

Long-Smith Cottage

Pre-Visit Activities

1. Explain to students the concept of how things change over time. Brainstorm a list of everyday things and how they change. Relate the information to changes at school, in their homes and in their communities. (Touch on changes in technology, job choices and types of jobs, family life, etc.)
2. Recreate the size of an average first home (log cabin of 16 feet by 20 feet) using string or chalk. See how many students can comfortably stand in this area. Estimate how much furniture could be put in this space. Discuss the uses of this room since it was the only room in the house. A dogtrot cabin would have two rooms about this size. The cottage they will be touring is an 1840s town house - it originally had four rooms plus space upstairs under the roof.
3. Research the date each student's house was built. Make a timeline showing the information. Perhaps use the number of rooms in each house as another piece of data for a chart.
4. Discuss with the students what an artifact is and explain that they will be seeing artifacts from early Fort Bend County families in the cottage. Have them describe one artifact from their own family that would represent their lives.

Long-Smith Cottage

Post-Visit Activities

1. Look at pictures of many different styles of houses, past and present. Compare and contrast the many components of the houses. Discuss how the location of the house and the climate of the area can affect the design of the house.
2. Draw a picture and write a story about your dream house. Be sure to include details and reasons why you designed the house in a certain way.
3. Have students make a survey of the houses in their neighborhood – or go on a walking tour of the neighborhood around your school. Decide on the categories to look for ahead of time. Collect and display the data.
4. Think about houses from the past, such as the Long-Smith Cottage you have just seen. Knowing what a treat it is to get to visit old houses, think of all the things we can do to help preserve the buildings from our past. Create a poster or bumper sticker encouraging people to take care of those buildings that show us what life was like in the past.
5. Working in groups, have students bring in materials from home to use to create a house for the future. Invent some new things that will make the houses different from anything we have ever seen before.