

The Sweet Taste of Spring

Maple Syrup Programme

A Guide for Teachers



Westfield Heritage Village

This guide provides an overview of the “Sweet Taste of Spring” program as well as information that you will need to make the most of your visit to Westfield.

Program Overview

We are delighted that you and your class will be joining us for our Sweet Taste of Spring program. Westfield is a special place where students have the opportunity to learn about the past in an immersive, multi-sensory environment that makes history come alive. We strive to provide enjoyable, and informative educational opportunities that allow students to learn about our past through active, hands-on experiences.

Westfield's educational programs are developed in accordance with the learning objectives outlined in the Ontario Curriculum, with the goal of being a valuable complement to the work that you do in the classroom. We are committing to offering a unique learning environment where students can explore, imagine and discover.

Program Objectives

This program focuses on helping students gain an understanding of the technological, social and cultural history of maple syrup production in southern Ontario from the days of early settlement through to modern times. Utilizing our beautiful rural location, rare collection of period buildings and rich artifact collection, our knowledgeable and welcoming costumed interpreters will guide your students through an enjoyable, unique program. All stations allow the participants an up-close experience of maple syrup production.

The primary objectives of this program are...

- to describe the ways in which First Nations peoples shared their knowledge with early settlers, including their expertise related to maple syrup production, and how this knowledge helped new Canadians adapt to the climate, resources and circumstances of their country
- to demonstrate how pioneers were able to refine and further develop early maple syrup production techniques, through advances in technology and increased availability of materials
- to demonstrate modern day methods of maple syrup production
- to encourage students to consider how co-operative work benefits a community
- to help students understand the connections between human activity and natural environments
- to develop an understanding of the social, cultural and technological circumstances that impacted individuals and families in Upper Canada in the early 19th century.



Making the Most of Your Visit

Confirmation Form

Please check your confirmation form carefully and notify us as soon as possible if the information is incorrect, or if you need to make any changes. Westfield has a three week cancellation policy.

Payment

We will send an invoice following your visit. If you prefer to pay on the day of your visit, please make cheque payable to “**Hamilton Conservation Authority.**”

Arrival Time

Program times are 10:00 - 11:30 and 12:30 – 2:00. Please plan to arrive by 9:45 a.m. for a morning or all day program and by 12:15 pm. for an afternoon program. This will ensure your program will begin on time. When your group arrives you will be greeted by a costumed interpreter and given further directions.

Late Arrivals

Any groups arriving after the program start time of 10:00 am or 12:30 pm will result in parts of the program being shortened or omitted. We will not be able to extend program times.

Lunches

Program participants are encouraged to bring nut free, litter-less lunches and refillable drink bottles. Please note that Westfield cannot guarantee that our facilities are nut-free.

Please refer to our **Pack like a Pioneer** brochure, included in your information package, for details on how your group can pack healthy, environmentally friendly lunches.

Lunch Space - The Ironwood Hall

The Ironwood Hall is available as a lunchroom and is reserved for groups booking full day programs. The room is available for groups here for a half day at a cost of \$37.29, but needs to be booked in advance. Lunches will be stored here but please note that there is no refrigeration or microwaves available for school use. This area is not locked, so please do not leave valuable items. Washrooms are located in this building as well as a water cooler. Please encourage students to bring a refillable water bottle.

Outside Picnic Area

Groups are welcome to use our picnic area free of charge and the space does not need to be booked in advance. The picnic area is uncovered. You will have access to the washrooms as well as the water cooler for participants to refill their own water bottles.

Storing Belongings

In cases where groups have not booked the Ironwood Hall but wish to have lunch in the picnic area, you will be asked to leave your lunches outside of the Hall while in program. Please note that there is some shade in this area however no refrigeration. Please encourage program participants to pack an icepack and/or use thermo lunch bags.

Dressing for the Weather

Students should dress appropriately for cool, hot or rainy weather. They will be spending the majority of the time outdoors and on gravel roads and in buildings that are heated by methods used during the 19th century. During cold weather boots, mitts, hats and heavy coats are strongly encouraged. In warmer weather sun hats, sunscreen, bug spray are all recommended.

Extreme Weather

All programs continue rain, snow, or shine. During weather extremes however a greater portion of our programs may be conducted indoors or adapted for the safety of participants and staff.

Movement between Stations

To make the most of your program, please encourage your group to move as efficiently as possible from station to station. Your interpreters will direct you to each of your stations.

Supervision

You know your group best, so we will leave it to you to determine how many additional supervisors will be necessary. Please note, however, that due to the small sizes of many of our historic buildings, we recommend you not exceed a ratio of 1:5. You are responsible for supervising your group(s) at all times while on site.

Special Needs

Westfield is working to make the village fully accessible for all visitors, however all areas are not fully accessible at this time. Please let us know if anyone in your group requires special assistance or accommodation and we will do our best to provide the best experience possible.

Costumes

Students and teachers wishing to get into the spirit of the day are welcome to visit in historical costumes. Boys can wear dark dress pants, a white or plaid shirt, suspenders and vest. Girls can wear a dark dress or long dark skirt with cotton blouse and bib-style apron. All can wear straw hats, long black socks and dark leather shoes or boots. No jewelry or makeup should be worn.

Gift Shop

The Gift Shop is not normally open during school programming days however if requested in advance arrangements may be made.

Program Structure

Upon arrival, you will be welcomed by a costumed interpreter, who will help organize the students into groups. Following a brief welcome and introduction, each group will be taken to the first of four stations by the interpreter. You will then be directed to each of the following stations.

Sweet Water -Techniques of First Nations

Location: The Early Settlement Area

Gather around the fire in the early settlement area and listen to a First Nation's legend that tells the tale of how maple syrup was first made. Participants will learn about how trees were tapped by Indigenous Peoples, the equipment that was ingeniously created from the materials at hand in the forest, the methods of converting this sap into sugar, and how this knowledge was shared with early settlers.

Boil and Bubble -The Pioneer Method

Location: The D'Aubigny Inn

At the D'Aubigny Inn, participants will learn how advances in technology and an increased availability of materials allowed maple syrup production techniques to be further refined and developed. Participants will have an opportunity to examine a variety of tools and equipment.

Sugaring Off - Sweet Fun and Games

Location: The Village Green

The maple syrup harvest was a time for both hard work and fun. "Sugaring bees," or "sugaring off parties" were a festive, enjoyable time for everyone in early communities. A fun relay race will have the participants working together to help get the syrup made!

A Sticky Situation - Modern Maple Syrup Production

Location: The Sugar Shack

Take a walk on a lovely wooded path to the Sugar Shack and learn how maple syrup is produced today. While still a labour intensive process, modern equipment allows for large quantities of maple syrup to be produced more efficiently. Participants will have an opportunity to see the large stainless steel evaporator in action as it boils many litres of sap inside the sugar shack. Participant will learn how to identify trees that can be tapped, how much sap is required to make a litre of syrup and will compare the use of buckets and modern tubing methods.