The Catskills

Mother Nature’s skills at its finest
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The Catskill Mountains underwent many events that made them what they are today. They began as the Allegheny Plateau and also experienced continental drift. In addition, many key people played an important role in the history, such as Robert Juet, Robert Livingston, the Bartrams, and Lieutenant Jacob Rose. This area eventually ended as a key site in Washington Irving’s Rip Van Winkle. It is in this vast region of New York that there are many sites and structures that hold historic significance for the Hudson River Valley. As a result of this significance, it is a top priority of historical societies and associations to preserve these locations and advance public awareness and appreciation of the Catskills historic resources. Some key preservationists of the Catskill Mountains include the Catskill Heritage Alliance, the Greene County Historical Society, and the Mountain Top Historical Society.

The beautiful, mountainous Catskills are home to many animals, trees, waterfalls, rivers and agriculture. The Catskills are the birth place to American fly fishing, waterways that provide water for New York City, black bears. It holds the beautiful Kaaterskill Falls and over 98 peaks. The first Christmas tree tradition began in the Catskills. Athens is a village in Greene County, NY. The population was 1,695 at the 2000 census. The village is named after the classical city of Athens. The Village of Athens is in the eastern part of the Town of Athens, opposite the City of Hudson. Jefferson Heights is a hamlet in Greene County, NY. The population was 1,104 at the 2000 census. The community of Jefferson Heights is in the Town of Catskill, northwest of the Village of Catskill. The Catskills are also filled with numerous key sites that may be of interest to both tourists and visitors. The Catskills include wonderful hotels and resorts, famous hiking trails, camp sites, and fishing scenes, historical houses, prompts for famous painters, and is even home to a majestic waterfall. Some key sites include Kaaterskill Falls, Escarpment Trail, North-South Lake, The Catskill Mountain House, and The Mohonk Mountain House. All of these sites display pure natural beauty. The Catskills attract nature lovers from all over because of its trails and outdoor recreational opportunities. The Catskills is the home to hundreds of miles of hiking trails, thousands or acres of natural forest, and endless possibilities for people to experience the true beauty of the New York area.
Using the information that we gathered for the midterm, we have designed a lesson plan, guidebook, and itinerary that visitors can use to enjoy the Catskill region. We have planned a 5 day, 4 night schedule that allows one to take in all that the Catskills has to offer. The sites include Kaaterskill Falls, The Escarpment Trail, North-South Lake, and The Mohonk Mountain House. Along with the new additions, we have also corrected and improved our midterm portion of this case study.
The Catskill Mountains began as a river delta 350 million years ago. Originally this region was known as the Allegheny Plateau. Continental drift pushed up the Appalachians causing the delta region to rise almost into a plateau rather than breaking up into smaller mountains. Streams eroded gaps and valleys, leaving today’s mountains. The most recent of four periods of glaciations, the Wisconsin, can be thanked for the next geographic change of the Catskills. The glaciers left behind lakes when they melted, some of which became reservoirs in the 20th century. In the history of the Catskills, it is believed that there was not long term Native American stays, probably due to a lack of farming land. The Mohican and Munsee tribes did however use land and water routes through the mountains to get to places beyond them. They also used the mountains in some of their tribal rituals and hunted the game that lived in the area.
The first European to take note of the Catskills was Robert Juet. Robert Juet was one of Henry Hudson’s crew members. He noticed the Catskills when Half Moon sailed up the river, however, like the Native Americans, these explorers too chose not to live there. Eventually, settlers were drawn to the region, particularly due to the rumored gold strikes. No gold was ever found. Exploration and settlement was furthered thanks to the addition of trade in beaver hats. The most important event in the history of the Catskills is known as the Hardenbergh Patent. During Queen Anne’s War, Johannes Hardenbergh, and his partner, Jacob Rutsen, wanted a land grant in the mountains of Ulster County, in hopes to head off a petition by a group of farmers. The Patent was granted on April 20, 1708, and they ended up with practically the entire Catskill region. Eventually, Hardenbergh began to sell shares in the partnership. Indian tribes were upset because their land was being sold out from under them. Robert Livingston noticed the economic value of the region, and he would eventually be the one to acquire the Hardenbergh Patent. John Bartram and his son William were the primal people to document the wide variety of tree species in the mountains according to their account “A Journey to Ye Cat Skill Mountains with Billy.” In 1753 John and William Bartram went to the Catskills as part of their explorations into the plant life. The Bartrams also explored the area of the Pine Orchard (near the North and South Lakes) which in the next century would become the site of the famous Catskill Mountain House.
Robert Livingston’s son took over management of the lands. He saw promise in the limber located there. He envisioned castles and grand manors which would be sold to European nobility. When John Bradstreet stepped in, these plans were put on hold. He argued that he should be granted a 50,000 acre part of the land, as a retired officer, and others followed. During the early 1770s, colonies and Britain were debating over how to pay for the war. Large land owners wanted independence, in fear that a land tax would cut into their wealth. Tenant farmers stood by the king, in belief that he would confiscate the holdings of those who opposed him, and award those who remained loyal. In 1777 Lieutenant Jacob Rose had an army that fought alongside the British in return for 50 acres each. Rose’s Rangers had to make it through the Hudson River Valley, where they were captured in Orange County. Prisoners were taken to Fort Montgomery. Here they were tried for treason, and most were pardoned if they agreed to serve in the Continental Army. The failure of Rose and the burning of Kingston decreased the Tory attitudes of the Catskills. Finally, in the mid-20th century, the Catskills became a major resort area for many Jewish New Yorkers, and in 1969, it was the planned site for Woodstock, New York. Finally, Washington Irving’s Rip Van Winkle takes place near the Hudson River Valley and the Catskills, although he had never been there. The Catskill Mountains were named after Kaaterskill, the Dutch word for a local stream.
The Catskills are filled with numerous key sites that may be of interest to both tourists and visitors. The Catskills include wonderful hotels and resorts, famous hiking trails, camp sites, and fishing scenes, historical houses, prompts for famous painters, and is even home to a majestic waterfall.

