

# Teaching *The Hudson River Valley Review*

## Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge

**Grade level:** 7

### **Rationale:**

The print resource focuses mostly on the impact of the railroad bridge on the industrialization of the Hudson River Valley in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The immigration experience is also highlighted in the text. The Hudson River Valley Institute's webpage includes many high quality oral histories which can be used in a classroom setting.

### **Objectives:**

Students will be able to:

- Create a timeline about the events leading to the construction of the Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge.
- Research and write one paragraph about one of the principal participants in the project.

### **New York State Social Studies Standards:**

#### **Standard 1: History of the United States and New York**

Students will: use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the 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 which includes learning about the important roles and contributions of key groups.

### **New York State Content Understandings:**

#### **Industrial growth and expansion**

- Transportation, inventions, communication, and technology (e.g., 1800s—Erie Canal, railroads, steamboats, turnpikes, telegraph, cable; 1900s—automobiles, subways, air travel, seaways, telephones, radios and televisions, computer)
- Immigration and migration
- The important contributions of immigrants to New York State
- Geographic influences of industrialization and expansion (e.g., natural resources, location); the interactions between economic and geographic factors.

### **Teacher Resources:**

#### **Articles from *The Hudson River Valley Review*:**

Goldsmith, Gail. "[The Industrial History of the Poughkeepsie Railroad Bridge and the Central New England Railway's Maybrook Line.](#)" *Hudson River Valley Review* 26.2 (2012): 119-29. Print.

## Teaching *The Hudson River Valley Review*

### **Materials from the Hudson River Valley Institute:**

Oral histories about the bridge & Walkway:

<http://www.hudsonrivervalley.org/themes/walkwayhistory.html>

### **Materials:**

- Article
- Pencil/Pen
- Construction Paper
- Plain white copy paper
- Pictures of the railroad bridge (You can find some at [Hudson River Valley Heritage](#))

### **Procedures:**

1. Teachers may use a blank timeline template to create handouts for the students to complete.
2. Teachers will also write the dates of importance which pertained to the construction of the bridge. The cards will be randomly mixed. Students will put the cards into chronological order and then transfer the information to the timeline.
3. Students will use the article, the Hudson River Valley Institute website, and other web-based resources to write one paragraph about the contributions of one of the following individuals: Matthew Vassar, Harvey Eastman, Cornelius Vanderbilt, and J. P. Morgan. They may also research the following railroads: Central New England, Poughkeepsie and Eastern, New York Central, and Penn Central.
4. Students will use the above information to create a paragraph about the history of the bridge. In the paragraph, students should discuss the geographical changes (links between East and West, to New England), the role of immigrants, and the improvement of the economy in the Hudson River Valley.

### **Assessment:**

- Students will pretend to be a newspaper reporter. Their task:
  - Create a newspaper article about the construction of the bridge. They should include mock interviews of the various people who helped construct the bridge.

### **Enrichment:**

- Students will research and choose three of the various types of bridges that have been built. By either using computer software or physical materials, students may construct models of each of the bridges they chose to test the model's capacity to handle weight.