

8th Grade - South Kingstown Mills

How did the mills in South Kingstown shape the town we know today?	
Standards and Content	RI GSEs Economics: E2-1, 3-1; Geography G4-1; History HP1-2, 2-1, 2-2, 2-3
Staging the Compelling Question	A slideshow/collage of photographs of the town during the days of the mill and the Narragansett Pier Railroad from areas they are familiar with in our town.
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2
How did our mills contribute to the local and national economies?	Who worked at the mills? What was their everyday life like?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Create a graphic organizer of your choosing showing the different products made by each mill and what they were used for.	Iron Chef: With your “cooking” team, investigate and answer the questions about the person/role assigned to you. Your group will present your “final dish” to the rest of the class.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources
<p>Source A: Historical and Architectural Resources of South Kingstown, RI</p> <p>Source B: southkingstownri.com</p> <p>Source C: Peace Dale Manufacturing Company Images</p> <p>Source C: Peace Dale Manufacturing Company Records - RIHS Manuscripts- provided by teacher</p>	<p>Source A-D: Supporting Question 1 Featured Sources</p> <p>Source E: 1870 Census, South Kingstown</p>
Supporting Question 3	
How has the geography of the town changed because of the mill?	
Formative Performance Task	
Bed Sheet Activity: Students will compare and contrast the geography of the town before and after the mill was built (railroads, buildings, roads, major buildings).	
Featured Sources	
<p>Source A-C: Supporting Question 1 Featured Sources</p> <p>Source D: Sketch map of Peace Dale village, 1825, by Joseph P. Hazard - provided by teacher, copied from local collection at Peace Dale Public Library</p> <p>Source E: 1870 Beers Map of South Kingstown</p> <p>Source F: Atlas of Rhode Island, Map of South Kingstown 1870</p> <p>Source G: Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from South Kingstown, Washington County, Rhode Island, 1921</p> <p>Source H: https://www.google.com/maps/@41.4500322,-71.4977923,17z</p>	
Summative Performance Task	<p>ARGUMENT: How did the mills in South Kingstown shape the town we know today? Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that uses specific claims and relevant evidence from sources.</p> <p>EXTENSION: Produce a timeline showing the use of each mill building between the close of the mills and now.</p>
Taking Informed Action	<p>UNDERSTAND: As our community progresses through time, it’s important to preserve the history of the mills and reintroduce that story to our growing community.</p> <p>ASSESS: Students will use their research to determine how best to communicate this information to the public.</p> <p>ACT: South Kingstown’s upcoming 300th Anniversary celebration is a great opportunity to create a documentary, webpage, or presentation highlighting the project.</p>

*Featured sources are suggested and links are provided. It may be that these links are broken and we apologize in advance for the inconvenience.

How did the Peace Dale Mill in South Kingstown shape the town we know today?

Overview

Inquiry Description

In this inquiry, students will examine the Peace Dale Mill Complex and explore its history, role in shaping our town, and the role townspeople played in the operation of the mill, as well as the contribution to the local and national economy with products produced at the mill. Students will complete each supporting question in a station format. This lesson can be completed in three to four lessons.

Structure of the Inquiry

In addressing the compelling question, “How did the Peace Dale Mill shape the town of South Kingstown as we know it today?” students work through a series of supporting questions, formative performance tasks, and featured sources to construct an argument supported by evidence. The supporting questions help students build an understanding of the operation and products of the mill, the roles of people in the mill, and the mill’s lasting impact on the geography of the town. Although students will understand the definition and use of kersey cloth, they will not explore the contradiction of Rowland G. Hazard condemning slavery, yet still benefitting financially from the practice. This will be explored in another unit about financial connections of the North and South before the Civil War.

Staging the Compelling Question

To introduce the inquiry, the teacher will ask students about places they frequent that were gifted to the town by the Hazard family, using the profits from the mill. The vast majority of students use the library, the Neighborhood Guild and its recreation programs and playground, attend Peace Dale Congregational Church, patronize Rock Spot climbing gym, or attend an event at the brewery. These are only a partial list of ways the students benefit from the physical contributions to the town by the Hazard family. The student will view a slide show of photographs taken of places they’re familiar with but with things that aren’t there anymore. The photograph most students take an interest in is of the railroad bridge crossing the Peace Dale rotary. The train and bridge are no longer there. The students use the bike path that follows the old rail line. The students will then examine what the town looked like while the mill was still active, the time after it closed, and how the places they use and enjoy came to be, thanks to the generosity of the Hazard Family.

Supporting Question 1

The first supporting question “How did our mills contribute to the local and national economies?” introduces the Peace Dale Mill complex and its role in the shaping of our town. It manufactured a variety of fabrics and materials. One of the most prominent was kersey cloth, also known as Negro Cloth. This cloth was very profitable for the Hazard family, who owned the mill. Students will encounter this and other materials and products made in the mill which were sold nationwide, due to their popularity. Another example is the Peace Dale shawl. Students can also explore the connection

between the materials we received from the south, the source of that labor, and the profit the north made from that labor. Learning about the materials made will help understand the larger role of the mill in shaping our economy today. Some materials made in the Peace Dale Mill were used to make military uniforms during times of war. Fabrics were also displayed at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Students will be encouraged to create a “web design” graphic organizer. This will help the student and people looking at the product see the connection between our town and the national economy. Students can complete this activity individually or in pairs.

