

Murder on the Frontier: The Paxton Massacre

by Ron Nash and John McNamara

UNIT OVERVIEW

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute's Teaching Literacy through History™ resources, designed to align to the Common Core State Standards. The lessons can also be modified to conform to the C3 Framework. These units were developed to enable students to understand, summarize, and evaluate original documents of historical significance. Students will learn and practice the skills that will help them analyze, assess, and develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned viewpoints on these source materials.

The title of this unit refers to a little-known massacre in colonial Pennsylvania. Over the course of three lessons, students will attempt to understand how a vigilante group justified its role in murdering twenty Native Americans. The primary source evidence will allow students to analyze questions related to claims about colonization, peace and war, race and ethnicity, masculinity and civility, the use of violence as a political weapon, and religious association. Most of the primary sources referenced here are available in *Digital Paxton* (digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/index), which collects in one open-source repository surviving pamphlets, broadsides, political cartoons, and correspondence related to the Paxton incident.

Ultimately, students will demonstrate what they have learned through an analysis of the various primary source materials by writing a response to essential questions posed for the unit, participating in whole-class and small-group discussions, and engaging in a news conference simulation.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Analyze both primary and secondary source documents using close-reading strategies
- Interpret, analyze, and demonstrate understanding of visual materials
- Draw logical inferences and summarize the essential message of a work of art
- Compose summaries of the major points in written primary sources
- Compare and contrast the viewpoints and perspectives of different writers

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

Below is a selection of Essential Questions that you may use to guide discussions as students analyze and assess the documents in these lesson.

- To what extent did fear of Native Americans develop into racial hatred in colonial Pennsylvania?
- To what extent can the rhetoric of fear incite a population to violence?

- To what extent did fear and racism shape colonial perceptions of neighboring Native Americans?
- How did the living conditions on the frontier contribute to confrontation and conflict between Native Americans and colonists?
- To what extent did the actions of the Paxton Boys disrupt or destroy William Penn's Peaceable Kingdom?

NUMBER OF CLASS PERIODS: 4

GRADE LEVEL: 7–12

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2: Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6: Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on . . . topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

LESSON 1

OVERVIEW

Students will read a secondary source that provides historical context for a selection of six images from the eighteenth century. They will then carefully examine each image, using the questions on an activity sheet to interpret the images. Their knowledge will be demonstrated through the completed activity sheets, class discussion, and a written response.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Demonstrate understanding of both literal and inferential aspects of written text- and image-based evidence
- Summarize the essential message of a visual primary source
- Draw conclusions based on direct evidence found in a visual primary source

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- To what extent did fear of Native Americans develop into racial hatred on the Pennsylvania frontier?
- To what extent can the rhetoric of fear entice a population to violence?
- To what extent did fear shape colonial perceptions of neighboring Native Americans?

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Provided in the handouts for Lesson 1.

MATERIALS

- Historical Background: “Peaceable Kingdom Lost, Part 1” by Kevin Kenny, Glucksman Professor in Irish Studies, New York University. Commissioned for *Digital Paxton*.
- Activity Sheets
 - Analyzing an Essay for Lesson 1
 - Details, Description, and Decision activity sheet
- Visual Culture Array (images may be found on the Digital Paxton website: <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/index>)
 - #1: Benjamin West, *Penn’s Treaty with the Indians*, 1771–1772, oil on canvas, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Gift of Mrs. Sarah Harrison (The Joseph Harrison, Jr. Collection).

- Available online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/penns-treaty-with-the-indians-1771-72>.
- #2: “The Massacre of the Indians of Lancaster by the Paxton Boys in 1763,” in [James Wimer], *Events in Indian History, Beginning with an Account of the Origins of the American Indians, and Early Settlements in North America* (Lancaster PA: G. Hills & Co., 1841), p. 488. Available online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/media/massacre-of-the-conestogas-1>.
 - #3: Charles Grignon, “The Indians Giving a Talk to Colonel Bouquet in a Conference at a Council Fire . . . in Oct^r 1764,” based on artwork by Benjamin West, in William Smith, *An Historical Account of the Expedition against the Ohio Indians, in the Year 1764: under the Command of Henry Bouquet, Esq. . . .* (Philadelphia, 1766). Available online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/the-indians-giving-a-talk-to-colonel-bouquet-in-a-conference-at-a-council-fire>.
 - #4: [James Claypoole or Henry Dawkins], “An Indian Squaw King Wampum Spies,” (Philadelphia, [1764]), Historical Society of Pennsylvania Large Graphics Collection (#V65). Available online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/an-indian-squaw-king-wampum-spies>.
 - #5: [James Claypoole or Henry Dawkins], “The German Bleeds and Bears Ye Furs,” ([Philadelphia], 1764), Historical Society of Pennsylvania Large Graphics Collection (#V65). Available online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/the-german-bleeds-and-bears-ye-furs?path=political-cartoons>.
 - #6: Henry Dawkins, “The Paxton Expedition, Inscribed to the Author of the Farce, by HD,” (Philadelphia, ca. 1764), Library Company of Philadelphia. Available online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/the-paxton-expedition?path=political-cartoons>.

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce the following Essential Questions:
 - To what extent did fear of Native Americans develop into racial hatred on the Pennsylvania frontier?
 - To what extent can the rhetoric of fear entice a population to violence?
 - To what extent did fear shape colonial perceptions of neighboring Native Americans?
2. Distribute Part 1 of the Historical Background essay written by Professor Kevin Kenny. You may choose to assign the reading as homework before starting the lesson, and the students can complete the Analyzing an Essay activity sheet to prepare for the class discussion.

You may also choose to “share read” the document in class. This is done by having the students follow along silently while you begin to read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation.

Then ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud, still serving as the model. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).

