

Town of Hempstead
Supervisor
Donald X. Clavin, Jr.

Rock Hall Museum

Grade Educational Program
Pre-Visit Packet



199 Broadway
Lawrence, NY 11559
(516) 239-1157

*Sponsored by The Friends of Rock Hall
Enrolled on the National Register of Historic Places*



ROCK HALL - TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD MUSEUM

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Dear Educator,

I look forward to your visit to Rock Hall. The tour will take approximately one hour and thirty minutes.

The classroom materials in this booklet should be used before your visit. We believe that the background information enclosed involving colonial life and the Revolutionary War will lead students to a greater appreciation of history when they visit Rock Hall. We hope you enjoy the material.

Suggestions for use:

Begin by reading "Letter to Students" (on page 1) aloud to your class. After reading the letter, ask your students the questions on page 2 and suggest one of the exercises.

Duplicate page 3 & 4. This is a mapping game. If you are unable to reproduce these pages, use a wall map and read the instructions aloud to the group.

Duplicate "Hidden Word Puzzle" on page 5. Give each child a copy. Please discuss the six terms defined on that sheet.

"Building Rock Hall" is on page 6. That can be an activity for follow-up after your museum visit or before.

We hope you enjoy your visit to Rock Hall.

Yours truly,

Linda Barreira, Director
Rock Hall Museum

A letter to Students:

Dear Friends,

Soon you will be visiting Rock Hall Museum. When you arrive you will be shown a painting of me. My name is Mary Elizabeth and my grandfather, Josiah Martin, built Rock Hall. The portrait in the dining room shows what I looked like when I was nine years old.

Grandfather Josiah owned a plantation on the island of Antigua in the West Indies that grew sugar cane. His products, sugar and rum, were brought to the colonies by ship and Grandfather often came to New York with them to attend to business. He preferred the climate of New York to that of the islands. In Antigua the lack of rain and the problems caused by the unrest among the slaves made him decide to leave. He settled in Hempstead Plains first and then moved to the Rockaways because it was near the water. This area reminded him of the West Indies where he was born. He loved the climate here, and the beautiful beaches. At the same time he was near the harbor of New York City where the sugar and rum from his plantation in Antigua was shipped. He wanted a grand house for his large family. Josiah built Rock Hall in 1767, which you will be visiting soon!

Some famous people visited his new home. John Singleton Copley, a well-known artist, was one of them. He traveled by stagecoach and ferry to paint this picture of my dog and me when I lived here.

I had good times and bad times at Rock Hall. I played on the beaches and marshes and danced to the music of the harp you can see in the Guest Parlor. The bad times came when I had smallpox, which was a dangerous disease. Before the Revolutionary War started my father was appointed Royal Governor of North Carolina. I left Rock Hall to be with him but had to leave North Carolina when the Rebels broke into the Governor's mansion. We returned to Rock Hall where we were safe until the Rebels won the war.

After the war, I continued to live at Rock Hall with my grandparents, aunts and uncles for many years. Cousin Alice remained there all her life. She gave her paintings to a friend, Mr. Thomas Hewlett, to thank him for helping her through her illnesses. Mr. Hewlett bought Rock Hall and lived there for many years.

The surroundings look different now. The barn, smokehouse, chicken coop, outhouse, separate summer kitchen and slave quarters are gone.

When you enter Rock Hall use your imagination and look carefully around you. Time has not changed the interior of the house. Maybe you can imagine the house being made ready for a special party. If you shut your eyes and listen perhaps you will hear my footsteps as I run down the stairs with my dog.

I will be waiting for you...

Pre-visit Thoughts...

