



June 2007

About the USA – Virtual Classroom Newsletter for English Teachers

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MARSHALL PLAN – 60th Anniversary

Sixty years ago, on June 5, 1947, U.S. Secretary of State George C. Marshall delivered a commencement address at Harvard University that would change the course of European history. Marshall emphasized Europe's failing economies, proposed U.S. assistance and challenged war-torn nations to work together. Inspired by his vision, seventeen Western European countries set aside old rivalries to cooperate and rebuild.

Historians say the events of the late 1940s in Europe and the United States were so unique that it is unlikely the Marshall Plan ever could be repeated in another setting. However, they also say the plan -- considered one of the great foreign policy achievements of the past century -- is well worth studying as the definitive model of how to organize and run a successful international government program.

The plan, proposed by Marshall in June 1947, offered massive American financial aid if war-torn European governments could cooperate to spend the money for the benefit of the entire region. European governments also had to agree to match American contributions with their own funds. The offer was generous. But the United States had a high degree of self-interest as well. An economically strong Europe no longer would require U.S. assistance, would be able to resume buying American products and could prevent a Communist takeover of the Continent.

"Recovery," Larry I. Bland, senior director of the George C. Marshall Foundation, said, was the key word in the European Recovery Program – the formal name of the Marshall Plan. The goal was not to develop trade and expertise where none had existed, but to help restore Europe to its former wealth. Western Europe already had a working legal system, respect for private property and ownership, and centuries of evolution toward democratic governance.

Josef Joffe, editor and publisher of the German newspaper Die Zeit, wrote in 2006 that a lasting lesson of the Marshall Plan, aside from its focus on cross-border cooperation, was a strategic and far-sighted willingness to "advance American interests by serving those of others." (USINFO [Full article](#))

Links & Teaching Resources

George C. Marshall Foundation – [The Marshall Plan Speech \(PDF\)](#)

[The Marshall Plan Speech \(Audio\)](#)

[60th Anniversary Education and Programs](#)

USINFO – [The Marshall Plan's 60th Anniversary](#)

Library of Congress - [For European Recovery](#)

America's Library – [George C. Marshall](#)

USAID Timeline - [Historical Perspective on U.S. Foreign Assistance](#)

Our Documents – [Marshall Plan](#)

eJournal - [The Marshall Plan: A Strategy that Worked](#)



"It is logical that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos."

George C. Marshall, June 5, 1947

An [Exhibition](#) of the U.S. Diplomacy Center – **Marshall Plan: Vision of a Family of Nations** - tells the story of the recovery program that transformed Europe after World War II from a continent ravaged by war to one of peaceful, prosperous nations.



Italian children reading about the Marshall Plan. ©Library of Congress



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Links

- ★ U.S. Global [Climate Change Policy](#)
- ★ eJournalUSA [Protecting the Environment](#)
- ★ eJournalUSA [Clean Energy Solutions](#)
- ★ FREE - [Federal Resources for Educational Excellence on Climate Change](#)



(© Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation)

Links

- Jamestown Virginia - [Official Website](#)
- Wikipedia - [Jamestown, Virginia](#)

Educational Resources

- Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation - [The Jamestown Settlement Curriculum Materials](#)
- [Jamestown Questions and Answers](#)
- The History Channel - [Save Our History](#)
- Historic Jamestowne - [Teacher's Corner](#)
- Virginia's First People - [Past and Present](#)
- Virginia Tech/University of Virginia - [The Virtual Jamestown Archive](#)
- About the USA > [U.S. Society](#) > [Native Americans](#)



Lesson Plan

Native Americans — Stereotypes and Reality

This lesson plan was compiled by participants of the Teacher Training Seminar Media and Teaching English as a Foreign Language at the Center for United States Studies in Wittenberg. This lesson plan is suitable for grades 8 – 11.

Rationale: To develop an understanding of the life and the culture of contemporary Native Americans and to correct stereotypes about Native Americans.

World Environment Day - June 5

[World Environment Day](#) is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action. The World Environment Day slogan selected for 2007 is *Melting Ice – a Hot Topic?* In support of International Polar Year, the WED theme selected for 2007 focuses on the effects that climate change is having on polar ecosystems and communities, and the ensuing consequences around the world.

2007 U.S.-EU Summit Statement on Energy Security, Efficiency, and Climate Change: Ensuring secure, affordable supplies of energy and tackling climate change are central, interlinked global challenges facing the international community. [White House Press Release](#)

In the [Global Challenge](#), established in 2005 by the Arno Group and the University of Vermont College of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences, teams of U.S. high school students collaborate with international counterparts from October to May to address global climate change.

Jamestown Anniversary

Jamestown Settlement

In 1607, 13 years before the Pilgrims landed in Massachusetts, a group of 104 English men and boys began a settlement on the banks of Virginia's James River. They were sponsored by the Virginia Company of London, whose stockholders hoped to make a profit from the resources of the New World. The community suffered terrible hardships in its early years, but managed to endure, earning the distinction of being America's first permanent English colony.