3. If you introduce the reading in class during this lesson, distribute the Analyzing an Essay activity sheet after the reading activity. Depending on the students' experience with examining texts, you may choose to model the selection and analysis of the first phrase and, when the class is ready, the answer to the first critical thinking question. For the rest of the activity sheet, you may choose to have the students work individually, as partners, or in small groups of three or four.
4. After giving the students enough time to complete the activity, reconvene the whole class and discuss different interpretations developed by individual students or groups.
5. For the rest of the class period you may choose to have the students do the following activity individually, as partners, or in small groups of no more than three or four students. Depending on the time available, you may choose to provide a selection of the images or assign some image analysis as homework
6. Distribute the first image from the visual culture array ("The Treaty of Penn with the Indians") to the class along with the Details, Description, and Decision activity sheet.
7. Model the activity with the class for the first visual image, eliciting answers to the questions through class discussion.
8. Distribute images #2–#6 and the Details, Description, and Decision activity sheets (1 per image per student or group). The verses from three of the images are provided as well. You may ask the students to include the text in their analysis of the images.
9. After giving the students enough time to complete the activity sheets, reconvene the whole class and discuss different interpretations developed by the individual students or groups.

ASSESSMENT

Using the secondary source and the six visual images, students will select one of the essential questions and develop a viewpoint. They will then write a brief essay response to the essential question that they have chosen and support their viewpoint with evidence from the essay and visual sources.

- To what extent did fear of Native Americans develop into racial hatred on the Pennsylvania frontier?
- To what extent can the rhetoric of fear entice a population to violence?
- To what extent did fear shape colonial perceptions of neighboring Native Americans?

LESSON 2

OVERVIEW

Students will read two primary source documents representing opposing points of view about the murders of the Conestoga Indians by the Paxton Boys. Students will engage in the Key Word strategy to develop an effective comprehension as well as draw sound conclusions about these historical events.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- To what extent were the Paxton Boys justified or not justified in attacking and annihilating the Conestoga Indians in Lancaster?
- To what extent were the factors of excessive competition and fear influential in the relationship between the colonists and the Conestoga Indians?

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Compare and contrast the views of two opposing texts
- Summarize the essential message of each primary source
- Draw conclusions based on direct evidence found in the primary sources

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Provided in the handouts for Lesson 2.

MATERIALS

- Historical Background: “Peaceable Kingdom Lost, Part 2” by Kevin Kenny, Glucksman Professor in Irish Studies, New York University. Commissioned for *Digital Paxton*.
- Primary Sources
 - “The Apology of the Paxton Volunteers Addressed to the Candid & Impartial World,” in *The Paxton Papers*, ed. John Dunbar (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1957), pp. 193–194. Some spelling and punctuation have been modernized in the transcript.
 - Benjamin Franklin, *A Narrative of the Late Massacres, in Lancaster County, of a Number of Indians, Friends of the Province, by Persons Unknown. With Some Observations on the Same*, 1764, pp. 12–14 and 25–27.
- Activity Sheets
 - Analyzing an Essay (Lesson 2)-*Important phrases only, no critical thinking questions*
 - Summary Organizer #1: Excerpts from “The Apology of the Paxton Volunteers”

- Summary Organizer #2: Excerpts from Franklin’s *Narrative of the Late Massacres*
- Summary Organizer #3: Excerpts from Franklin’s *Narrative of the Late Massacres*
- Overhead projector, ELMO projector, or similar device

PROCEDURE

1. During this lesson students will engage with two primary source documents. The first is an excerpt from “The Apology of the Paxton Volunteers” outlining the Paxton Boys’ grievances.
2. Hand out Summary Organizer #1. Share read the text with the students as described in Lesson 1.
3. Display Summary Organizer #1 in a format large enough for everyone in class to see. The whole class will be going through the text-analysis process together for the first reading.
4. Explain that the objective is to select Key Words from the text and then use those words to create a summary sentence that demonstrates an understanding of the passage.
5. Guidelines for Selecting the Key Words: Key Words are very important to understanding the text. Without them the selection would not make sense. These words are usually nouns or verbs. Tell the students not to pick “connector” words (*are, is, the, and, so, etc.*). The number of Key Words depends on the length of the original selection. This selection is 288 words, so you can pick ten to twelve Key Words. The students must know the meaning of the words they select. This will give them practice reasoning out word meanings using context and advancing dictionary skills.
6. Students will now select ten to twelve words from the text that they believe are Key Words and write them in the Key Words section of their organizers.
7. Survey the class to find out what they selected as Key Words. You can ask for a show of hands to determine the most popular choices. Using this vote and some discussion the class should finalize ten to twelve Key Words. For example, let’s say that the class selects *Indians, governed, dangerous enemies, spies, laws, intelligence, implements, war, source, and calamities*. (Note: Two words may be allowed if they convey a single idea.) Now, no matter which words the students had previously selected, have them write the words agreed upon by the class or chosen by you into the Key Words section of the summary organizer.
8. The class will now use these Key Words to write a brief sentence or two to summarize what the author was writing about. This should be a whole-class discussion-and-negotiation process. For example, *The Indians who lived among us were not governed by our laws and were dangerous enemies and spies who gave intelligence and implements of war to our enemies (the French). They are the source of our calamities*. The students might decide that they don’t need some of the Key Words to make the summary even more streamlined. This is part of the negotiation process. Copy the final negotiated sentence(s) into the organizer.
9. Tell the students to restate their summary sentence in their own words; they do not have to use the author’s words. For example, *The Indians who lived in our area were not governed by our laws and*

were dangerous enemies and spies who helped the French. They are responsible for our misery and misfortune. Copy the final negotiated sentence(s) into the organizer.

10. Wrap-up: Discuss vocabulary that the students found confusing or difficult. You could have students use the back of their organizers to make a note of these words and their meanings.
11. Hand out Summary Organizer #2. This contains an excerpt from Benjamin Franklin's *A Narrative of the Late Massacres*, written as a reply to the Paxton Boys' explanations. The students may work in small groups, in pairs, or individually to complete the organizer. They should select ten to twelve Key Words for this passage.
12. Wrap-up: Discuss vocabulary that the students found confusing or difficult. You could have students use the back of their organizers to make a note of these words and their meanings.
13. You can assign Organizer #3 for homework. They may complete the whole assignment at home or only identify and circle Key Words (seven to eight) so that you are prepared to engage in the negotiation process the next day.

ASSESSMENT

Either as an in class or homework assignment, students will develop a viewpoint on one of the lesson's Essential Questions, writing a brief evaluative essay or exit card.

