

<b>Pioneer Life in Michigan in the 1830's</b>	
<b>Big Ideas / Essential Questions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historians use primary sources to learn about what life was like in the past. Secondary sources are created from primary sources.</li> <li>• What were some challenges faced by early settlers of Michigan? How did they meet those challenges?</li> <li>• How is the life of a child in early Michigan similar to and different from your life as a child in Michigan today?</li> </ul>	
<b>Lesson Abstract</b>	
<p>In this lesson, students learn about the differences between primary and secondary sources. They are introduced to a primary source account of an early settler to Michigan—<i>The Bark-Covered House</i> by William Nowlin. Students listen to recorded passages from <i>The Bark-Covered House</i>. After visualizing what is being described in a passage, students draw a picture to accompany this section of text. Students then use the picture to retell orally or in writing the main ideas of the text. The pictures and retellings are combined to create a picture book of pioneer life in Michigan.</p> <p>The picture book is shared with the entire class. Students discuss challenges faced by early settlers to Michigan, and explain how they met those challenges. Finally, students write a compare/contrast piece on the life of a child in early Michigan versus their lives as children in Michigan today.</p>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students will understand the difference between primary and secondary sources.</li> <li>• Students will listen to primary source accounts of pioneer life in Michigan, then recount key ideas through visual representations and oral or written retellings.</li> <li>• Students will use a graphic organizer to list similarities and differences between pioneer life and life today, and then write a paragraph with a compare/contrast text structure.</li> </ul>	
<b>Recommended Time Frame</b>	Three weeks if all activities are completed. Teachers may choose to only use select portions of the unit, which would result in less time required.
<b>Grade Level</b>	Third Grade
<b>Curriculum Fit</b>	Social Studies (Michigan History); Language Arts time may also be used for some of the activities

## Michigan Grade Level Content Expectations

**Social Studies (3 – H3.0.7)** Use a variety of primary and secondary sources to construct a historical narrative about daily life in the early settlements of Michigan (pre-statehood).

**ELA (R.MT.03.01)** Self-monitor comprehension when reading or listening to texts by automatically applying strategies used by mature readers to increase comprehension including: predicting, constructing mental images, visually representing ideas in text, questioning, rereading or listening again if uncertain about meaning, inferring, and summarizing.

**ELA (R.CM.03.02)** Retell in sequence the story elements of grade-level narrative text and major idea(s) and relevant details of grade-level informational text.

**ELA (W.PR.03.02)** Apply a variety of pre-writing strategies for both narrative and informational writing (e.g., graphic organizers such as maps, webs, Venn diagrams) in order to generate, sequence, and structure ideas (e.g., sequence for beginning, middle, and end, problem/solution, or compare/contrast).

## Materials

- *The bark covered house, or Back in the woods again; being a graphic and thrilling description of real pioneer life in the wilderness of Michigan* by William Nowlin (from [Pioneering the Upper Midwest: Books from Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, ca. 1820-1910](#) collection at Library of Congress)
- Podcasts One through Seven (mp3 files)—make available to students on school network or web page
- Text to Accompany Podcasts (Word document) – make copies for students as needed; use transparency or copy for display
- Podcast Guides One through Seven (Word documents)—make copies for students as needed; use transparency or copy for display
- Sample of Visual Representation for Podcast One
- Graphic organizer for compare/contrast paragraph writing:  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson\\_images/lesson275/comcon\\_chart.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson275/comcon_chart.pdf)

## Evaluation

Rubrics will be used to evaluate the visual representation, the written retelling, and the compare/contrast paragraph.

