

## Classroom Activities for Virginia Women in History 2007

We hope that the Virginia Women in History project can become a part of your classroom curriculum. Below you will find a number of activities that tie the women honored on the 2007 poster to content covered by the Virginia Standards of Learning. You can also find more activities, primary sources, maps, and handouts online at the virtual component of the project: <http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwedo/k12/vw2007/index.htm>.

### Activities for all ages:

1. Research other important Virginia women and nominate someone for the 2008 poster! See the nomination form and directions for more information. Keep in mind that there are many significant female figures to choose from and past honorees will not be recognized again. Students at all grade levels are encouraged to participate.
2. Start the class with a walk through history and tell students about a different woman honored on the 2007 poster for each of the first eight classes during March. This will give the students an introduction to the honorees for other projects throughout the month.
3. If you want to learn more about women in Virginia's history, read Suzanne Lebsack's book *Virginia Women, 1600-1945: "A Share of Honour"* (1987).

### Kindergarten – Grade 3:

#### K.1, 1.2, 1.3

1. Share the stories of the 2007 Virginia Women in History with your students to help them connect with people and events of the past. Explain that we have Women's History Month to honor important female figures.

#### K.2, 2.3

2. Talk about how these women's lives were different from the lives of your students. Opossunoquonuske was born before Jamestown was settled, Mary Willing Byrd owned slaves, and the Nineteenth Amendment which allowed women to vote was not passed until Mary Jeffery Galt was in her seventies. Children where Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver lived did not have public schools to attend, Maybelle Addington Carter and Camilla Ella Williams were close in age but never would have attended the same schools because of segregation, and Mary Alice Franklin Hatwood Futrell was teaching and Sheila Crump Johnson was in school during desegregation.

#### K.3, K.4, 1.4, 2.4, 3.6

3. Look at a Virginia map and find the locations associated with the 2007 Virginia Women in History. Are they near the coast? Far from the capital? Do you see mountains or rivers?

#### K. 8, 1.10, 1.12, 2.10, 2.12

4. Talk about how individuals can give back to the community. Sheila Crump Johnson gives money to educational institutions, Mary Alice Franklin Hatwood Futrell held positions in organizations to improve education, and Mary Jeffery Galt created an organization to protect buildings that she cared about. Develop a class project where your students give back to the community. Show them that being young does not prevent them from helping society.

#### 1.1

5. Draw a timeline and, as a class, put the women in order based on when they were born.

#### 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 2.8, 2.9, 3.8, 3.9

6. Look at Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver as an economics lesson. She wanted women in her community to be able to earn a living, so she encouraged women to turn their skill for making household textiles into a business. Develop teams or work with other classrooms to create your own market. Have one group reshel books or perform other classroom services to earn "money" while other groups prepare crafts (bookmarks, simple origami, etc.), and then let the groups trade. The children will have to make choices about what they want to buy based on the money they earn for their services or for selling their goods.

## 2.2

7. Study Opossunoquonuske with your class. Although we don't know much about her, we can learn from what we do know. We know that she was a chief. What does that say about positions of power for women in Native American culture? We know that she lived near the water. What does that mean for transportation and food? We know that she died within three years of the settlement at Jamestown. What does that say about the effect of colonization on Native Americans? Use what you learn about other Powhatan tribes to describe more about what her life may have been like.

### Virginia Studies:

#### VS.1, VS.2

1. Look at a Virginia map and identify where the 2007 Virginia Women in History live or lived. Where do the women fit into the five geographic regions of Virginia? What land or water features can you recognize?

#### VS.1, VS.3

2. Opossunoquonuske would have viewed the arrival of the Jamestown settlers very differently than did the Englishmen who recorded the events. Write an account of her first meeting with the settlers from her perspective. Think about how the settlers dressed, where the Native Americans lived, how both groups obtained food, and why Opossunoquonuske decided to kill the settlers she invited to her town.

#### VS.1, VS.4, VS.5

3. Mary Willing Byrd was a slave-owning widow at the time of the American Revolution. She risked legal prosecution to have her slaves returned to her after they had been taken by the British. She did so to protect her property, both land and human, and to provide for her children. This says a great deal about the relationship between slavery and the agricultural economy. You can also look at Byrd to discuss the choices individuals had to make in choosing between loyalty to Britain and the new American nation.

#### VS.1, VS.9

4. • Camilla Ella Williams was the first African American to have a contract with a major American opera company. Think about how proud she must have been to achieve her dream and the struggles she must have faced.
  - Mary Alice Franklin Hatwood Futrell integrated the faculty at George Washington High School. Think about what she accomplished and what fears she might have had.
  - Sheila Crump Johnson was a child when the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was announced. If you were a child at that time, what would you have been thinking about?
  - Divide into groups and have students write a one-act play with one of the above moments in the 2007 Virginia Women in History's lives as a theme. Address the effect that segregation had on these women and their work toward an integrated society.
5. Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver wanted women in her rural community to be able to participate in economic development. The company that she started has now achieved international recognition. What does this say about the development of business in Virginia and the diversity of products produced in the state?

### United States History to 1877:

#### USI.1, USI.3, USI.4

1. Opossunoquonuske would have viewed the arrival of the Jamestown settlers very differently than did the Englishmen who recorded the events. Write an account of her first meeting with the settlers from her perspective. Think about how the settlers dressed, where the Native Americans lived, how both groups obtained food, and why Opossunoquonuske decided to kill the settlers she invited to her town.

#### USI.1, USI.5, USI.6

2. Mary Willing Byrd was a slave-owning widow at the time of the American Revolution. She risked legal prosecution to have her slaves returned to her after they had been taken by the British. She did so to protect her property, both land and human, and to provide for her children. This says a great deal about the relationship between slavery and the agricultural economy. You can also look at Byrd to discuss the choices individuals had to make in choosing between loyalty to Britain and the new American nation.