- To what extent were the Paxton Boys justified or not justified in attacking and annihilating the Conestoga Indians in Lancaster?
- To what extent were the factors of excessive competition and fear influential in the relationship between the colonists and the Conestoga Indians?

LESSON 3

OVERVIEW

Students will read two additional primary source documents, two pamphlets representing the Paxton Pamphlet War, and complete activity sheets for each one. They will then develop a mock debate using the documents from Lessons 2 and 3 to deepen their understanding of the documents and demonstrate their comprehension. The unit concludes with an essay that builds on the assessment from Lesson 2.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Write insightful questions on a specific topic
- Draw conclusions based on direct evidence found in the text
- Demonstrate an effective oral presentation
- Synthesize multiple sources of information in order to arrive at a logical conclusion that is supported by textual evidence

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Provided in the handouts for Lesson 3.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- To what extent was the violence of the Paxton Boys motivated by fear, economics, politics, and/or racism?
- To what extent should the Paxton Boys be viewed as democratic freedom fighters or brutal murderers on the Pennsylvania frontier?
- To what extent were the Paxton Boys justified or not justified in attacking and annihilating the Conestoga Indians in Lancaster?
- To what extent were the factors of excessive competition and fear influential in the relationship between the colonists and the Conestoga Indians?

MATERIALS

- Historical Background: “Peaceable Kingdom Lost (Part 3)” by Kevin Kenny, Glucksman Professor in Irish Studies, New York University. Commissioned for *Digital Paxton*.
- Activity Sheets
 - Analyzing an Essay (Lesson 3)-*Important phrases only, no critical thinking questions*
 - Analyzing a Pamphlet

- News Conference Organizer
- Primary Sources
 - Excerpts from *A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania, Presented by Them to the Honourable the Governor and Assembly of the Province, Shewing the Causes of Their Late Discontent and Uneasiness and the Grievances under Which They Have Laboured, and Which They Humbly Pray to Have Redress'd*, 1764, pp. 10–17.
 - *A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman, and Thomas Zealot; About the Kiilling the Indians at Cannestogoe and Lancaster*, [1764]. Some spelling and punctuation in this text have been modernized to aid comprehension. For the original text, see the images online at <http://digitalpaxton.org/works/digital-paxton/a-dialogue-between-andrew-trueman-and-thomas-zealot>.
 - From Lesson 2: “The Apology of the Paxton Volunteers Addressed to the Candid & Impartial World,” in *The Paxton Papers*, ed. John Dunbar (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1957), pp. 193–194. Some spelling and punctuation have been modernized in the transcript.
 - From Lesson 2: Benjamin Franklin, *A Narrative of the Late Massacres, in Lancaster County, of a Number of Indians, Friends of the Province, by Persons Unknown. With Some Observations on the Same*, 1764, pp. 12–14 and 25–27.

PROCEDURE

1. Assign and distribute the two readings from the Paxton Pamphlet War—excerpts from *A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants* and *A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman, and Thomas Zealot*.
2. Divide the class into groups of four to six students. Within their groups they will work collaboratively to complete an Analyzing a Pamphlet activity sheet for each of the new documents.
3. After the groups have completed the Analyzing a Pamphlet activity sheets, each group is assigned or chooses one of the four Digital Paxton documents (two from this lesson and two from the previous lesson). It is best if all four texts are used before doubling up on any of the documents.
4. Students select who will portray the speaker, and the rest of the group members will take the roles of reporters at a news conference.
5. If possible, have the students watch an actual news conference prior to this activity.
6. Hand out the News Conference organizer. Together the students in each group will write both the questions and the answers to the questions for each reporter. The questions should highlight the major issues in the document. If time permits, the students could script follow-up questions. They should be careful to cite evidence from the text for the answers given by the speaker. All students will write out their own complete copy of the questions and answers, not just their own question.

7. Presentation:
 - a. The speaker reads the text aloud to the class.
 - b. The reporters raise their hands and the speaker selects them one by one to ask their question.
 - c. Continue until all of the questions have been asked, one per reporter; if time permits, they may ask their follow-up questions.
 - d. Repeat the process with all of the groups. This may mean going into another class period to allow time for all of the presentations as well as time to debrief the experience.
8. Have the class debrief the presentations: Which were the most effective? What made them effective? How could the presentations have been improved? Focus on good oral presentation skills as well as which questions elicited the most meaningful answers and whether the answers were based on evidence in the text.
9. Students should now write an essay addressing one of the Essential Questions from Lesson 2. The students may elaborate on their short essay or exit card from the previous lesson or a new essay on the alternate question:
 - To what extent were the Paxton Boys justified or not justified in attacking and annihilating the Conestoga Indians in Lancaster?
 - To what extent were the factors of excessive competition and fear influential in the relationship between the colonists and the Conestoga Indians?

Historical Background

Kevin Kenny, “Peaceable Kingdom Lost, Part I”

The Paxton Boys struck Conestoga Indiantown at dawn on December 14, 1763. “Fifty-seven Men, from some of our Frontier Townships, who had projected the Destruction of this little Commonwealth,” Benjamin Franklin wrote in his *Narrative of the Late Massacres in Lancaster County*, “came, all well-mounted, and armed with Firelocks, Hangers [a kind of short sword] and Hatchets, having travelled through the Country in the Night, to Conestogoe Manor.” Only six Indians were in the town at the time, “the rest being out among the neighboring White People, some to sell the Baskets, Brooms and Bowls they manufactured.” The Paxton Boys killed these six and burned their settlement to the ground.

The Conestoga Indians lived on a 500-acre tract near the town of Lancaster, about one hundred miles west of Philadelphia, which William Penn had set aside for them seventy years earlier. By 1763 only twenty Conestogas were living there—seven men, five women, and eight children. They survived by raising a little corn, begging at local farms, soliciting food and clothing from the colonial government, and selling their homemade brooms and baskets.

Local magistrates removed the remaining fourteen Conestoga Indians to the Lancaster jail and workhouse for their safety, but on December 27 the Paxton Boys rode into that town and finished the job they had started two weeks earlier. Fifty men, “armed as before, dismounting, went directly to the Work-house and by Violence broke open the Door,” Franklin reported, “and entered with the utmost Fury in their Countenances.” Within a matter of minutes they had slaughtered the fourteen Indians sheltering at the workhouse, including the eight children.