1. Rubric for Visual Representation of Primary Source Text (Word document)
2. Rubric for Retelling of Primary Source Text (Word document)
3. Rubric for Compare/Contrast Paragraph:  
[http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson\\_images/lesson275/comcon\\_rubric.pdf](http://www.readwritethink.org/lesson_images/lesson275/comcon_rubric.pdf)

## Procedures

1. Explain the concept of primary sources and secondary sources. Teachers can refer to information from the Library of Congress:  
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/>
2. Introduce the primary source *The bark covered house, or Back in the woods again; being a graphic and thrilling description of real pioneer life in the wilderness of Michigan* by William Nowlin; show the actual pages of the book at the Library of Congress website. Share background information on William Nowlin from the bibliographic information page for the book.
3. Use Podcast One for teacher modeling. Using Podcast Guide One, go through background information with students, thinking aloud as you make connections to prior knowledge. Read through the questions as a preview of the podcast; think aloud to make predictions of what the podcast will be about. Pass out the text of Podcast One to students, and have them silently follow along as you play the podcast. After listening, ask students for answers to the questions. Write the answers on the transparency; model how to go back and check the text if you're not sure of the answer. Also model how to infer meaning from context (and prior knowledge) if you're not sure what a word means. Read through your answers again, and use "think-alouds" to help students visualize a drawing that shows the main ideas of the text. Model how to make a list of things you want to include in your drawing (parents, William, brothers and sisters, etc.) Play Podcast One a second time, and add to your list of ideas to draw. Then model for students how to create the drawing using your list of ideas. Also, demonstrate how to go back to the text to locate additional facts or to clarify ideas. If necessary, play Podcast One a third time to listen for additional details. Discuss how you want your drawing to be neatly done and historically accurate, according to the primary source. Show your sample drawing, and discuss the expectations on the Rubric for Visualization of Primary Source Text.
4. Use Podcast Two for guided practice, gradually releasing more responsibility to students. Pass out Podcast Guide Two to all students. Go through the maps, photo, and vocabulary with students; have them share their own connections to prior knowledge and experiences. Read through the questions as a preview of Podcast Two; have students make predictions of what the podcast will be about. Pass out the text of Podcast Two to students, and have them silently follow along as you play the podcast. After listening, have students answer the questions on their own, and then go over the answers together. Have students start to visualize their drawing, and make a list of things to include. Share some of their lists. Play Podcast Two again, and have students add to their lists of ideas, and again share. Have students create a drawing for Podcast Two. Discuss their drawings and offer feedback as necessary. If necessary, play Podcast Two a third time.

## **Procedures**

5. Use Podcasts Three through Seven as independent practice for students, using a jigsaw approach. Divide students into five groups, and assign each group one of the podcasts. Give each group the appropriate Podcast Guide, and have them read through the background information and make predictions. Have each group share predictions of what their podcast will be about. Give each group the appropriate Podcast Text. Take the class into the computer lab, and have students listen to their podcast a first time, and then answer the questions on the Podcast Guide. Collect the questions, and check student answers. Give students back their questions with appropriate feedback. Have them start visualizing their drawing, and make a list of ideas. Tell students to listen to their podcast a second time, and add to their list of ideas. Look over student lists and offer appropriate feedback. Have students create their drawings to represent the text. Assess the drawings using the Rubric for Visual Representation of Primary Text.
6. Use the drawings created for each of the podcasts to generate retellings of the primary source text. Depending on the abilities of your students, you may want to have them provide oral retellings which you transcribe, or have them do written retellings. If you use oral retellings, you can begin by having students describe their drawings, and then prompt them for additional information if necessary. You can model target skills for writing, or have students participate in shared writing. If you want students to complete written retellings, once again you can use your drawing from Podcast One for teacher modeling on how to write a retelling, and use the students' drawings from Podcast Two for guided practice. Students can use their drawings from their independent practice podcast to write a retelling which you evaluate, using the Rubric for Retelling of Primary Text.
7. Combine student drawings and retellings to make a book (or books) about pioneer life. Discuss with students how you have created a historical narrative, which is a secondary source. Share the book(s) with students. As they listen to the retelling from each podcast, ask them to describe the challenges faced by early settlers to Michigan, and discuss how the settlers met those challenges.
8. Work with students to fill out a graphic organizer on similarities and differences between pioneer life and life today. Depending on whether you have already taught this informational text structure, you might fill out the graphic organizer as a whole class, or have students complete it individually.
9. Depending on which graphic organizer you used, have students write a paragraph comparing and contrasting pioneer life with life today. Evaluate these paragraphs using the compare/contrast rubric.