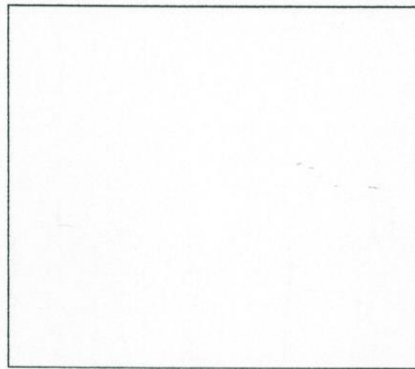
If you lived on Long Island in colonial days, would you have chosen to be a loyalist to your motherland, England (like the Martins), or be a rebel and fight for the growth of a new nation?

Why? _____

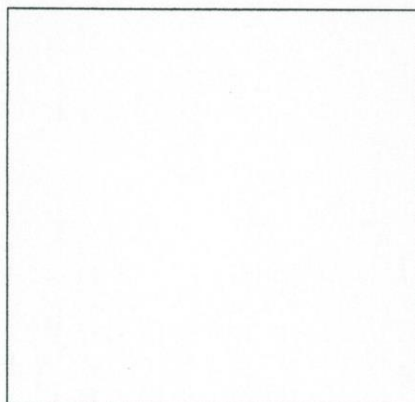
Would it be difficult for a Long Island community to accept loyalists after the war? How would the loyalists be treated in their community? _____

Josiah Martin's son, Dr. Samuel Martin, was a respected doctor in the community. Would his services be needed? _____

Before you come to Rock Hall, use your imagination and design what you think a grand country house that faces the sea will look like.



Draw your version of Mary Elizabeth's portrait. Don't forget her dog. What is she wearing? How is her hair styled? Is the background to her portrait the garden, sea, or inside the house?



MAP GAME:
The World Inside Mr. Martin's House

The Martin's house was filled with objects from around the world. Can you find the sea routes that these objects took to get to Rock Hall? On the attached map, draw a line from the place of origin of the objects mentioned below, to Rock Hall.



1. In the second floor guestroom, the fireplace is lined with tiles from Holland. Each of these Dutch tiles illustrates a story from the Bible. In the evening, children might sit around the fire to keep warm and tell the stories illustrated around them. (Do you have any pictures of favorite stories hanging in your room?) On the map, draw this tile's journey from Holland to Rock Hall.



2. Josiah Martin ordered chairs from England for his new home. The mahogany wood for these chairs came from Honduras. The wood was shipped to England. There a chairmaker made a number of chairs and shipped them to Rock Hall, where they have been ever since. On the map, draw the journey from Honduras to England and then to Rock Hall.



3. The Martin family enjoyed entertaining guests and displaying their handsome china. Some plates and vases did in fact come from China. China was shipping tremendous loads of tea to England and North America. At first the Chinese traders put porcelain dishes on the boat to add weight to the cargo of tea leaves. The English and Americans developed a love for China porcelain, and the trading of dishes became as important as the trading of tea. On the map, can you draw this Chinese vase's journey from China to Rock Hall.



4. Can you find tiny Antigua in the West Indies? The Martins frequently traveled from their sugar plantation in Antigua to North America. On the map, can you draw the sea route that the Martins took between their two homes, in Antigua and Rock Hall?