The Paxton Boys were fully aware of the symbolic and political significance of their actions. They murdered unarmed peaceable Indians to make the point that all Indians were the same. And they slaughtered the Conestogas on government property in broad daylight. In perpetrating the massacres, they repudiated the Indian policy of William Penn.

Inspired by Quaker principles, Penn had founded his colony in 1682 as a “holy experiment” in which Christians and Indians could live together in harmony. He referred to this ideal society as the “Peaceable Kingdom.” The nineteenth-century Quaker artist Edward Hicks produced a series of paintings of the Peaceable Kingdom, based on a theme from the Book of Isaiah, in which he always included Penn’s legendary meeting with the Delaware Indians under the elm tree at Shackamaxon, in present-day Philadelphia. In pursuit of his vision, Penn treated the Indians in his province with unusual respect and decency. The Conestogas revered him, his children, and his grandchildren.

Yet for all William Penn's popularity, his holy experiment rested on colonial foundations. There would have been no Pennsylvania, after all, had he not received a gift of 29 million acres from King Charles II in 1681—a gift that made him the largest individual landlord in the British Empire. Within this immense territory, Penn purchased land from Indians fairly and openly. But he did so because he needed to get clear title to their land so that he could sell it to settlers and try to make a profit from his colony. The Indians, however, believed that they were only selling the land temporarily. It could never be sold permanently because it belonged to the tribe as a whole as a sacred trust. For this reason alone, the holy experiment was never likely to work in practice.

Analyzing an Essay (Lesson 1)

Important Phrases

Which phrases or sentences are the most informative and important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Critical Thinking Questions

Cite examples from the text in your answers.

1. How would you evaluate the events of December 14, 1763, in terms of participant actions and outcomes?

2. Where did the Conestoga Indians live and how long had they been there?

3. What were the colonists' attitudes toward land ownership and how did this belief differ from the Conestoga Indians' belief?

Image # _____

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#1

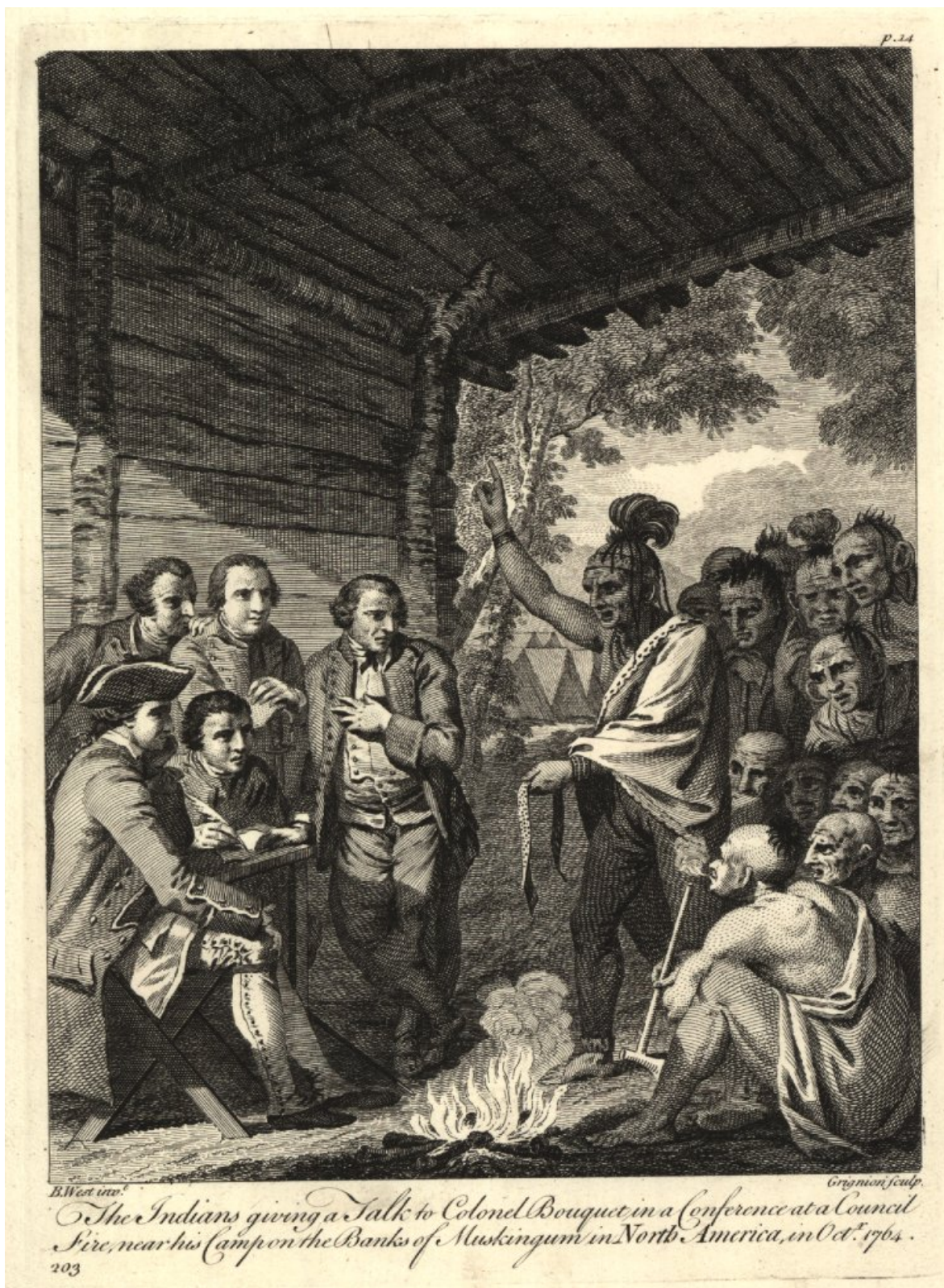


Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

#2



#3



#4



Historical Society of Pennsylvania

An Indian Squaw King Wampum Spies

An Indian Squaw King Wampum spies
Which makes his lustful passions rise
But while he doth a friendly Jobb
She dives her Hand into his Fob
And thence conveys as we are told
His Watch whose Cases were of Gold.

