# Impact of the Erie and Chenango Canals

| Lesson | **Subject:** Impact of the Erie and Chenango Canal West of Albany, New York  
Grade Level: 4th - 8th grades (adaptable for all ages)  
Scope of Lesson: 30-45 minutes. Lesson may also be extended through additional assignments. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overview/Rational</strong></td>
<td>The Erie Canal opened in 1825 to much fanfare and celebration, connecting New York City and the Atlantic Ocean with the Great Lakes. The success of the Erie Canal led to the building of other canals. This allowed agricultural and factory made goods, as well as people, to move cheaper and with greater speed from New York City to western New York. Canals created different opportunities to work outside the farm and home as Hosea Dimmick decided to do in 1845.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Standards** | Next Generation Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 4  
NY4R7: Identify information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time-lines, animations, illustrations), and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text. (RI&RL)  
NY4R9: Recognize genres and make connections to other texts, ideas, cultural perspectives, eras, personal events, and situations. (RI&RL)  
New York State Social Studies Framework  
- Standard 1: History of the United States and New York State: 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.  
- Standard 3: Geography: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the geography of the interdependent world in which we live—local, national, and global—including the distribution of people, places, and environments over the Earth's surface. |
- Standard 4: Economics: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of how the United States and other societies develop economic systems and associated institutions to allocate scarce resources, how major decision-making units function in the United States and other national economies, and how an economy solves the scarcity problem through market and nonmarket mechanisms.

**Next Generation Math Standards**

NY-4.OA: Use the four operations with whole numbers to solve problems.

**New York State Learning Standards and Core Curriculum**

NY.RH.5-8. Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies
- Craft and Structure
  - RH.5-8.4. Determine the meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
  - RH.5-8.5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).
- Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity
  - RH.5-8.10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 5-8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

NY.6P. Grade 6: Social Studies Practices
- 6P.A. Gathering, Interpreting, and Using Evidence
  - 6P.A.5. Identify implicit ideas and draw inferences, with support.
  - 6P.A.6. Recognize arguments on specific social studies topics and identify evidence to support the arguments. Examine arguments related to a specific social studies topic from multiple perspectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objective(s):</th>
<th>Students will:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learn new terms and vocabulary about the Erie Canal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gain map-reading skills related to New York State geography and the Erie Canal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Develop skills analyzing historical evidence through primary source photographs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Targets: Skills/Procedures</th>
<th>Students will be able to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Analyze a broadside (poster) and determine the importance of the opening of the Erie Canal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Discuss the impact of the Erie and Chenango canals on the people of Western New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Read charts and graphs to determine the economic impact of the canals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Evaluate the changes in occupation the canal system had on people living west of Albany, New York by writing a summary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content Vocabulary: What specific words in the subject do students need to understand?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Canal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lock tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Barge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Packet boat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Economic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Materials Needed:** | **Teachers:** Internet and computer  
Power Point Presentation  
Student Activity Sheets and Answer Key | **Students:** computer and internet access for remote learning; computer for jump drive, or packet for pen and pencil learning |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| **Procedure:** The lesson may need to be taught for a variety of situations. Please consider how the lesson will be taught In Person, Remotely with Internet Access, or Remotely without Internet Access | **In Person Instruction and/or Live Instruction through Zoom**  
**Introduction 5 minutes**  
- Teachers will introduce the topic.  
- Ask students how they think people traveled before the Erie Canal was built and opened in 1825. (Horse and wagon, walking)  
- Show a short video with images of the Erie Canal with the song, “Fifteen Years (Miles) on the Erie Canal” that can be used to introduce the lesson. Here is a link for a 2-minute video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIIM1mHfJ0U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gIIM1mHfJ0U)  
**Lesson 20-30 minutes**  
- Teachers will present the PowerPoint by sharing their Zoom screen with the students and/or projecting the PowerPoint in the classroom. Teacher will discuss the topics associated with this lesson, moving through each slide, asking appropriate questions to help students decipher what they see on the slide and how it relates to the topic. Teachers will also help student find connections between the topic and their own experiences. For example, teachers will ask students what they see in the pictures in the presentation, then have them describe how what is being done in the picture is done differently by them now.  
- Within the PowerPoint there are instructions to complete specific activities. If the teacher chooses to have students complete this in class, the teacher can then review the answers as a class. If the class is zooming, lessons can be uploaded to google classroom or other platform for students to access. Student answers will allow the teacher to check for understanding.  
**Closing 5 minutes**  
- Teacher will review the information learned in the PowerPoint to reinforce the ideas presented about the economic impact of the canals on life in New York west of Albany. |
| **Assessment:** Students will complete a “ticket out” to assess their level of understanding the lesson objectives. | **Live Online Instruction with Internet Access**  
**For Live Instruction:** Teacher will send a zoom link to students prior to the lesson. Teacher will present PowerPoint through the shared screen to the students. Teacher will upload associated documents including Lessons 1-3 in Google Classroom or other module. Teacher will follow the in person instruction lesson plan.  
**Remote Instruction** (not live) or **Paper/Pencil Instruction**  
Teacher will upload PowerPoint and associated documents to student learning module. Students with Internet access will view the PowerPoint and complete Lessons  | **Students without Internet Access:**  
If the student has computer but no internet, PowerPoint and documents may be put on a jump drive for the student.  
No computer:  
PowerPoint with notes and any handouts will be printed for the student. |
### Supplemental Lessons

- To extend the lesson, teachers may choose to have students work independently to research a specific town or city that grew along the canals.

1. Teachers may choose to allow students play the “Weigh Master Game” located on the Erie Canal Museum website: [http://eriecanalmuseum.org/history](http://eriecanalmuseum.org/history) to visualize the lock system and how it works.

### Differentiation

- A printout of the images and the notes will be provided.
- Extra time will be provided.
- Students may be provided an opportunity to review the PowerPoint again.
- If students finish early, they will write a paragraph about what they learned, and/or work on a supplemental research project.
- Use subtitles on the powerpoint.
- Students with IEP or 504 plans will be treated accordingly. Students will be allowed to sit in the front of the classroom and have a tutor or receive extra help. All bullet points above also apply.

### Resources

**References for Resources Used:**

- New York State Library, NYSL_erie_canal_celebration_broadside
- [https://www.canals.ny.gov/history/history.html](https://www.canals.ny.gov/history/history.html)
- [www.harvestofhistory.org](http://www.harvestofhistory.org)
- [www.chenangocanal.org](http://www.chenangocanal.org)
- Chenango_Canal_Review_by_Diane_Van_Slyke.pdf
- CANAL DISCOVERY: The duties of a lock tender | Columns | lockportjournal.com
- [https://th.bing.com/th/id/Rc1458190ab6aba799d3bfa81338f9e4a?rik=HDdDrVB%2bD5lmyoQ&riu=http%3a%2f%2feriecanal.info%2fimages%2fLockport-1%2fLockportLocks-1880a.jpg&ehk=e56Vr5mfBeg50gQlBX6m4d8drCpMKjpxg6h42vouegU%3d&riss=&pid=ImgRaw](https://th.bing.com/th/id/Rc1458190ab6aba799d3bfa81338f9e4a?rik=HDdDrVB%2bD5lmyoQ&riu=http%3a%2f%2feriecanal.info%2fimages%2fLockport-1%2fLockportLocks-1880a.jpg&ehk=e56Vr5mfBeg50gQlBX6m4d8drCpMKjpxg6h42vouegU%3d&riss=&pid=ImgRaw)