

## **DEVELOPING A FRENCH SEIGNEURY ON LAKE CHAMPLAIN**

**Background:** Chimney Point is located at the epicenter of the Hocquart seigneurie that centered on the modern day Vermont towns of Panton, Addison, and Bridport. The French had a very distinct settlement pattern along waterways consisting of very thin lots with narrow water frontage that run in a great depth from the shore. These plots of land are sometimes referred to as “spaghetti lots” due to their shape. French settlements in New France were run similar to medieval fiefdoms, where settlers rented plots of land from the seigneur (landowner). To entice French settlers to the Hocquart seigneurie, a little inhabited and potentially dangerous area on the military frontier, many incentives had to be offered. Hocquart also encouraged retired soldiers to settle here, so as to have extra military to defend the fort. By the mid-1740s there were approximately 20 houses on each side of the lake, with Fort St. Frédéric as the central location of the settlement.

**Lesson Overview:** This activity will introduce students to the workings of the French seigneurial system and how it relates to the settlement of the Champlain Valley, using primary and secondary documents as background information. Students will become aware of the challenges faced by all individuals involved in a seigneurial system and why the French strategically chose to settle the Chimney Point area.

**Vermont Standards:** This activity addresses the following standards:

- |                                      |                                    |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 6.4 Historical Connections           | 6.8 Movements and Settlements      |
| 6.5 Traditional and Social Histories | 6.15 Knowledge of Economic Systems |
| 6.6 Being a Historian                | 6.18 Nature of Conflict            |

**Materials:** 1 Overhead of Graphic Organizer

- For each student:
- Excerpts of Primary Documents
  - Seigneurie Graphic Organizer
  - Seigneurie Advertisement sheet
  - French Vocabulary Sheet
- French/English Dictionary for reference

### **Procedure:**

Part A. Divide the class into groups of 4 or 5 and hand out excerpts sheet and graphic organizer to each student. Each member of the group will need to complete a graphic organizer to use for Part B. Have each group read through and discuss the excerpts. As a group students will fill out graphic organizers using information from the primary documents as reference. When each group has finished have the entire class take turns sharing their findings and thoughts. It may come in handy to use an overhead of the Graphic Organizer as a guide for conversation and to ensure that each student has all the correct information written down.

Part B. Handout Seigneurie Advertisement assignment and French Vocabulary sheet to each student. Read over the instructions for the assignment. Advertisements can be created individually or in groups. If students choose to perform a skit, the assignment may take additional class periods.

### Excerpts from Primary Documents

The following paragraphs are examples of the ongoing correspondence between the governments of New France and France. Messieurs Beauharnois and Hocquart, the Governor and Lt. Governor of New France wrote the letters to the French Colonial Minister in Paris. These excerpts explain the ways that Beauharnois and Hocquart planned to persuade people to settle on these plots of land nearby Fort St. Frederic.

Quebec, Oct. 11, 1737

“We believe that by means of this arrangement young settlers can easily be attracted to this region. To induce them, at least the first ones, to make a firm commitment, and some have already shown interest, it would be advisable to extend them some aid the first year. This aid consists of provisions and tools such as axes, hoes, and plows which we estimate would cost 150 livres for each of the first six settlers who will have maintained hearth and home for one year. When the first six will have been established there will be no lack of others to follow their example. There are still other means to attract them. For example the storekeeper of the fort might keep on hand the supplies and merchandise most needed by settlers and sell them at a reasonable price. Or quit-rents and taxes could be remitted during the first two or three years. We will successively use these means as necessary.”

*An excerpt from “Early Plans for the Development of the Crown Point Area”*  
From Crown Point, NY, State Historic Site Archives

Canada, Oct. 3, 1741

“We gave to all the same start, namely 15 or 18 months keep and some tools instead of the pay (reward) that you intended us to give. We did not think we ought to limit the aid we give to the first six or eight settlers because of the importance of this settlement as much for the help which the garrison would get from it as for the defense of the fort as necessary. We hope, Sire, that you will give your approval. We have hastened to hand over these new settlers deeds if grant and we shall do the same of others; we shall have the honor of sending you copies next year, and to ask you to confirm them. If all these settlements are as successful as we hope, this section will in two or three years furnish all the grain necessary for the garrison.”