When Dangers threaten tis mere Nonsense
To talk of such a thing as Conscience
To Arms to Arms with one Accord

The Sword of Quakers and the Lord
Fill Bumpers then of Rum or Arrack
We'll drink Success to the new Barrack.

Fight Dog! fight Bear! you're all my Friends
By you I shall attain my Ends
For I can never be content
Till I have got the Government
But if from this Attempt I fall
Then let the Devil take you all.

#5



Historical Society of Pennsylvania

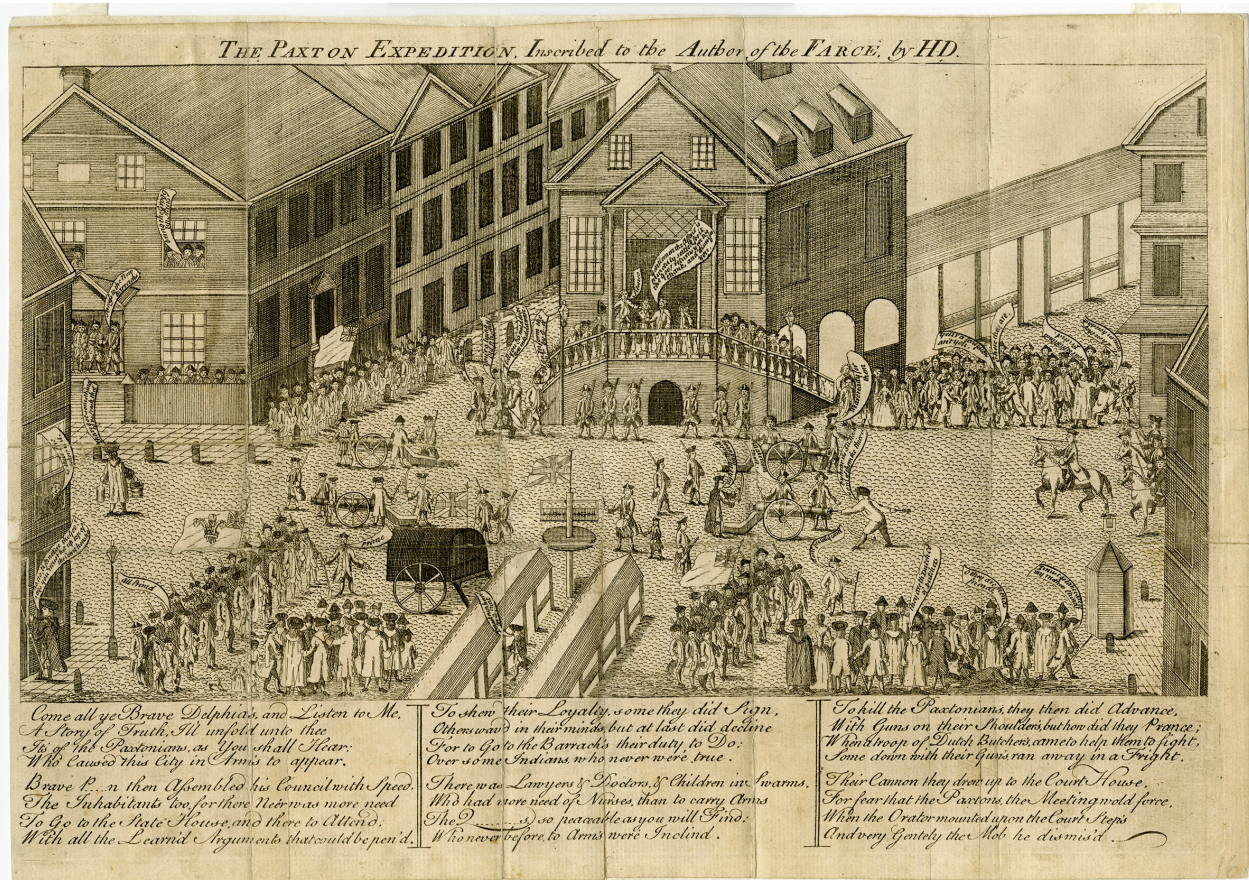
The German Bleeds and Bears Ye Furs

The German bleeds & bears ye Furs
Of Quaker Lords & Savage Curs

Th' Hiberian frets with new Disaster
And kicks to fling his broad brim'd Master

But help at hand Resolves to hold down
Th' Hiberian's Head or tumble all down

#6



Library Company of Philadelphia

The Paxton Expedition, Inscribed to the Author of the Farce, by HD.

Come all ye Brave Delphia's, and Listen to Me.
A Story of Truth, I'll unfold onto thee
It's of the Paxtonians, as You shall Hear:
Who Caused this City in Arm's to appear.

Brave P....n then Assembled his Council with Speed.
The Inhabitants too for there Ne'er was more need
To Go to the State House, and there to Attend,
With all the Lear'd Arguments that could be pen'd.

To shew their Loyalty, some they did Sign,
Others wav'd in their minds, but at last did decline
For to Go to the Barrack's their duty to Do;
Over some Indians, who never were true.

There was Lawyers & Doctors, & Children in Swarms,
Who had more need of Nurses, than to carry Arms
The Q.....s so peaceable as you will Find;
Who never before to Arm's were Inclind.

To kill the Paxtonians, they then did Advance,
With Guns on their Shoulder's, but how did they Prance;
When a troop of Dutch Butcher's came to help them to fight,
Some down with their Guns ran away in a Fright.

Their Cannon they drew up to the Court House,
For fear that the Paxtons, the Meeting wold force,
When the Orator mounted upon the Court Step's
And very Gentely the Mob he dimis'd.

Historical Background

Kevin Kenny, “Peaceable Kingdom Lost, Part 2”

The Peaceable Kingdom, already in decline by the time of William Penn’s death in 1718, disintegrated gradually over the next few decades. Penn’s son and principal heir, Thomas, cast off the Quaker faith and converted to Anglicanism. He and his brothers continued to negotiate with Indians but they did not hesitate to use fraud and intimidation. In 1737 they swindled the Delawares out of a huge tract of land in a transaction known as the “Walking Purchase.” For the Indians, the measure of this land was how much a man could walk in a day and a half. The Penns, however, sent out a team of relay runners who marked out a tract almost as big as Rhode Island. Most of the Delawares who lived there were forced to move west of the Susquehanna River, which at that time marked the western boundary of European settlement. The “Walking Purchase” remained their primary grievance when they went to war against Pennsylvania twenty years later.