Although Jamestown settlement was launched as a commercial venture by London shareholders, it quickly evolved into the English New World's first laboratory for representative government. (USinfo - [Jamestown, Cradle of U.S. Democracy, Celebrates 400th Anniversary](#))

Early Settlement Years

- April 1606** James I of England granted a charter to the Virginia Company to establish colonies in Virginia.
- December 20** Three ships (Susan Constant, Godspeed, and Discovery) left London with 105 men and boys to establish a colony in Virginia between 34 and 41 degrees latitude.
- April 26, 1607** The three ships sighted the land of Virginia, landed at Cape Henry and were attacked by Indians. Soon later they moved into the James River and stopped at Kecoughtan where the Indians welcomed them.
- May 1** Exploring parties sailed up the James River in search of a suitable place to settle.
- May 13** On May 13 the colonists chose Jamestown Island as the site for settlement, ... [A Jamestown Timeline](#)

Native Americans — Stereotypes and Reality

Article

Proceed with Caution: Using Native American Folktales in the Classroom *Debbie Reese, Language Arts, Jan 2007, v84, #3, pp245*

"Broadly speaking, representation of Native Americans in children's literature is dominated by two categories of writing: they tend to be either well-loved classics (like *Little House on the Prairie* [Wilder, 1935] or *Sign of the Beaver* [Speare, 1983]) that portray Native peoples as primitive savages who merely grunt or speak in broken English, or they are best sellers (like *Brother Eagle, Sister Sky* [Jeffers, 1991]) that present Native peoples as romantic but tragic heroes who speak with elaborate, poetic prose about living in harmony with the earth.

To counter flawed representations found throughout popular culture and the media, the author draws on her identity as a woman from the Nambe Pueblo to help teachers select children's books that are realistic in their presentation of Native peoples, as well as factually, historically, and culturally accurate." * [Fulltext](#)

TEACHING LITERATURE

What is Folklife?

The everyday and intimate creativity that all of us share and pass on to the next generation:

The traditional songs we sing, listen and dance to

Fairy tales, stories, ghost tales and personal histories

Riddles, proverbs, figures of speech, jokes and special ways of speaking,

Our childhood games and rhymes ...

Source: [American Folklife Center, Library of Congress](#)

American Folktales

Folktales interpret the experience of tellers and audience. While motifs endure from century to century and culture to culture, details and emphases vary with group experience and individual talent. The art of the tale is to adapt the traditional motif to particular circumstances. [More](#)

Tall Tales

Tall tales began in the 1800's as a way for pioneers to understand the greatness of the American west. There were huge forests, ferocious animals, deserts, and mountains. The pioneers were trying to conquer these elements, and that was a scary business. The heroes and heroines in the tall tales were also huge and often ferocious. They made the taming of America a little easier to handle. [More](#)

Links American Folklore - [American Folktales](#)
Internet School Library - [Traditional Literature: Lesson Plan](#)
ArtsEdge - [Exploring American Tall Tales](#)
USINFO - [Outline of American Literature](#)
USINFO - [US Literature in Brief](#)

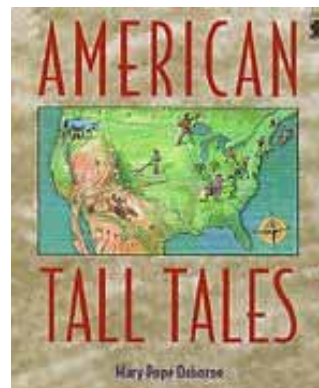
The Truth About Folk Heroes

Legendary tales passed on for generations note and embellish the superhuman adventures of the greatest folk heroes in American culture; ballads set rhyme and meter to the popular stories; and children read their tales and then make games of their heroic exploits. But are any of the stories true, or even based on fact? Are they simply remnants of a collective memory passed down through childrens' books and fireside yarns? The reality of folk heroes is much debated, even among historians and folklorists. But using a bit of genealogical research, we can begin to understand who these people really were. [More](#)

The Legend of John "Applesseed" Chapman

Johnny Applesseed, or rather John Chapman, is one folklore character we can be sure is based on a true person who spent much of his life planting and tending apple orchards along the westward migration routes. Applesseed's legend evolved over time with the spreading and embellishment of his lifestyle by those who knew him, or knew of him. People told tales of a barefooted man walking the migration trails of Pennsylvania and Ohio with a tin pot on his head and planting applesseeds along his way. In reality, John Chapman was less of an eccentric old man as stories claim, and more of a shrewd businessman. Knowing that land companies required settlers to plant apple trees on their homesteads, Chapman began to set up nurseries of seedling apple trees along the migration trails and sold them to travellers. He spent much of his time travelling between his nurseries and tending the trees he planted there.