This translated letter appears in the article, “La Pointe a La Chevelure,”  
in *Vermont History*, Vol. XXVIII No. 3, July 19

## The Seigneurie System of New France

**Directions:** Using your Reading Packet, collect information to fill in the table below.

	King of France: Louis XV	Seigneur- Landlord	French Settler- <i>Habitant</i>
Role/ Position in system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What work would this individual be doing in daily life?</li><li>• How does this fit in the system?</li></ul>			
Why was the settlement important to this individual?			
Pros: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What does this person get out of the deal?</li><li>• Incentives</li></ul>			
Cons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Difficulties, dangers, hardships</li></ul>			
Enticement/Motivation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Why would they want this opportunity?</li></ul>			

## **SEIGNEURY ADVERTISEMENT**

### **Assignment:**

You have been granted land by Louis XV, the King of France, on the shore of Lake Champlain to help maintain French control of the lake and northern waterways. Your land is very isolated, a great distance from other French settlements, and there will be potential threat from the English and area Native American tribes. Knowing all of this information, how are you going to convince people to settle on your land? Remember if you can't get people to "maintain hearth and home" on your seigneurie, Louis XV will take it back and give this financial opportunity to someone else.

Your goal is to create an advertisement, either a poster or in skit format, to entice would-be settlers to rent land on your unpopulated seigneurie. You will need to be very convincing, using creativity and persistence.

### **Factors to keep in mind:**

- Who is your target audience? What kind of people do you want in your settlement?
- How can you make your seigneurie sound exciting, not dangerous and potentially a failure?
- What extra incentives are you willing to offer settlers if you have trouble recruiting people?
- Remember these are French settlers. Try to include French language from your vocabulary list.
- Include drawings, maps, and symbols associated with New France.

Here are some French words that can be incorporated into the educational activities. A French/English Dictionary may also come in handy for reference. [Babelfish.com](http://Babelfish.com) is a website that can translate words and phrases in many different languages.

**In the Village—dans la ville**

Crown (Scalp) Point—Pointe-à-la-Chevelure [Vermont side of lake]  
Farmer—habitant  
Fort or palisade—le fort  
Indian village —le camp des autochtones  
The store—le magasin  
Settlement—colonie  
Free of charge—gratuitement  
Mill—le moulin  
Soldier—soldat  
Retired—a la retraite

**Family- la famille**

My father—Mon père  
My mother—Ma mère  
My brother—Mon frère  
My sister—Ma sœur  
My son—Mon fils  
My daughter—Ma fille  
My grandfather—Mon grand'père  
My grandmother—Ma grand'mère  
My aunt—Ma tante  
My uncle—Mon oncle  
My cousin (boy)—Mon cousin  
My cousin (girl)—Ma cousine

*Other phrases*

To provide—fournir  
We provide—nous fourons  
Opportunity—La occasion  
Wonderful—Merveilleux  
Exciting—Excitant (e)

**Expressions**

Hello—Bonjour  
Goodbye—Au revoir  
Thank you—Merci  
No—Non  
Yes— Oui

**Questions**

Are you...?— Est tu...?  
How— Comment  
Who— Qui  
Where—Ou  
Which—Quel or Quelle  
What? —Qu'est-ce que?  
When—Quand  
Why—Pour quoi  
Isn't that right?—N'est ce pas?

**Numbers- Les chiffres**

1- un	
2- deux	Month--le mois
3- trois	Year--l'année
4- quatre	Years--les ans
5- cinq	
6- six	
7- sept	
8- huit	
9- neuf	15- quinze
10-dix	16- dix-six
11- onze	17- dix-sept
12- douze	18- dix-huit
13- treize	19- dix-neuf
14- quatorze	20- vingt

**The Natural World – Le monde naturel**

River – la rivière

Lake – le lac

Island – île

Land – la terre

Forest – la forêt

Trees – les arbres

Water – l'eau

**Trip – le voyage**

To travel, journey – voyager

Canoe – un canoë, canot

Boat – le bateau

To canoe – faire de canoe

Countryside – la campagne

Place/site – l'endroit

**Directions**

North – le nord

South – le sud

East – l'est

West – l'ouest

**Animals – Les animaux**

Beaver – le castor

Fish – le poisson

Bird – l'oiseau

Bears – les ours

Eel – l'anguille

Cow – la vache

Hen – la poule

Eggs – les œufs

**Habitant – farmer**

House – la maison

Farm – la ferme

Tools – l'outils

Knife – le couteau

To farm – cultiver

Garden – le jardin

**Vegetables – les légumes**

Peas – les pois

Green beans – haricots verts

Cucumber – concombre

Radish – radis

Onion – l'oignon

Squash – courge

Pumpkin – citrouille, courge

Wheat – le blé

Grain – céréales

Bread – le pain

Parsley – persil

**Fruit – fruit**

Apple – pomme

Berry – baie

Currant bush – grosseillier