### **USI.1, USI.9**

3. Mary Jeffery Galt was a teenager during the Civil War. Have your students pretend to be one of Mary Galt's contemporaries and write her a letter about what the Civil War is like for someone at that age.

### **United States History 1877 to the present:**

#### **USII.1, USII.2, USII.3**

1. Mary Jeffery Galt believed in the preservation of historic structures. On a map, locate buildings still standing that are connected to historic events in America. You can also try to find where some important structures used to be. Talk with your students about why some buildings were lost and why preservation is important.

#### **USII.1, USII.4**

2. Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver wanted women in her rural community to be able to participate in economic development. The company that she started has now achieved international recognition. What does this say about the development of business in Virginia and the diversity of products produced in the state?
3. Listen to songs by Maybelle Addington Carter and have your class sing along. How is her music like music we hear today? How is it different? Have your students imagine life without the radio. Have them write about what it must have been like to be a radio star. You can organize your own class radio program.
4. Camilla Ella Williams grew up during the Harlem Renaissance. Write about the effect the national movement may have had on her. Consider the obstacles she had to overcome based on her race. Play some of her music while the students write reflective essays.

#### **USII.1, USII.8**

5. • Camilla Ella Williams was the first African American to have a contract with a major American opera company. Think about how proud she must have been to achieve her dream and the struggles she must have faced.
  - Mary Alice Franklin Hatwood Futrell integrated the faculty at George Washington High School. Think about what she accomplished and what fears she might have had.
  - Sheila Crump Johnson was a child when the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was announced. If you were a child at that time, what would you have been thinking about?
  - Divide into groups and have students write a one-act play with one of the above moments in the 2007 Virginia Women in History's lives as a theme. Address the effect that segregation had on these women and their work toward an integrated society.

### **Civics and Economics:**

#### **CE.1, CE.9, CE.10**

1. Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver wanted women in her rural community to be able to participate in economic development. The company that she started has now achieved international recognition. What does a business need to start? How does a business grow? Try a model in your classroom by providing basic resources and seeing what the students develop, how they trade their goods, and whether or not they can make a successful business grow.

#### **CE.1, CE.12**

2. The eight women represented on the 2007 Virginia Women in History poster each had very different careers. Make a list of the personal qualities that made each of these women successful. Identify how the opportunities for American women have changed between the time of Mary Willing Byrd and Sheila Crump Johnson. Think about how the role Opossunoquonuske played in her community differs from, or is similar to, the role American women play in government today.

### **World History and Geography: 1500 AD to the present:**

#### **WHII.1, WHII.4**

1. Write about the arrival of European explorers from Opossunoquonuske's point of view. What was different about these newcomers? How must their arrival have affected her life and culture?

#### **WHII.1, WHII.8**

2. Look at how Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver participated in capitalism to create a successful business venture in rural Virginia.

## **World Geography:**

### **WG.1, WG.3**

1. Discuss how Virginia's geography could have affected the lives of the 2007 Virginia Women in History. Did being near a river influence Opossumquonuske's culture? What makes Middleburg an attractive place for Sheila Crump Johnson to live? Is there a regional influence in Maybelle Addington Carter's music?

## **Virginia and United States History:**

### **VUS.1, VUS.2**

1. Opossumquonuske would have viewed the arrival of the Jamestown settlers very differently than did the Englishmen who recorded the events. Write an account of her first meeting with the settlers from her perspective. Think about how the settlers dressed, where the Native Americans lived, and how both groups obtained food. Hold a classroom debate in which students analyze Opossumquonuske's decision to kill the group of settlers she invited to her town, and argue for or against her action or the colonists' retaliation.

### **VUS.1, VUS.3**

2. Mary Willing Byrd went to great lengths to preserve the institution of slavery to provide economic advantages for her children. Write about what this tells us about the role of slavery in the economic and social culture of early America.

### **VUS.1, VUS.13**

3. • Camilla Ella Williams was the first African American to have a contract with a major American opera company. Think about how proud she must have been to achieve her dream and the struggles she must have faced.
  - Mary Alice Franklin Hatwood Futrell integrated the faculty at George Washington High School. Think about what she accomplished and what fears she might have had.
  - Sheila Crump Johnson was a child when the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision was announced. If you were a child at that time, what would you have been thinking about?
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### **VUS.1, VUS.14**

4. The eight women represented on the 2007 Virginia Women in History poster each had very different lives. Identify how the opportunities for American women have changed between the time of Mary Willing Byrd and Sheila Crump Johnson. Think about how the role Opossumquonuske played in her community differs from, or is similar to, the role American women play in government today.

## **Virginia and United States Government:**

### **GOVT.1, GOVT.9**

1. Explain how Mary Jeffery Galt and Mary Alice Franklin Hatwood Futrell worked to affect public policy.

### **GOVT.1, GOVT.15, GOVT.16**

2. Laura Lu Scherer Copenhaver wanted women in her rural community to be able to participate in economic development. The company that she started has now achieved international recognition. What does a business need to start? How does a business grow? Try a model in your classroom by providing basic resources and seeing what the students develop, how they trade their goods, and whether or not they can make a successful business grow.

### **GOVT.1, GOVT.17, GOVT.18**

3. The women honored by the 2007 Virginia Women in History poster each show how an individual can be a positive member of a community. List the personal traits that assisted these women in achieving success. Identify how these women gave back to their communities. Ask your students to explain how they participate in society. Do they have a natural talent they can share? Do they contribute to economic development? Do they work for a cause they care about? If not, make finding a way to contribute the next assignment!