

Summary Description

This is the eighth in a series of eleven lessons that introduces the student to European American history.

Learning Objectives

To have the student learn a few key facts about Dutch American history and culture.

Approximate Time for Lesson

40 minutes

Suggested Maturity Level for Instruction

Student should be able to read simple words and perform simple addition and subtraction. Also, student should be able to sit still and engage in one-on-one conversation.

References:

"Dutch Americans", Herbert J. Brinks, Multicultural America -
<http://www.everyculture.com/multi/Du-Ha/Dutch-Americans.html>

"Place Mattered: The Social Geography of Dutch-American Immigration in the Nineteenth Century" (Lecture), November 17, 1998, Robert P. Swierenga - http://www.swierenga.com/Calvin_lect.html

"What's in a Name? Holland or Netherlands?" Livius: Articles on Ancient History, Jona Lendering, December 16, 2006 - <http://www.livius.org/dutchhistory/names.html>

"Saint Nicholas and the Origin of Santa Claus", St. Nicholas Center -
<http://www.stnicholascenter.org/Brix?pageID=35>

"The History of Christmas", 10 Holidays - <http://www.thehistoryofchristmas.com/traditions/usa.htm>

Materials Needed

1. Internet Access - Pull up the following:
 - a. World Map (go to <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/atlas/index.html?Parent=world&Mode=d&SubMode=w>)
 - b. Europe Map by Country (go to <http://www.sitesatlas.com/Maps/Maps/Europe.htm>)
 - c. United States Map (go to <http://maps.google.com/maps>)
 - d. OPTIONAL: Picture of Sinterklaas (go to <http://flashyourstache.files.wordpress.com/2007/12/sinterklaas.jpg>)
2. A piece of paper with two words written side by side: 1) Santa Claus and 2) Sinterklaas

Preparation

Make sure you have materials open, printed, and/or available prior to beginning the lesson.

Script

Introduction (5 minutes)

1. Teacher: Last week, we learned about the Scottish Americans, who moved to the United States because to find better opportunities for their families. Today, we will learn about the Dutch Americans. The Dutch Americans come from the country of Netherlands. [\[Point to the Netherlands in the Europe Map\]](#).
2. Teacher: Now, I bet you have a question before we even begin, "how come the country is called "Netherlands", but the people are called "Dutch"? I mean, so far we learned about the Germans, who live in Germany, the Irish, who live in Ireland, the English, who live in England and so on. But then, why are the people in the Netherlands called Dutch?"
3. Teacher: Well, that's the first thing we will learn. Then, we'll learn about why the Dutch moved to the United States.
4. Teacher: So are you ready to learn about the Dutch? [\[Get positive response from Student and begin lesson\]](#).

Lesson (30 minutes)

1. Teacher: Great. Now, let's solve this riddle about why the people in the Netherlands call themselves Dutch.
2. Teacher: First of all, you have to know that countries do change names. It doesn't happen too often, but it does happen from time to time. And so was the case of the Netherlands.
3. Teacher: Actually, the Netherlands had several name changes. First, it was called the Low Countries because the Netherlands was actually one of the three countries belonging to the same leader. Then, it was called the Republic of the Seven United Provinces. Republic of the Seven Provinces? Have you ever heard of a country with a name this long?!
4. Teacher: Well, since this name was too long to use in conversation and writing, people started to call this country "Holland", because Holland was the most important of the seven provinces. A province is part of land that belongs to a country. As time went on though, the people of Holland thought that the country should really be named something that represents all seven provinces, instead of just one (Holland). And so, these people came up with the "Netherlands".
5. Teacher: So, that's the story about how the Netherlands got its name. Here's the story about why the people of the Netherlands are called "Dutch".
6. Teacher: This word comes from another word, "Deutsch", which means anyone who does not speak or write an ancient language called, "Latin". Because the people of Netherlands did not use Latin, they described themselves way back then as speaking Dutch, or "not Latin". Well, the Dutch name seemed to stick all these years and even now, the people of the Netherlands still say they are "Dutch".