Hikes are prominent in the Catskills, as they help one see Mother Nature’s work at its finest. Nature hikes are easy to moderate and range from 2-5 hours, while adventure hikes are strenuous and can be up to 8 hours. Night hikes occur under the star-lit skies, and are done over easy terrain. All are offered at various locations in the mountains. A ½ mile hike to Kaaterskill Falls, the tallest double-tiered waterfall in New York, can be described as a moderate yet rewarding trail. Kaaterskill Falls is a two-drop waterfall, totaling 260 feet in height, making it one of the Eastern United States’ taller waterfalls. Its beauty has inspired artists such as Thomas Cole and Frederic Church.
Another popular hiking trail is the Escarpment Trail. It is about 10 miles long, and leads to the large public campground, North-South Lake. North-South Lake exists where the once famous hotel, the Catskill Mountain House, resided. The Catskill Mountain House, overlooking the Hudson River Valley, was built in 1824. Three U.S. Presidents: Grant, Arthur, and Roosevelt have all visited. The Mountain House continued to operate until the start of World War II. On January 25, 1963, the state Conservation Department burned the house, despite the valid attempts of the preservationists. Today, the state now operates North-South Lake, near the site of the hotel, and all that remains is the amazing view and the gateposts. North-South Lake is a 1,100-acre state campground in the Catskill Forest Preserve. This site was a favorite subject of painters in the Hudson River school, particularly Thomas Cole. Artists focused on the wildness of the landscape and where the mountains met the river.
Another site that features hiking in the Catskills is the Mohonk Mountain House, which is home to more than 85 miles of hiking trails. It encompasses 2,200 acres of forests, mountains, and secluded New York hiking trails. In addition, Mohonk Mountain offers nature walks, trail rides, rock climbing, boating and fishing, and mountain biking. Aside from hiking, the Catskill Mountains offer some of the best fishing in the nation, consisting of some of the best Trout fishing streams.
The Catskills are also home to many hotels and resorts, namely Emerson Resort and Spa, Pinegrove Dude Ranch, and The Friar Tuck Resort, Spa, and Convention Center. The Pinegrove Dude Ranch is famous for its horseback riding or the cattle drive. At the Emerson Resort and Spa one can enjoy hiking or biking through the scenic Catskills, white water tubing, a ride on the Catskill Mountain Railroad, or a look at the world’s largest kaleidoscope. The Friar Tuck Resort, Spa and Convention Center is located in the Catskills Mountains. It is surrounded by the majesty of the mountains, and is one of the Northeast’s premier conference resorts and vacation destinations.
The Catskill Heritage Alliance is a tax-exempt charitable organization that is “dedicated to preserving the harmony between the villages of the central Catskills and the surrounding wilderness through community revitalization and open space conservation” (Catskill Heritage Alliance). Among some of the many things that this association works hard at is promoting the revitalization of the Catskill’s diverse communities and preserving its open spaces, protecting the unique wilderness environment that stands as the region’s most reliable economic engine, and supporting sustainable economic growth that maintains the Catskill way of life. Perhaps most important though, is their devotion to keep the Catskill heritage and to keep it essential!