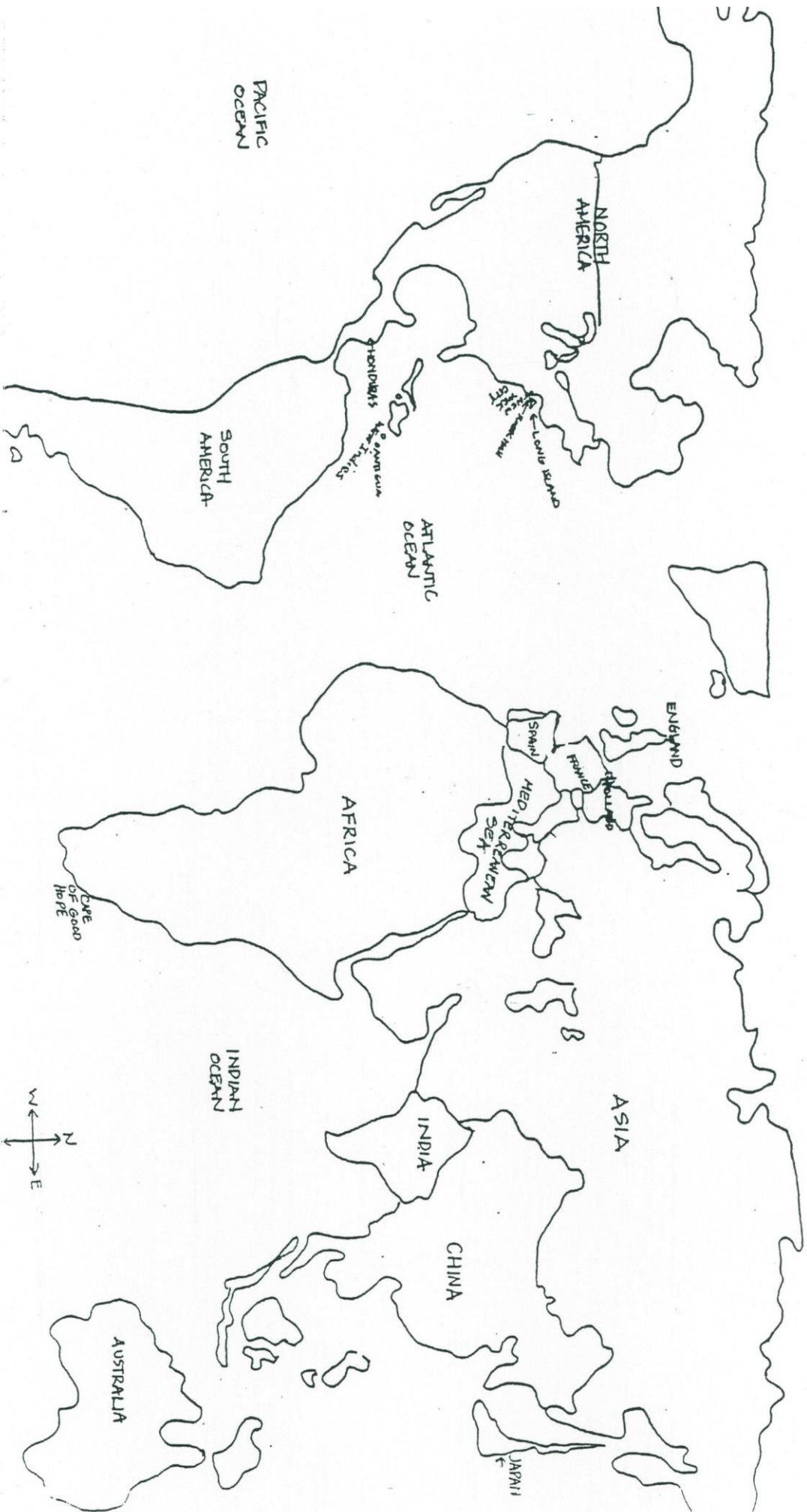


5. Like most Long Islanders today, the Martin family had some free time for recreation. Playing cards was a favorite game. These cards were made in France. The ace of clubs shows views of Paris, France's capital city. On the map, draw the journey of these cards from France to Rock Hall.