Immigrants from the province of Ulster, in the north of Ireland, also posed a threat to Pennsylvania’s Indians. These settlers began to arrive in Pennsylvania at the beginning of the eighteenth century and set up as squatters along the frontier, ignoring the land rights of the Indians and the Penn family alike. They claimed the land by “tomahawk right”—marking trees at a distance from one another with their axes, and declaring the territory between these trees as their own. As early as 1730, a generation before the Paxton Boy massacres, a group of Ulster squatters temporarily occupied Conestoga Manor, declaring that it was “against the Laws of God and Nature that so much Land Should lie idle while so many Christians wanted it to labour on and raise their Bread.”

Conflict between western colonists and Native Americans intensified during the French and Indian War (1754–1763). Expelled from their native lands in eastern Pennsylvania, the Delaware and Shawnee Indians west of the Susquehanna River sided with the French as the lesser of two evils and launched devastating raids on frontier settlers. The colonial government in Philadelphia responded by declaring war on the Delawares and, for the first time, establishing a militia. A handful of strict Quakers remained true to William Penn’s pacifist vision, but the Peaceable Kingdom was at an end. Frontier settlers did most of the fighting during the war and, from their perspective, both branches of the government in Philadelphia—the Quaker-dominated Assembly and executive branch, run by the Penn family—seemed indifferent to their fate.

No sooner had the British defeated the French in 1763 than Pontiac’s War, the largest Indian rebellion in colonial American history, erupted. Delaware and Shawnee Indians once again launched raids east of the Susquehanna River. Frontier settlers re-lived the nightmare of the

French and Indian War. It was in this context, in December 1763, that the Paxton Boys carried out their massacre.

The Paxton Boys arose directly out of a local militia created by the colonial government in response to frontier demands for defense in the summer of 1763. Colonel John Armstrong of Carlisle commanded a unit west of the Susquehanna River and the Rev. John Elder, the “fighting pastor” of Paxton Presbyterian Church, commanded a unit to the east. These two units were supposed to be strictly defensive, but Elder and Armstrong used them to launch raids against Delaware Indians. When raids failed, a group of Paxton Boys led by Lazarus Stewart and Matthew Smith attacked the Conestoga Indians instead.

Analyzing an Essay (Lesson 2)

Important Phrases

Which phrases or sentences are the most informative and important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Summary Organizer #1: Excerpts from “The Apology of the Paxton Volunteers”

Original Text

We have long been convinced from sufficient evidence that the Indians that lived as independent commonwealths among us or near our borders were our most dangerous enemies, both in the last and present war, although they still pretend to be our friends . . . as they murdered our inhabitants, led them into captivity, were guides to other Indians, reported our weak and defenceless state to the French together with all our motions and dispositions against them; and at the same time wearing the cloak of friendship, they could readily obtain provisions, ammunition and warlike implements to convey to our enemies. Their well-known claim to freedom and independency put it in their power to harbor spies and give intelligence. They have ever asserted and exercised the right of making war and peace as independent nations, never came under our laws, nor acknowledged subjection to our king and government; but they always governed themselves by their own customs, and exercised the power of life and death over their own people. . . . Mournful experience has convinced us that no nation could be safe especially in a time of war, if another state or part of a state be allowed to live among them, free and independent, claiming and exercising within themselves all the powers of government ,the powers of making war and peace, harboring and corresponding with the enemies of the state wherein they live, receiving their spies, giving them intelligence, and furnishing them with the means of support and implements of war. No such privilege has been granted to any commonwealth in any civilized nation in the world. But this had been allowed to Indians amongst us, and we justly complain of it as the source of many of our calamities; as they have all proved perfidious.

Key Words

Summary:

In Your Own Words:

Summary Organizer #2: Excerpts from Franklin's *Narrative of the Late Massacres*

Original Text

There are some (I am ashamed to hear it) who would extenuate the enormous Wickedness of these Actions, by saying, "The Inhabitants of the Frontiers are exasperated with the Murder of their Relations, by the Enemy *Indians*, in the present War." It is possible;—but though this might justify their going out into the Woods, to seek for those Enemies, and avenge upon them those Murders; it can never justify their turning in to the Heart of the Country, to murder their Friends. . . . If an Indian injures me, does it follow that I may revenge that Injury on all *Indians*? It is well known that *Indians* are of different Tribes, Nations and Languages, as well as the White People. In *Europe*, if the *French*, who are White-People, should injure the *Dutch*, are they to revenge it on the *English*, because they too are White People? The only Crime of these poor Wretches seems to have been, that they had a reddish brown Skin, and black Hair; and some People of that Sort, it seems, had murdered some of our Relations. If it be right to kill Men for such a Reason, then, should any Man, with a freckled Face and red Hair, kill a Wife or Child of mine, it would be right for me to revenge it, by killing all the freckled red-haired Men, Women and Children, I could afterwards any where meet with.

But it seems these People think they have a better Justification; nothing less than the *Word of God*. With the Scriptures in their Hands and Mouths, they can set at nought that express Command, *Thou shalt do no Murder*; and justify their Wickedness. . . . Horrid Perversion of Scripture and of Religion! to father the worst of Crimes on the God of Peace and Love!

Key Words

Summary:

In Your Own Words:

Summary Organizer #3: Excerpts from Franklin's *Narrative of the Late Massacres*

Original Text

We pretend to be *Christians*, and, from the superior Light we enjoy, ought to exceed . . . in the Knowledge and Practice of what is right. . . .

These poor People have been always our Friends. Their Fathers received ours, when Strangers here, with Kindness and Hospitality. Behold the Return we have made them! When we grew more numerous and powerful, they put themselves under our *Protection*. See, in the mangled Corpses of the last Remains of the Tribe, how effectually we have afforded it to them!. . . .