7. Teacher: So now you know why the people of the Netherlands are called “Dutch”. Let’s talk about why the Dutch came to the United States. Actually, the Dutch came to the United States long ago, even before the English came and created Jamestown (remember Jamestown, and Pocahontas?). But sadly, they lost some battles against the English and with it, lost their lands. But after this first group of Dutch who came to explore and claim lands, the next group of Dutch people came to the United States for three reasons: 1) religious freedom (religious freedom means that you can believe in anything or anyone you want such as God, or someone or something different than God, or even many gods), 2) a better opportunity to make money and provide for their family and 3) because of a potato famine, kind of like the Irish, but not nearly as bad.
8. Teacher: Anyway, these reasons seem to be about the same as why other European Americans came to the United States. Most of the Dutch came and lived in the middle of the country, in the States of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Iowa [[point to these states on the United States Map](#)]. But not too long ago, another group of Dutch people came to California, which is in the western coast of the United States [[point to California on the United States Map](#)]. This group of Dutch was known as the Dutch Indonesians.
9. Teacher: Now this may get a bit confusing, but listen carefully. At one time the Dutch actually took over another country in Asia, called Indonesia, which is located here [[point to Indonesia on the World Map](#)]. Well, Indonesia fought for its rights to become its own country without the Netherlands to control it and Indonesia won this fight. When the Dutch people who were living in Indonesia started to go back to the Netherlands, the Netherlands had no room for them. And so, after the Netherlands got permission from the United States, these Dutch people came to the United States. Since Indonesia is closest to the western side of the United States, the Dutch Indonesians came to live in California, where many still live today.
10. Teacher: Now, the Dutch people were accepted by the Americans since they were hard-working, loyal to their families, and nice. And the Dutch gave many things to the United States in return.
11. Teacher: For example, one of the cities with the most people living in it in the entire United States (and in the world), New York City, was first settled by the Dutch. To settle means to live in, so, the Dutch were the first people to live in what is now known as New York City. Actually, New York City was called New Amsterdam by the Dutch. Amsterdam was the capital city of the Netherlands back then and so the Dutch named this city after their capital. But after losing battles to the English, the English took over New Amsterdam and changed the name of the city to New York, after one of their own royal people, the Duke of York and Albany.
12. Teacher: And finally, like all the Europeans we’ve talked about, there are many successful Dutch Americans in every kind of job today. Some famous Dutch Americans are: Thomas Edison (inventor of the light bulb), former U.S. Presidents Theodore and

Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Paul Schrier, who played the role of Farkas "Bulk" Bulk Meier in the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers.

NOTE: PLEASE GO TO LINE 15 FOR THOSE WHO DO NOT WISH TO TELL THE STUDENT THAT SANTA CLAUS IS NOT REAL, OTHERWISE CONTINUE WITH LINE 13:

13. Teacher: Also, one last thing about the Dutch. Even though they were not the first ones to make up the tradition for kids in Europe, the Dutch were the ones to bring the idea of Santa Claus to the United States. In fact, the Dutch word for Santa Claus is "Sinterklaas". See how the spellings look about the same? [Show Student paper with "Santa Claus" and "Sinterklass" written side by side].
14. Teacher: Anyway, the Dutch brought over Sinterklass as an old man with a smoking pipe who flew around in a wagon, bringing presents to children every year. The heavy red coat, the North Pole, and reindeer were added to the Santa Claus story later by the Americans. And so, you can thank the Dutch Americans for bringing this idea of giving presents to children each year. Hey, so you want to see what Sinterklaas looks like? See what kinds of things Santa and Sinterklass have in common. [Show Student picture of Sinterklaas].
15. Teacher: OK - time for review. Get in front of the class. [Have the Student stand in front of you (consider inviting other members of the family also to set the stage) and ask her the following:
 - a. Why do the people of Netherlands call themselves "Dutch"? Because they do not speak or write Latin, which is what the word "Dutch" means.
 - b. Why did Dutch Americans move to the United States? Any one of the following: 1) to find better opportunities for their families, 2) to find religious freedom, 3) to escape famine, and 4) to move after living in a former colony (Indonesia)
 - c. What was the name of the city that the Dutch first created, which is one of largest cities in the United States? New York City (formerly called New Amsterdam by the Dutch and renamed New York by the English)
 - d. OPTIONAL: What was one great tradition that the Dutch brought over to the United States? Santa Claus (and the tradition of giving presents to children every year)

Teacher reviews any questions that the Student missed].

Wrap Up (5 minutes)

Teacher: [Clapping] You did GREAT! Wonderful job! Are there any questions that you have regarding the Dutch Americans? [Engage in conversation with the Student and resolve further questions by researching the Internet].