



Adirondack History
Syllabus – Mr. Jones
Schroon Lake Central School, 2008-2009

The purpose of this course is to survey the important historical, social, political, and environmental aspects of the Adirondack Park.

The method for learning in this course is differentiated instruction. Students will have choices in how they learn and how they are assessed. Resources for each unit and assessment rubrics are available on the school server and/or at JonesHistory.net. After a brief overview of a topic, students will complete a menu to select how they will learn the material and how they will be assessed. Class time is then devoted to that end, with homework assigned by the student to her/himself to meet deadlines s/he negotiated with the instructor. There are two categories of “things to know” in this class: a “core knowledge” of Adirondack History that every student must know and “extended knowledge” that students choose according to their own interests.

As a half-credit high school class, naturally the pace and intensity will be less than one expects in a Regents course. Nonetheless, students are expected to use all class time wisely, complete assignments on time (the late fee is 15 points per day) and come to class prepared.

Grading – “High” order tasks = 65%, “Low” order tasks = 35%

Required for Everyone – Students choose how they are assessed, but there are four tasks required for everyone: 1) midterm exam on the “core” knowledge; 2) display or presentation at the Academic Fair in March, if it is held; 3) term paper in a topic of choice due in May; 4) final exam on “core” knowledge. The midterm and term paper count as two high order tasks. The final exam is 20% of the course grade. The academic fair display is a single high order task.

Resources – There is no textbook for this course, however there is a rich variety of books on Adirondack History for use in the class and extensive online and instructor-created sources. Students will use primary sources as well as secondary sources.

Topics and Core Questions

“Core Questions” are things every student in the class needs to know about Adirondack History. Core questions would appear on teacher-made tests such as the optional topic tests and the required midterm and final. “Extended Knowledge” refers to things students decide to learn based on their own interests. Extended knowledge can be demonstrated in a variety of ways.

- I. **“The Adirondacks are ...”**
Where is the Adirondack Park? How big is it? How many people live there? What do they do for a living? What are the major waterways and where are they located? What are the major mountain groups and where are they located? Where are the important towns in the Park? What are they like? How are the towns unique? What kinds of animal and plant life are found here? What is the Native American history in the Adirondacks before the Europeans?
- II. **French, British, and Indians**
What European powers claimed the various zones in the Adirondacks in the 17th and 18th century? How did they maintain control? What economic principles were at stake? What was the cause and extent of the French and Indian War in the Adirondacks? What were the major engagements of the war? What were the effects of the war for the Adirondacks? What happened in the Adirondacks during and immediately after the American war for Independence?
- III. **Adirondack Guides**
What sparked interest in the tourism in the Adirondacks in the early 19th century? What was it like being a tourist then? Who were some of the most famous Adirondack Guides? What were they like?
- IV. **Mining and Logging**
When and where were the earliest mines established? What was involved in making profit from the mines or logging? What were the long and short term effects of mining and logging in the Adirondacks? When and where was logging an important part of the economy? Who were the important people in logging and mining?
- V. **Establishing the “Blue Line”**
Why were efforts made to create the Adirondack Park? What makes it unique in the world/USA? What were the competing interests in the Park and how did the conflicts play out in court and in the woods? Who were the important people in this?
- VI. **Curing Tuberculosis**
What was tuberculosis? Why did people think coming here would cure them? Who were the most important people associated with this? What areas were most affected by the tuberculosis ‘cure’?
- VII. **Environmental Concerns**
What conflicting interests are there in the Park? What environmental issues have there been in Adirondack history and today? How are these issues resolved? What is the APA?
- VIII. **Modern Life in the Park**
How do people make a living in various parts of the Adirondacks now? What challenges do “Adirondackers” face in 2009 and how are they resolving them?
- IX. **Local History: Schroon Lake and Environs**
How does Schroon Lake history fit in with the whole Park? Who settled here first? Why? Where does the name come from? What was it like to live here at various times in the past? What is the history of the school? What is the history of your own family in the Adirondacks?