They would have been safer, if they had submitted to . . . the *Turks* . . . [who] never kill Prisoners in cold Blood. . . . They would have been safer it seems among *Popish Spaniards*, even if Enemies, and delivered into their Hands by a Tempest. These were not Enemies; they were born among us, and yet we have killed them all. But shall we imitate *idolatrous Papists*, we that are *enlightened Protestants*? They would even have been safer among the *Negroes of Africa*, where at least one manly Soul would have been found, with Sense, Spirit and Humanity enough, to stand in their Defence: But shall *Whitemen* and *Christians* act like a *Pagan Negroe*? In short it appears, that they would have been safe in any Part of the known World, except in the Neighbourhood of the CHRISTIAN WHITE SAVAGES . . . !

Key Words

Summary:

In Your Own Words:

Historical Background

Kevin Kenny, “Peaceable Kingdom Lost, Part 3”

At the end of January 1764, a month after the massacres, reports reached Philadelphia that hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Paxton Boys were marching eastward, threatening to sack the city unless their grievances were met. The Paxton Boys also demanded the right to “inspect” 140 Christian Delaware Indians who had been removed from the frontier and placed in protective custody in the city. Given what the Paxton Boys had done to the Conestogas, the residents of Philadelphia could only imagine what this “inspection” might result in.

When several hundred Paxton Boys reached Germantown, just six miles outside Philadelphia, they were met by a delegation led by Benjamin Franklin, who persuaded them to write down their grievances. Their spokesmen, Matthew Smith and James Gibson, submitted a Declaration and a Remonstrance for consideration by the colonial government, and what followed was a war of words instead of a war of weapons. Presbyterian supporters of the Paxton Boys, in alliance with the Anglican faction surrounding the Penn family, did battle with Benjamin Franklin and the Quaker party. The debate, featuring more than sixty pamphlets and ten political cartoons, went far beyond the immediate issue of the Conestoga massacres to address the fundamental question of how Pennsylvania ought to be governed.

Despite Benjamin Franklin’s efforts, the Paxton Boys went unpunished. Nobody was investigated let alone arrested or prosecuted. As a result, like-minded settlers on the Pennsylvania frontier felt free to behave in similar ways. The result was wave after wave of violence on the frontier, culminating in total war against Indians during the American Revolution. The Paxton Boys’ brutality was the exception as late as 1763, in Pennsylvania at least, but during the Revolution it became commonplace.

Ironically, Benjamin Franklin and the Paxton Boys ended up supporting the same side in the American Revolution. But that is because there was more than one revolution going on—the familiar struggle for lofty principles of liberty and equality in the east, and a lesser-known struggle involving land and Indians in the west. Some historians have seen the Paxton Boys as frontier democrats fighting against the privilege of the Penn family who extended their fight for democracy into the revolutionary era. John Elder, Matthew Smith, John Armstrong, and Lazarus Stewart all rallied to the patriot cause, to be sure, but they were fighting for the same thing as they had fought for in the 1760s—access to land, personal security, and vengeance against Indians. In their Remonstrance, the Paxton Boys had demanded greater political representation for the western counties in the Pennsylvania Assembly, but that was only one of nine grievances; all of the others concerned Indians. The American Revolution did more than destroy the privilege of the Penn family; it doomed the region’s Native Americans. During the Revolutionary War, American patriots enacted the brutal logic of the Paxton Boys on a devastating scale.

Analyzing an Essay (Lesson 3)

Important Phrases

Which phrases or sentences are the most informative and important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Analyzing a Pamphlet

Critical Thinking Question 1: What is the major claim being made by the author of this pamphlet?	
What textual evidence supports the author's claim?	Does the claim that is being presented appear to be fact based or opinion based?
Critical Thinking Question 2: What is the tone of the pamphlet?	
Give evidence of the tone from the text of this pamphlet:	How does this tone influence the effectiveness of the pamphlet?
Critical Thinking Question 3: What are the best (most convincing or most thought-provoking) parts of the pamphlet?	
Cite textual evidence to support your opinion.	
Critical Thinking Question 4: Summarize, in your own words, the overall message of this pamphlet:	
What evidence in the text supports your summary?	

Speaker/Author: _____

Write your question here:

Evidence from Text:

Answer:

Evidence from Text:

Answer:

Evidence from Text:

Excerpts from A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania, 1764

1st. WE apprehend, that as Free-Men and *English* Subjects, we have an indisputable Title to the same Privileges and Immunities with his Majesty's other subjects, who reside in the interior Counties of *Philadelphia*, *Chester* and *Bucks*, and therefore ought not be excluded from an equal Share with them in the very important Privilege of Legislation. Nevertheless, . . . our five Counties are restrained from electing more than ten Representatives. . . .

2dly. WE understand that a Bill . . . that such Persons as shall be charged with killing any *Indians* in *Lancaster* County, shall not be tried in the County where the Fact was committed. . . . This is manifestly to deprive *British* Subjects of their known Privileges, . . . as if they were unfit to serve their Country in the Quality of Jury-Men, and to contradict the well known Laws of the *British* Nation, in a point whereon Life, Liberty, and Security essentially depend: Namely, that of being tried by their Equals in the Neighbourhood where their own, their Accusers, and the Witnesses Character and Credit, with the Circumstances of the Fact are best known, and instead thereof, putting their Lives in the Hands of Strangers, who may as justly be suspected of Partiality to, as the Frontier Counties can be of Prejudices against Indians. . . .

3dly. DURING the late and present *Indian* Wars, the Frontiers of this Province have been repeatedly attacked and ravaged by Skulking parties of the Indians, who have with the most savage Cruelty, murdered Men, Women and Children, without distinction; and have reduced near a Thousand Families to the most extream Distress. It grieves us to the very Heart, to see such of our Frontier Inhabitants as have escaped from savage Fury, with the loss of their Parents, their Children, their Husbands, Wives, or Relatives, left destitute by the Public, and exposed to the most cruel Poverty and Wretchedness; while upwards of One Hundred and Twenty of the Savages, who are with great Reason suspected of being guilty of these horrid Barbarities, under the Mask of Friendship, have procured themselves to be taken under the Protection of the Government, with a view to elude the Fury of the brave Relatives of the Murdered; and are now maintained at the public Expence. . . .

