

MYSTIC SEAPORT

THE MUSEUM OF AMERICA AND THE SEA

TM

## “The Rise and Fall of the American Whaling Empire: A Synthesis Lesson for Today”

*He who has never failed somewhere, that man can not be great. -Herman Melville*



“Sperm Whaling No. 2 – The Capture.” © Mystic Seaport, 1955.489

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**Subject:** AP English Language and Composition

**Grade Level:** Grades 11 & 12

**Timeframe:** Four days

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**Introduction:** This multi-day lesson challenges the student to identify, explore, and apply principles of Economics to the rise and fall of the American whaling industry through, the use of primary source documents and, in turn, to connect the lessons learned from the American whaling industry to a 21<sup>st</sup> century industry (with an encouraging emphasis on the business sector of the State of Connecticut).

**Geographic Connections:** Related to Global Cultural Themes (see C3 under geography: <http://www.socialstudies.org/system/files/c3/C3-Framework-for-Social-Studies.pdf>)

D2.Eco.2.9-12. Use marginal benefits and marginal costs to construct an argument for or against an approach or solution to an economic issue.

**Vocabulary:** Economics, Capitalism, Socialism, (Whaling) Contracts, editorials, political cartoons, voyage maps, visual sources, rhetoric, argument, claim, counterclaim, synthesis, primary documents, evaluating sources.

## **Content Standards**

### [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1.b](#)

Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.

### CCR Anchor Standard for Writing 1

W.11-12.1a Introduce precise, knowledgeable claim(s), establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.

W.11-12.1b Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases. W.11-12.1c

### **Compelling (Essential) Question:**

How and why does Economics and its principles affect the rise, growth, decline, and failure of a successful industry?

### **Literacy through the Content Area:**

Previous lessons on strategies for teaching literacy include: the strategy of reading critically for analyzing argument (with claims, counterclaims, and evidence); using close textual passage analysis; the strategy of using annotation for rhetoric, argument, claim and counterclaim; and skill-based strategies in writing analytical essays, argument essays, and synthesis essays.

### **Placement of Lesson within Broader Curriculum/Context:**

This multi-day lesson falls at the end of a sequence of units preparing students for effective college writing and for the AP English Language and Composition exam (those units being Analysis, Argument and Synthesis). Students completing this lesson will self-determine their proficiency in necessary college-ready skills of analytical reading, selection and evaluation of primary sources, and synthesis of sources into an argument essay (with primary and secondary claims and counterclaims). Subsequent instruction will be individualized based upon student need of further development of and practice of skills that the student and the teacher have determined the student needs in order to construct a college-ready essay.

### **Learner Background:**

The student will have practiced skills in critical, annotative reading, in analysis of visual documents (pictures, photographs, portraits, sketches, editorial cartoons, maps and graphs), and in writing analytical, argument, and synthesis essays. At this point, both formative and summative assessments would have confirmed knowledge of and application of necessary reading and writing skills to undertake the work of this lesson.

### **Objective(s) for Lesson:**

The student will read critically; annotate analytically; conduct close textual analysis and visual analysis; assess, evaluate, and choose appropriate primary documents; synthesize those chosen documents into an argument thesis and essay outline; and construct an argument essay with claim(s), counterclaim(s), and supportive evidence.

**Integration of 21st century skills:**

Students will use higher level thinking skills and critical thinking skills of analysis of the primary sources (Dimension 3); interact in group work where students dialogue with and about the primary sources (Dimension 1); make connections with current real world economic challenges (Dimension 2); use technology in their research of the primary sources; select and evaluate appropriate sources to use in their arguments (Dimension 3); and communicate effectively via a synthesis argument essay (Dimension 4).

**Assessment**

Students will demonstrate mastery of the student learning objective with a Summative Assessment: the construction of a synthesis argument essay. (See below the assignment and assessment criteria via the presentation and essay rubrics.) Students will show evidence of learning by attaching annotations of sources, submitting the Formative Assessment of the essay thesis and outline (Dimension 3, submitted earlier and approved by the teacher) and the Summative Assessment, the synthesis argument essay (Dimension 4).