Chapman learned many of his wilderness and survival skills from the Native Americans in Pennsylvania and Ohio, and in turn taught them how to cultivate apple trees. No one knows for sure when John Chapman came to be known as Johnny Applesseed. At the time of his death on 18 March 1845, Chapman had a successful orchard business, and left behind hundreds of acres of orchards in both Ohio and Indiana. [More](#)
John Applesseed [Wordsearch](#); [Vocabulary](#); [Crossword Puzzle](#); [Challenge](#)



Mary Pope Osborne's *American Tall Tales*, Scholastic 1992. This superb collection of larger-than-life folk heroes aptly represents America's robust early days, perfectly capturing the vitality of the men and women who carved a new country out of the North American wilderness. Author Mary Pope Osborne supplies a fascinating introduction to each tale and then gives her own original twist to the telling of it.

*He was a sailor bold and true,
To my aye storm a-long!
A good old skipper to his crew;
Aye, aye, aye, Mister Storm a-long.*

Stormalong, the [story](#) of the gigantic sea captain Alfred Bulltop Stormalong in New England folklore is one of the stories Mary Pope Osbourne retells in the book *American Tall Tales*.

"One day in the early 1800s a tidal wave crashed down on the shores of Cape Cod in New England. After the wave had washed back out to sea, the villagers heard deep, bellowing sounds coming from the beach. When they rushed to find out what was going on, they couldn't believe their eyes. A giant baby three fathoms tall - or eighteen feet! - was crawling across the sand, crying in a voice as loud as a foghorn."

Sea Shanties (chanties)

The word "chanty" (or shanty) is probably derived from the French word "chanter" - to sing. Shanties were originally shouted out, with emphasis on a syllable or word as sailors performed their work. Shanties developed separate rhythms for the various chores at sea - for raising the anchor (which was done by marching around the capstan), hauling ropes, etc. Most songs involved a lead singer and a choral response. The words were called out by a chantyman and the men joined in on the chorus. The words of the chorus usually coincided with a heave, or pull.

Shanties served both as a mental diversion and synchronized teamwork. They also provided an outlet for sailors to express their opinions in a manner which would not cause punishment. [More](#)



Women & children wait in the Gouroukoum refugee camp in eastern Chad March 28. (© AP Images)

"The commitment of the United States to protecting and assisting refugees is deep and abiding. This commitment is part of our nation's history and it goes to the very core of our values."

--Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice



© The Neue Nationalgalerie

The Masterpieces of French Painting from The Metropolitan Museum of Art: 1800–1920

A selection of 135 masterpieces from the Met's collection of French painting
June 1 – October 7, 2007
Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin

Webchat Station

Internet Tools & Curriculum Design for Young Learners of English: Technology and Classroom Activities

Date: Thursday, June 14, 2007

Time: 11:00 p.m. CET

Sign in

How can technology enhance English-language instruction for young learners? Join ESL expert Judie Haynes to discuss ways to motivate students and make language learning fun!



usa.usembassy.de

About the USA is a digital collection of background resources on American society, culture, and political processes. In addition to featuring selected websites, it provides access to documents in full text format (E-Texts) on topics ranging from the history of German-American relations, government and politics to travel, holidays and sports.

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THIS MONTH

World Refugee Day – June 20

In 2000, a special United Nations General Assembly Resolution was unanimously adopted which designated 20 June every year as World Refugee Day. Since World War II, more refugees have found permanent homes in the U.S. than in any other country. The U.S. is also the largest single donor to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), making it a global leader in refugee protection and assistance. The United States, in keeping with a national government's responsibility to protect refugees within its territory, has a strong asylum system and strives to help other nations develop similar systems, according to a State Department official. [Full Text](#)

Links:

[Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration](#)

[UNHCR: World Refugee Day 2006](#)

[United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees](#)

[United Nations Refugee Agency](#)

USINFO - [Humanitarian Assistance and Refugees](#)

EXHIBITION

"It sounds like a paradox, but it is a very simple truth, that when today we look for 'American art' we find it mainly in Paris."

Henry James, 1887

Paris was the art capital of the 19th century. The art schools, museums, and exhibition spaces and the integration of arts into everyday city life, attracted painters, sculptors, and architects from the United States and around the world -- as well as wealthy American art collectors. In those days, the U.S. was more of a buyer than a seller of cultural influence. While Americans had a strong "New World" vision of the United States, "Old World" culture was still the yardstick for aesthetic refinement and the prestige that came with it. "With their technological know-how and their economy growing at a fast pace, Americans wanted some of that prestige which meant creating -- and collecting -- art on European terms.

Links:

[Back When America's Art School Was Paris \(New York Times, October 20, 2006\)](#)

[Americans in Paris, 1860-1900 \(Metropolitan Museum of Art\)](#)

TALKING ABOUT MEDIA

AMERICAN STUDIES JOURNAL

<http://asjournal.zusas.uni-halle.de/>

The American Studies Journal has been re-launched and turned into an electronic publication. See:

<http://asjournal.zusas.uni-halle.de/>