4thly. WE humbly conceive that it is contrary to the Maxims of good Policy and extreamly dangerous to our Frontiers, to suffer any *Indians* of what Tribe soever, to live within the inhabited Parts of this Province, while we are engaged in an *Indian* War; as Experience has taught us that they are all Perfidious, and their Claim to Freedom and Independency puts it in their Power to act as Spies, to entertain and give Intelligence to our Enemies, and to furnish them with Provisions and warlike Stores. To this fatal Intercourse between our pretended Friends and open Enemies we must ascribe the greatest Part of the Ravages and Murders that

have been committed in the Course of this and the last *Indian* War. We therefore pray that this Grievance be taken under consideration and remedied. . . .

6thly. In the late *Indian* War this Province, with other of his Majesty's Colonies gave rewards for *Indian* Scalps, to encourage the seeking them in their own Country, as the most likely Means of destroying or reducing them to reason. But no such Encouragement has been given in this War, which has damped the Spirits of many brave Men, who are willing to venture their Lives in Parties against the Enemy. We therefore pray that public Rewards may be proposed for *Indian* Scalps, which may be adequate to the Dangers attending Enterprises of this Nature.

7th. WE daily lament that Numbers of our nearest and dearest Relatives are still in Captivity amongst the savage Heathen, to be trained up in all their ignorance and Barbarity, or be tortured to death with all the Contrivances of *Indian* cruelty, for attempting to make their Escape from Bondage. We see they pay no regard to the many solemn Promises which they have made to restore our Friends, who are in Bondage amongst them; we therefore earnestly pray that no Trade may hereafter be permitted to be carried on with them, untill our Brethren and Relatives are brought home to us.

8thly. WE complain that a certain Society of People in this Province in the late *Indian* War and at several Treaties held by the Kings Representatives, openly loaded the *Indians* with Presents and that ----- a Leader of the said Society, in defiance of all Government not only abetted our *Indian* Enemies, but kept up a private Intelligence with them, and publicly received from them a Belt of Wampum, as if he had been our Governor or authorized by the King to treat with his Enemies. By this Means the *Indians* have been taught to dispise us as a weak and disunited People and from this fatal Source have arose many of our Calamities.

Source: *A Declaration and Remonstrance of the Distressed and Bleeding Frontier Inhabitants of the Province of Pennsylvania, Presented by Them to the Hounourable the Governor and Assembly of the Province, Shewing the Causes of Their Late Discontent and Uneasiness and the Grievances under Which They Have Laboured, and Which They Humbly Pray to Have Redress'd*, 1764, pp. 10–17.

A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman, and Thomas Zealot; About the Killing the Indians at Cannestogoe and Lancaster, [1764].

Andrew and Thomas

Andrew. WHERE have you been aw this Time, *Tom*?

Thomas. Where I have been! Where you should ha' been too, Andrew, fighting the Lord's Battles, and killing the Indians at *Lancaster* and *Cannestogoe*.

A. How many did you kill at *Cannestogoe*.

T. One and Twenty.

A. Hoot Man, there were but twenty all together, and fourteen of them were in the jail.

T. I tell you, we shot six and a wee one, that was in the Squaw's Belly; we scalped three; we tomahawked three; we roasted three and a wee one; and three and a wee one we gave to the Hogs; and is not that one and twenty you Fool.

A. How many did you kill in the jail!

T. We kilt them all, men women and weans.

A. Did you count them?

T. No faith: I stayed in the Street, for Fear of them Devils, the Highlandmen.

A. Were not you frightened to face so many Indians?

T. Indeed were we: But we did no' let them face Us. We kilt them at the Mannor just as they getting out of their Beds in the Morning; And the Gued Folks of *Lancaster* had taken away aw the Guns, Tomahawks, and long Knives, from them, that were in the jail.

A. How many were you?

T. Not quite fifteen hundred; But if any Body had mislested us, we would ha' been joined by five Thousand, that would have faced the Quakers, as well as the Heathens.

A. But did you think it right, *Tom*, to kill the Women and the Weans?

T. Some of us did not, as soon as auld Saunders Kent that (you know he has been an Elder this thirty Year) when he gaid [sic] about Duty, the Night before, he sung the 137 *Psalms*, where it says, "happy surely shall he be, they tender little ones, who shall lay hold upon, and them shall dash against the Stones." And he read the 15. *Chapter* of I *Samuel*.

A. So you did all this in the Name of the Lord.

T. Aye, to be sure. We were aw *Presbyterians*. But that wild Chiel, *Charly Breulluchan* shot an Indian's Doug, while auld *Saunder's* was saying Grace till half a Pint of Whusky. I doubt he has the Pope, or the Heegh-Kirk in his Guts.

A. I am afraid all this is wrong. I am a *Presbyterian*, you know, as well as yourself. But I would fain hope that I am a Christian also. Jesus Christ is the Prince of *Peace*, and has taught us the Doctrine of forgiving even our Enemies, as we expect that our heavenly Father will forgive us. I am afraid that you have done amiss. Many Things were permitted to the Jews because of the Hardness of their Hearts, which the Light of the Gospel has discovered to be wrong. But even the Jews paid the greatest Regard to their Treaties. And these Indians by Treaties have been acknowledged to be our Friends.

The Gibeonites were spared on Account of the publick Faith plighted to them, tho obtained by Fraud and Falshood. And tho *Schechem* had committed a Crime for which he ought to have suffered Death: Yet after Peace was made, we find the good old Patriarch *Jacob*, on his Death-Bed, bitterly cursing his Sons, for breaking the Peace. Instruments of Cruelty are in your Habitations. O my Soul come not thou into your Secrets, unto your Assembly, mine Honour, be not thou united: For in your Anger you have slain Man, and in yourself will you houghed Cattle. Cursed be your Anger, for it was fierce; and your Wrath for it was cruel. I pray that you may not be dispersed or scattered in the true *Israel* of GOD.

Source: *A Dialogue between Andrew Trueman, and Thomas Zealot; About the Kiilling the Indians at Cannestogoe and Lancaster*, [1764]. Some spelling and punctuation in this text have been modernized to aid comprehension.