**Materials/Resources:**

Materials used will include: the assignment (see below) with links to all primary sources and to the grading rubrics, and access to a computer/tablet in order to conduct research, reading, and the writing of the essay.

## Lesson Development/Instructional Strategies

### Lesson Plan

**Day 1.** Teacher will distribute the assignment (see below) and have a whole class review with students; this includes setting objectives, reviewing procedures and source documents, and understanding evaluation criteria via the rubrics. Students will be given the readings to prepare (reading and analyzing for claim, counterclaim, and evidence) for the next class. Students will also be assigned into a group (about four students per group is best so that two students can type the presentation points, two others prepare to present to the whole class); each group will be assigned about 5 readings (3 visuals, 2 written text) of the Source Document list.

**Day 2** Students will meet in groups to analyze their assigned readings; they will have about 20 minutes to capture key claim(s) counterclaim(s), and evidence of the pieces. Groups will then join the whole class where individual groups will present key claim(s), counterclaim(s), and evidence of the piece. The primary goal is for students to analyze **what** the text (visual or written) is presenting and **how** the text does this (with evidence).

**Day 3** Some groups may still need to present. Then, the whole class should convene in a discussion about the rise and fall of the whaling industry and how they see evidence of a similar rise and fall in other industries. (A focus on Connecticut industries is encouraged.) We will close the class with writing our primary findings on the white board.

**Day 4** Each student should meet with the teacher to formalize the student's thesis and outline for the student's essay. Once approved, student is now free to write the essay for a deadline established by the teacher.

The student assignment and readings are presented below.

**Students Needing Differentiated Instruction:** There will be limited need to differentiate because students taking the AP English Language and Composition course are expected to have the necessary skills to complete this assignment. However, if this assignment is modified for another class (e.g. American Literature, Junior year Honors level or Standard level), the teacher could pre-select four to eight sources and "chunk" those sources already evaluated as strong sources into shorter source documents. This would be particularly helpful if the teacher is building the lesson on critical analytical reading and synthesis argument essay writing, with limited or no emphasis on selecting and evaluating of resources.

## Synthesis Assignment:

### The Rise and Fall of the American Whaling Empire: A Synthesis Lesson for Today

*"Some years ago -- never mind how long precisely -- having little or no money in my purse, and nothing particular to interest me on shore, I thought I would sail about a little and see the watery part of the world." -- Moby Dick, Herman Melville*

*The whale ship was my Yale College and my Harvard. Herman Melville*

*He who has never failed somewhere, that man can not be great. Herman Melville*

In the 1800's the United States (particularly Connecticut and Massachusetts) enjoyed the prosperous benefits of a boom industry: the American whaling industry. Yet for a number of reasons the whaling industry declined and eventually died as a prosperous industry. Your assignment is to look at what made the American whale industry so prosperous and what caused its decline—as an example of why an industry rises and falls. In turn, you will draw connections to a 21<sup>st</sup> century industry as you analyze its rise and whether or not you seen its current or potential decline. You are encouraged to look at a 21<sup>st</sup> century industry in Connecticut.

Beside thinking about the various readings we have explored previously in this unit on Economics, you are now asked to look at all of the following source documents; you may also look at the Whaling industry bibliography (last on the list) and you may also include additional research documents. You will be assigned to a group that will analyze some of the assigned documents (both visual and written text) and will present its findings to the class. We will then have a whole class discussion about lessons to be learned from the American whaling industry for today. Next, you should submit a thesis and outline, and your annotations of the sources used for teacher approval. Last, you will write an essay in which you explain your position on what makes an industry rise and fall with a particular connection between the American whaling industry and a 21<sup>st</sup> century industry (possibly in Connecticut). You are asked to use appropriate evidence from the provided readings to support your argument. You should aim for at least 3 visual texts and 3 written texts as evidence. Again, you may include additional research.