Another key preservationist of the Catskill region is the Greene County Historical Society. For the past few decades, this association has made every effort to promote an interest in, and an appreciation of the history of Greene County. Through their 52 room museum, and their possession of over 10,000 artifacts, this society is able to accomplish their goal of preserving this specific portion of the Catskills. One exhibit in particular that they are quite proud of is the Bronck Museum. It is a complex that consists of Pieter Bronck’s stone house, brick house, Victorian horse barn, Dutch barn, as well as his 13-sided barn. The reason why it holds such significance is because Bronck’s stone house, which was built in 1663, is the oldest surviving house in Upstate New York.
The **Mountain Top Historical Society** is another important key preservationist of the Catskill region. It is a not-for-profit organization, founded in 1947, that dedicates its time and effort to discovering, preserving, interpreting, and sharing the rich history of the Mountain Top region in Greene County, New York. The Society, as they call themselves, takes part in activities and programs that *enrich understanding and advance appreciation of the Catskill High Peaks*. In addition to all this, it also promotes the study and preservation of the Mountain Top’s *art, literature, history, culture, folklore, and legends* in numerous ways. Among the variety of ways the Society promotes the study and preservation of this region are *educational programs* that help students of local schools understand the history of this area, *popular hiking series* that involve hiking leaders who enrich the experience with local folklore, as well as *annual open houses* that feature entertainment, lectures, and exhibits.
The beautiful, mountainous Catskills are home to many animals, trees, waterfalls, rivers and agriculture. For animals there are cougars, deers, flying squirrels, pheasants, falcons and rattlesnakes. It is also home to about 1500-2000 black bears, the second largest population in the world. The Catskills are the birthplace to American Fly-Fishing because they are filled with beautiful lakes, vast forests and deep valleys. It also has the world’s best trout fishing.
There are six major water ways but the biggest streams are the East and West Delaware streams. They are the dominant source for drinking water on that side of the Delaware River. The Catskills have 98 peaks that are over 3000 feet in elevation. The highest peak is Slide Mountain; it is about 4200 feet in elevation. The Slide Mountain Wilderness harbors the finest fisheries in the Catskills, including the Esopus Creek and the east and west branches of the Neversink River. The Kaaterskill Falls and Bastion Falls are also in the Catskill Mountains. Both are absolutely beautiful and peaceful. Kaaterskill Falls is the highest double tiered waterfall in New York.
There are many maple, yellow birch, black cherry, red oak, white pine, eastern hemlock, paper birch, spruce and beech trees grown in the Catskills. The birth of the Christmas tree took place around the 1850’s when a man decided to bring his Evergreen Christmas trees that he was growing in the Catskills, to New York City. By the 1900’s one in every five families had a Christmas tree in their home. Now it is a Christmas tradition and it all started in the Catskills. The Catskills have always been the number one supplier of Christmas trees.
Athens, NY
The Town of Athens was formed in 1815 from parts of the Towns of Catskill. As of the census of 2000, there were 3,991 people, 1,600 households, and 1,110 families residing in the town.

There are 1,972 housing units. The area is predominantly made up of white people. The average household size was 2.48 and the average family size was 2.96. The median income for a household in the town was $39,719, and the median income for a family was $43,672. Males had a median income of $33,913 versus $22,316 for females.

Racial makeup of Athens, NY

- White- 96%
- Black-.98%
- Native American-.28%
- Asian-.85%
- Pacific Islander-.65%
- Other races-1.33%
Jefferson Heights, NY

The community of Jefferson Heights is in the Town of Catskill, northwest of the Village of Catskill.
As of the census of 2000, there were 1,104 people, 382 households, and 241 families. There were 415 housing units with predominantly white people.

The average household size was 2.23 and the average family size was 2.80.
The median income for a household was $43,750, and the median income for a family was $45,365. Males had a median income of $47,109 versus $22,031 for females.
Hudson, NY
As of the census of 2000, there were 7,524 people, 2,951 households, and 1,590 families residing in the city.

