. The video will show students different 19th century crops that are still grown at Ben Lomond today. Use the video and following primary sources to answer the questions found in this worksheet.

Context:

Agriculture in Prince William County

Growing crops for food and to sell helped landowners, planters, and herdsman take care of their families from the early days of colonization through the time after the American Civil War. In the 1700s, tobacco was Virginia's main crop that farmers sold. Tobacco was very hard on the soil and made it less healthy for future crops. Even though tobacco damaged the soil, planters kept clearing land and planting more of it. Growing tobacco also required a lot of hard work, which led to the use of enslaved people in Virginia until the end of the Civil War. Farmers and herdsman who lived and worked at places like Ben Lomond left behind records, such as

census records, that help us learn about their lives today.

Exercise (can be used as a separate worksheet or as discussion questions for the classroom):

Watch the accompanying video telling the story of Agriculture in Prince William County through history and read the following primary sources and stories. Answer the following questions on the worksheet.

Primary and Secondary Sources:

Pringle Family Agricultural Census, 1860

The agricultural census of 1860 was a survey of farms across the United States. Its purpose was to help the government understand how much food was being grown, what kinds of crops and animals people had, and where farming was most successful. The census recorded information such as farm size, crops grown, animals owned, and how much farms produced. Today, historians use this information to learn what life was like for farmers long ago and to better understand the economy and daily life in the United States before the Civil War.

Improved Land (acres)	Unimproved Land (acres)	Cash Value of Farm	Value of Farm Equipment and Machinery	Horses	Milk Cows	Other Cows	Sheep	Swine	Value of Livestock	Indian Corn (bushels)	Oats (bushels)	Wool (pounds)	Irish potatoes (bushels)	Butter (pounds)	Hay (tons)	Value of animals slaughtered
2150	350	\$37,500	\$500	16	3	42	500	30	\$2,936	750	500	1,874	10	100	25	\$95

Pringle Family Civil War Damage Claims, 1862

On March 18, 1862	To one load of corn, 40 bushels, at 80 cents	\$32.00
	65 pieces of hams, sides, and shoulders taken from the smoke house, in weight about 1,300 lbs. at 40 cents	\$182.00
	10 pieces of beef and tongues, 70 lbs. at 30 cents	\$7.00
	About 400 lbs. of pressed manufactured tobacco, at 30 cents	\$120.00
	Two boxes of candles, 80 lbs., at 40 cents	\$11.20
	200 lbs. of lard, at 14 cents	\$28.00
	Tea, coffee, and sugar (about)	\$5.00
	Preserves, tin pans, wine, (3 gallon)	\$10.00
	Four sporting guns (best) by the major G.	\$205.00
April 11, 1862	100 bushels of corn and 700 lbs of bacon taken by Col. Gamble of the 8 th Illinois Regiment, and receipted for and vouchers kept.	\$178.00
April 13, 1862	To household furniture broken up by General McCall's Penn. Reserves Corps, viz: Sopha \$35, bureau \$35	\$70.00
	Mahogany table \$25, marble washstand \$25	\$50.00
	2 washstands \$10, stove \$25 2 bedsteads \$10, 8 chairs \$8	\$53.00
April 13, 1862	Three trunks at \$10 each	\$30.00
August 28, 1862	One 4 wheel wagon	\$60.00
April 25, 1862	2 horses \$200; saddle and 2 bridles \$20 taken by Capt. Alexander, 1 st Michigan Cav.	\$200.00
	Total	\$1,261.20

Name: _____

Short Answer Questions:

1. In the video, you learned that farming at Ben Lomond changed over time. In the 1700s, farmers grew tobacco. In the 1850s, the Pringle family grew corn, hay, and potatoes and raised 500 sheep. By the 1900s, Ben Lomond became a large dairy farm. Why do you think the people who owned Ben Lomond changed what they grew and raised over the years?

2. Observing the 1860 census record of the Pringle's who rented Ben Lomond, what was their method of making a living and how successful did they appear to be?

3. How do you think various planters and herdsman felt when armies came to their home?

Primary Source Detective:

Reread the primary sources. On your worksheet, highlight or underline property owned by the Pringles that may have been useful to a Civil War soldier. Then, explain how you think a Civil War soldier would have used three of these items.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Civilian Choices during the Civil War:

Students will explore what life was like for civilians in Prince William County by making difficult choices people faced during the Civil War. The teacher will read aloud “What would you do?” cards based on historical situations. Students will think about questions such as whether to give soldiers their family’s only milk cow, whether to stay in their home or try to leave when a battle is coming nearby, or how farmers decided what crops to grow when land and waterways were being damaged. After choosing what they would do, students will explain their decisions to the class and discuss how these choices could affect their family, their farm, and their community. This activity helps students understand that history is shaped by everyday people making hard decisions.

- Soldiers arrive at your farm and ask for your family's only milk cow to feed their army. If you give it to them, your family will have no milk. If you hide it, you could get in trouble. What would you do? Why?
- Soldiers camp near your land and your animals may wander into their camp and be taken. Do you move your animals to a safer place, even if it is far away, or keep them close to home and hope for the best?
- Food is becoming hard to find because armies are moving through the area. Do you share food with neighbors who are hungry, or save it for your own family in case things get worse? Why?
- The Pringle’s home, Ben Lomond, became a hospital during the Battle of First Manassas in July 1861. They ultimately decided to stay in their home while injured soldiers recovered there. What would you do?

Life Then & Now:

Write a short paragraph comparing life of planters and herdsmen in 18th and 19th century Virginia and the availability to acquire food and clothing made of materials like wool and cotton today. What is different? What is the same?