MAP GAME: THE WORLD INSIDE JOSIAH MARTIN'S HOUSE

← WEST

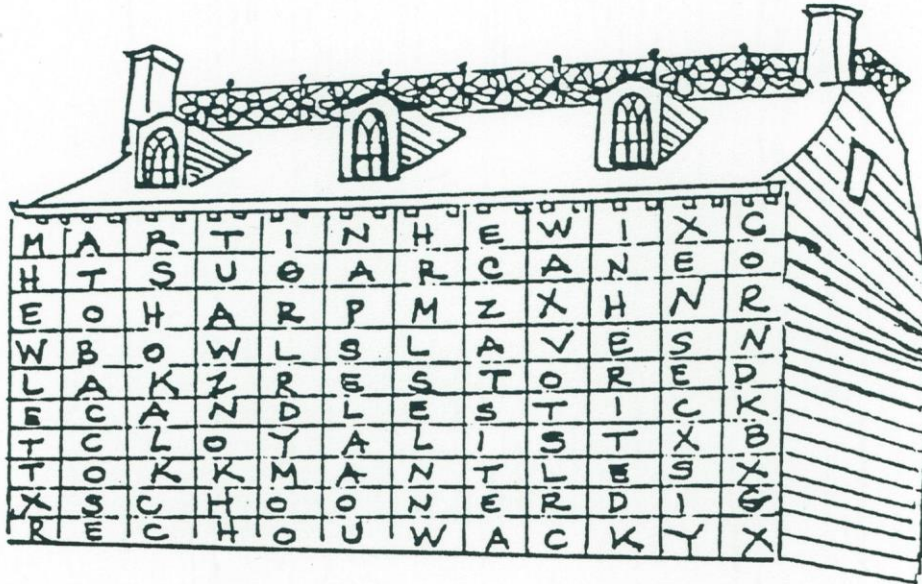
EAST →



Find the Hidden Puzzle

There are 15 words in this puzzle. How many can you find? Begin by finding the six defined words below. (TEACHER: Please discuss these important terms before your visit!)

ROCK HALL VOCABULARY GAME



RESTORED - Rock Hall was lived in by the Martin and Hewlett families for almost 180 years. Now it has been restored to look the way it did when the Martin family lived there. Families no longer live in the house. It has been restored as a museum so future children will be able to imagine life on an early American estate.

INHERITED - Each Martin family member inherited a part of their father's estate when he died. Martin children inherited chairs and furnishings. Some of these exist at Rock Hall today.

SUGARCANE - Mr. Martin made his fortune in the West Indies, where his family owned plantations that grew sugarcane. The sugar would be shipped to North America and made into rum. Some of this rum was sent to Africa and traded for slaves who were shipped to America's plantations.

LOYALIST - The Martin family were loyalists. They supported England during the American Revolutionary War.

MANTEL - At Rock Hall the front of each fireplace is handsomely designed. These fireplace fronts are called mantels. Each mantel is similar to ancient Greek and Roman style architecture. There are at least nine fireplaces in Rock Hall. Be sure to see how unique each mantel style is.

RECHOWACHY - This was the name that the Native Americans gave to this land. It meant "a sandy place" or "the place of our people." The word "Rechowachy" was later changed to "Rockaway." The Native Americans sold this land to the English, who later sold to the Cornell family in 1687. Josiah Martin purchased some of this land in 1767 so he could build Rock Hall.

A footpath from Rockaway to mid-Long Island, built by the Native Americans, is now called Broadway.

Other hidden words:

Hewlett	candlestick	slaves
Martin	schooner	harp
corn	dig	tobacco

Building Rock Hall

Josiah Martin, his children, and his grandchildren all lived at Rock Hall. They wanted a summer home that was a palace of splendor and grace. Josiah Martin selected a spot for a house with a majestic view of the bay. He called in a well-known architect and Rock Hall was under construction after it was purchased in September of 1767.

What kinds of materials were needed to build this house?

Where do you think the builders could get these materials?

How would they transport heavy materials to this site?

Answers to think about:

The floor stones for the foundation came from near the Hudson River in New Jersey.

Today foundations are made out of cement, but stones were used then. These heavy stones were transported by barge to Rock Hall.

Wooden posts and beams were made from chestnut and oak trees that were shipped in from New England.

Cedar shingles and pine floorboards also came by boat from New England.

Nails were made locally by blacksmiths. The iron was mined from rocks around upper New York State.

Window glass came from England and was carefully shipped.

After 1770, during the Revolutionary War, there were trade embargoes on Long Island. Rebels tried to prevent British goods from entering American ports. Do you think this affected the building of Rock Hall? _____

Acknowledgments

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