

Lesson Plan #5: Locust Grove and Samuel F. B. Morse

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Use a Samuel Morse quote to guide students as they redesign their schools' landscape.
- Use their knowledge of scale to sketch, graph or create a 3-D pop up representation to redesign landscape features modelling Morse's concept of landscaping.
- Write an explanation for the improvements and discuss how they will impact the school for the better.
- Create a map key or legend.
- Label their map with proper titles.

Standards:

Social Studies Standard 1: History of the United States and New York

Key Idea 3: Study about the major social, political, economic, cultural, and religious developments in New York State and United States history involves learning about the important roles and contributions of individuals and groups.

Performance Indicator: Study about the major social, political, economic, cultural, and religious developments in New York State and United States history involves learning about the important roles and contributions of individuals

Performance Indicator: gather and organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in New York State and the United States

Teacher Resources:

- *The Hudson River Valley Review* article:
 - [“The Prophetic Eye of Taste”: Samuel F. B. Morse at Locust Grove by Robert M. Toole.](#)

Materials:

- *Hudson River Valley Review* Article
- Photograph of School or a Photograph Taken from part of the school
- Paper (optional-graph, construction)
- Computer Design Program

Procedures:

1. Read the *Hudson River Valley Review* article.
2. Revisit and read to class the following quote:
“Arranging the object of Nature in such a manner as to form a consistent landscape...the art of hiding defects by interposing beauties;...of contriving at every point some consistent beauty so that the imagination in every part of the theatre of his performance [the site] may reveal in a continual dream of delight. His main object is to select from Nature all that is agreeable, and to reject or change everything that is disagreeable.”(pg. 184)
3. Discuss the influence of the “Romance Era” on Morse and landscape design at the time.
4. Have students use the picture of their school's landscape, or part of their school's landscape,

to create a new design. (They may use grid paper, construction paper- for a 3-D Pop-Up Design, or the computer)

Assessment:

- Students will evaluate their new school landscape design, and then write an explanation about:
 - how they improved the design, and
 - how the new look will impact their school.
- Present the new ideas to the class.

Enrichment:

- Research more about Samuel Morse's biography.
- Research the impact of Morse Code on American history.
- Take a field trip to Locust Grove. Report on how the property is different from the article's description.
- Research the impact of Locust Grove on Hudson River Valley history.