Supporting Question 2

The second supporting question “Who worked at the mills? What was their everyday life like?” gets students to see the workers as relatable people and they can imagine themselves doing the work.

Through the research on products made, as well as narratives, students will explore the daily life of mill workers. What was the pay? Where were the living conditions? What was the quality of mill houses? Did children work in the mill and if so, what were their ages? What were the different jobs available and who qualified to work each one.? The students will work in a group of four and complete the Iron Chef protocol. Students will answer one of four questions and add to the final presentation. Then, the group of four will present their slides to the class.

Supporting Question 3

The third supporting question, “How has the geography of the town changed because of the mill? gets students interested in how the buildings around them have changed. They are very familiar with the area and engage in a variety of activities in and around the buildings in and around the mill. Many of them will be curious about the train bridge that ran over the rotary, as shown in the slide show for “Staging the Compelling Question”. Students will complete the Bed Sheet Activity using maps from 1825, 1870, and 1921. Students will identify the changes in buildings, roads and bridges, waterways, railroads, and buildings provided, or gifted, to the town. In groups of two to four, they will use color coded electrical tape to identify locations and geographic features on the bed sheet to represent the changes in the town over 198 years. After the activity, students can reflect on the changes they see in each feature. Some arguments might include:

- Railroads were built for use at the mill, then disappeared.
- There was a rapid growth in mill buildings between 1825 and 1870.
- There was a rapid growth of municipal buildings funded by the Hazard family between 1870 and 1921.
- Why was the mill set along a waterway?
- Several buildings continue to be used for a different purpose. A smaller number were destroyed.

Summative Performance Task

At this point in the inquiry, students have examined how the Peace Dale Mill shaped the town we know today? Students should be expected to demonstrate the breadth of their understanding and their abilities to use evidence from multiple sources to support their claims. In this task, students construct an evidence-based argument using multiple sources to answer the compelling question. Students’ arguments will likely vary, but could include any of the following:

- The growth and success of the Peace Dale Mill shifted our town from an agriculture based economy to an industrial economy, where the role of agriculture continues to decrease.
- The remaining mill buildings are currently used in ways that benefit everyone in the town. Identify each building as it was used then and its use presently (the church, library, Hazard family homes, mill houses, and office building, as well as the five bridges).
- The history of textile manufacturing by the Hazard family has left a lasting impact on our economy and way of life. The many buildings bequeathed to the town are a part of our everyday life. These buildings include the library, the neighborhood guild, the office building, three schools, a church, five bridges, and the property for our high school.

As an extension task, students may be asked to create a timeline showing the use of each mill building between the closing of the mill in the 1940s and present day. This can be done using the map resources listed above, as well as town property records and interviewing their parents and grandparents. The timeline may be presented as an interactive web presentation or a physical timeline with visuals of the mill with past and present businesses. The timeline can be part of the presentation in “Taking Informed Action Task”.

Taking Informed Action: As our community progresses through time, it’s important to preserve the history of the mills and reintroduce that story to our growing community. Our town’s upcoming 300th anniversary celebration is a great opportunity to use the Summative Performance Act to create a presentation to be presented at one or more events planned for the anniversary celebration. Students can present their project to the anniversary committee for consideration to present it to a broader audience of people attending the celebration.

Supporting Question 1: Featured Sources

Source A: [“Historical and Architectural Resources of South Kingstown, RI” preservation.ri.gov](http://preservation.ri.gov) p. 17, 20, 25, 32 (all with the heading Peace Dale)

Source B: southkingstownri.com

Source C: [Peace Dale Manufacturing Company · South Kingstown Public Library Digital Collections](#)

Source D: Peace Dale Manufacturing Company Records - RIHS Manuscripts. This source will be provided by the teacher. They cannot be removed from the Rhode Island Historical Society Library.

Supporting Question 2: Featured Sources

Source A-D: Supporting Question 1 Featured Sources

Source E: [1870 Census, South Kingstown](#)

Supporting Question 3: Featured Sources

Source A-C: Supporting Question 1 Featured Sources

Source D: Sketch map of Peace Dale village, 1825, by Joseph P. Hazard - provided by teacher, copied from local collection at Peace Dale Public Library

Source E: [1870 Beers Map of South Kingstown](#)

Source F: [Atlas of Rhode Island, Map of South Kingstown 1870](#)

Source G: [Sanborn Fire Insurance Map from South Kingstown, Washington County, Rhode Island, 1921](#)

Source H: <https://www.google.com/maps/@41.4500322,-71.4977923,17z>