The objective of the assignment is to assess your skill in

- reading/analysis for claim and supporting evidence of both the American whaling industry and 21<sup>st</sup> Century America/Connecticut industry, (Dimension 2)\*
- formulating a strong thesis, outline and argument, (Dimension 1)\*
- synthesizing the best sources for a thesis by evaluating those sources, (Dimension 3)\* and
- writing a solid argument essay. (Dimension 4)\*

(Note: The four dimensions of the Inquiry Arc are reflected in this lesson.

- o Dimension 1: Developing questions and planning inquiry
- o Dimension 2: Applying disciplinary concepts and tools
- o Dimension 3: Evaluating sources and using evidence
- o Dimension 4: Communicating conclusions and taking informed action.)

Rubrics (Presentation and Writing) are attached.

## Source Documents

### VISUAL TEXTS

- Cartoon from an 1861 Vanity Fair: "Grand ball given by the whales in honor of the discovery of the oil wells in Pennsylvania." <http://photos1.blogger.com/hello/157/2154/640/DSCN0016.jpg>

Pictures of Artifacts/documents Related to Financial Profits of whaling:

- Barrels of whale oil: <http://www.freelancehistorian.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/shooks.jpg>
- Baleen Corset Stays: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/baleen\\_corset\\_stays/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/baleen_corset_stays/)
- Corset: <http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/corset/>
- Sperm Oil Advertisement: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/cwm\\_advertisement/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/cwm_advertisement/)
- Sewing Machine Oil Ad: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/ezra\\_kelley\\_label/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/ezra_kelley_label/)
- Whale Oil Lamp: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/whale\\_oil\\_lamp/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/whale_oil_lamp/)
- Oil Advertisement: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/oil\\_advertising\\_booklet/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/oil_advertising_booklet/)
- Ambergris Sample: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/ambergris\\_vial/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/ambergris_vial/)
- Whale Stamp (to mark kills/oil barrels)  
[http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/whale\\_stamp\\_bone/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/artifacts/whale_stamp_bone/)

Financial charts, graphs, maps

- \* Charles W. Morgan Financial Stats:

[http://educators.mysticseaport.org/static/connections/related\\_pdfs/cwm\\_financial\\_stats.pdf](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/static/connections/related_pdfs/cwm_financial_stats.pdf)

- \* Whaling Contract: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/documents/whaling\\_contract/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/documents/whaling_contract/)

\* Map of Morgan's first Voyage - (Each geographic spot opens up and connects to the actual logbook pages... I can explain this in detail tomorrow:

[http://educators.mysticseaport.org/maps/voyage/morgan\\_first/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/maps/voyage/morgan_first/)

- \* Shipping Articles: [http://educators.mysticseaport.org/documents/tenedos\\_hawaii\\_shipping\\_articles/](http://educators.mysticseaport.org/documents/tenedos_hawaii_shipping_articles/)

- \* ENTIRE whaling resource set:

<http://educators.mysticseaport.org/sets/whaling/http://educators.mysticseaport.org/sets/whaling/>

### WRITTEN TEXTS

Articles on 21st century economic decline of industries, Connecticut

<http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2012/02/the-spectacular-rise-and-fall-of-us-whaling-an-innovation-story/253355/>

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jimpowell/2013/08/01/how-did-rich-connecticut-morph-into-one-of-americas-worst-performing-economies/>

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/02/uss-most-endangered-industries\\_n\\_842787.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/02/uss-most-endangered-industries_n_842787.html)

<https://www.minnpost.com/macro-micro-minnesota/2012/02/history-lessons-understanding-decline-manufacturing>

<http://www.epi.org/publication/the-decline-and-resurgence-of-the-u-s-auto-industry/>

### Bibliography

<http://www.whalingmuseum.org/explore/library/bibliographies/specialized-bibliographies/economic-impact-of-american-whaling>