The average household size was 2.26 and the average family size was 3.00. The median income for a household in the city was $24,279, and the median income for a family was $27,594. Males had a median income of $26,274 versus $22,598 for females.
Demographics of Nearest Towns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Athens, NY</th>
<th>Jefferson Heights, NY</th>
<th>Hudson, NY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older.</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
<td>23.30%</td>
<td>28.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of all households were made up of individuals</td>
<td>54.80%</td>
<td>50.80%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were non-families</td>
<td>9.70%</td>
<td>8.60%</td>
<td>19.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a female householder with no husband present</td>
<td>30.60%</td>
<td>36.90%</td>
<td>46.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>were married couples living together</td>
<td>25.30%</td>
<td>34.30%</td>
<td>39.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>had children under the age of 18 living with them</td>
<td>13.40%</td>
<td>15.70%</td>
<td>15.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most common industries for males (%):
Construction (12%)
Public administration (12%)
Accommodation and food services (9%)
Educational services (6%)
Motor vehicle and parts dealers (4%)
Health care (4%)
Arts, entertainment, and recreation (4%)

Most common industries for females (%):
Health care (21%)
Food and beverage stores (13%)
Accommodation and food services (10%)
Public administration (10%)
Educational services (7%)
Social assistance (7%)
Finance and insurance (6%)
Overview: After traveling to the key sites of the Catskills, students will expand on the knowledge they gain. This will be demonstrated through cooperative learning, and their final project will be a brochure created on Microsoft Publisher.

Model: *Cooperative Learning*: Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which small teams of students at different levels of ability use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Students will work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it. In our lesson, each team will work together to create a brochure on the key site they are assigned.

Learning intelligences: Our lesson not only fosters knowledge of history and teamwork, but also incorporates the development of literacy skills. After students visit the key sites and research their designated area, their final assignment is a written brochure. It is expected the brochure follows rules of standard English, complete with proper grammar, complete sentences and punctuation, and correct spelling.
Standards:

*Standard 1- History of the United States and New York*
Through both research and field trips students will gain a variety of knowledge on the history of the Hudson River Valley Region, specifically the Catskills. They will learn of the key people, key sites, key resources, etc.

*Standard 3- Geography*
Children will specifically learn about the geography of the region of the Catskills. On the field trips, they will learn about the site we are visiting and the surrounding areas. We will focus on the role geography plays when it comes to the significance to the sites (ex: water for fishing or trails for hiking).

Objectives:
These students will
Students will visit key sites of the Catskills (Kaaterskill Falls, Escarpment Trail, North- South Lake, Mohonk Mountain House) during school field trips. Students will then further research a key site. Students will finish by creating a brochure in their assigned groups.
Materials:
Paper and pencils to record notes during field trips.
Computers and reference books to research sites.
Computers, paper, markers to create colorful and informative brochures.

Teacher Resources:
Books describing key sites in the Catskills (ex: Catskill Mountain Guide by Peter Kick)
Access to key sites and trails

Procedure:
Introduction: Teacher will begin with a brief overview of the Catskills in the classroom. Prior to each field trip, the teacher will inform the students of what they should expect. For example, the students should be warned that on the Escarpment Trail they will be hiking.
Development: After completion of the field trips, students will be divided into 4 groups. Each group will receive a different key site to research and complete a brochure on. Students should work together to gather information pertaining to history, significance, occupants, geography and location, etc.

Closure: After gathering all of the necessary information, students will complete a brochure for their key site. Brochures should be colorful, creative, and accurate. Students will conclude the project by presenting their brochures to the class.

Summary: This lesson plan incorporates various types of learning, with an ending final project. It allows students to experience the key sites first hand, making the project that much more meaningful and memorable. Students will exhibit their researching strategies to acquire the information necessary for completion of the project, and finally, create a brochure to share with the class. After presentations, the brochures will be displayed throughout the classroom for all to see!
The Tallest Double-tiered Waterfall in New York!

You are just a short hike away from one of the taller, most beautiful waterfalls in the entire United States. Kaaterskill Falls provides a short trail with scenic beauty all along the way to the 260 foot falls. Located in the eastern Catskills, Kaaterskill Falls continues to provide New York and its visitors with the most breathtaking sight around!

Only a half-mile hike to heaven!
The Escarpment Trail Run is not your typical road race. It is a rigorous challenge for well-trained runners who will have to climb boulders, jump downed trees, cross creeks, and cover over 10,000 feet of elevation change!

Sunday, July 25, 8:59AM, Windham NY, Rt 23

Come compete or watch the 200 talented athletes conquer the Catskills!
North-South Lake

Enjoy Camping in the Catskills!

Located on the famous historical site of the Catskill Mountain House on the eastern edge of the Catskills, North-South Lake offers scenic beauty with numerous trails and outdoor activities to help you enjoy your camping experience to the fullest!

North-South Lake is the most famous camping site in all of the Catskills. Trails lead you to famous sites, such as Kaaterskill Falls. At the top of some peaks at North-South Lake, you can see five different states from one spot!

Activities Available:

- Biking
- Bird Watching
- Boating
- Canoeing
- Cross Country Skiing
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Horseshoes
- Kayak Rentals
- Mountain Biking
- Nature Study
- Paddle Boat Rentals
- Picnicking
- Playground
- Recreation Programs
- Row Boat Rental
- Snowmobiling
- Swimming
- Volleyball
- and Much More!
Mohonk Mountain House

The Castle of the Catskills

Experience over 85 miles of hiking trails over 2,200 acres of stunning Catskill Mountain terrain!

Built in 1869, the Mohonk Mountain House offers a wide range of activities to compliment its 265 room resort. The resort is well known to hiking lovers as its trails lead to some of the best viewpoints in the Catskills. Just 90 minutes from New York City, the Mohonk Mountain House is the perfect escape from the busy city life for both New Yorkers and all visitors!

Now try rock climbing here at the Mohonk Mountain House!

1000 Mountain Rest Road
New Paltz, NY 12561
Mohonk Mountain House Websites:
http://www.mohonk.com/
http://www.historichotels.org/hotel/Mohonk_Mountain_House

North South Lake Websites:
http://www.villavosilla.com/index.htm
http://www.catskillsreservations.com/hotels/VillaVosilla.htm
http://www.catskillcenter.org/vhikes/hikes.html
http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/24487.html
http://www.dineatcurrans.com/

Escarpment Trail Websites:
http://escarpmenttrail.com/
http://www.localhikes.com/HikeData.asp?DispType=0&ActiveHike=3&GetHikesStateID=2&ID=4510
http://www.slackpacker.com/map_ny.html
http://sectionhiker.com/catskills-backpacking-the-escarpment-trail/
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catskill_Escarpment

Kaaterskill Falls Websites:
http://www.sunnyhill.com/
http://www.visittthecatskills.com/map.php
http://gonewengland.about.com/od/nyattractions/ss/aakaaterskill_3.htm
The Catskills. (1994-2009). Retrieved February 26, 2010, from History.com: <http://www.history.com/topics/catskill-mountains>. This website provided me with information regarding the general history of the Catskills. It began with the geographical formation and then went into specifics about the key people.


Catskills Outback Adventures. (n.d.). Retrieved February 2010, 2010, from Outdoor Adventures: <http://catskilloutback.com/catsadv.html>. This website provided me with information about the outdoor adventure programs that the Catskills have to offer. It specifically went into detail about hiking (nature hikes, adventure hikes, night hikes, and photo op hikes), camping, and fishing (fly fishing, drift fishing, and ice fishing).


[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1/].
Describes the Bronck Museum and what structures exist on this complex. Explains that this is the oldest dwelling in Upstate New York. Ultimately, provides an overview of this museum.

Here I found information about the famous Catskill Mountain House, which I used in the key site portion of the midterm.

Explains the mission of The Mountain Top Historical Society. Describes how it preserves the Catskill

This website provides tourists with healthy, all natural places to eat while they are visiting in the Catskills. It also includes exercise areas in the region.

Information about the North-South Lake campsites and the surrounding trails and activities.

This site depicted the best hotels and resorts that the Catskills has to offer. Some key places include Emerson Resort and Spa, Pinegrove Dude Ranch, and The Friar Tuck Resort, Spa, and Convention Center. It described the various activities that are available at each site, the location of the resort, among other key facts.
This website showed key sites and different natural beauty areas that the Catskills had to offer. It showed different waterfalls, trees and streams that tourists can visit.


This site was specifically used to talk about the Mohonk Mountain House. It went into detail about the various recreational activities available. It also provided wonderful pictures of the resort and the amazing view.