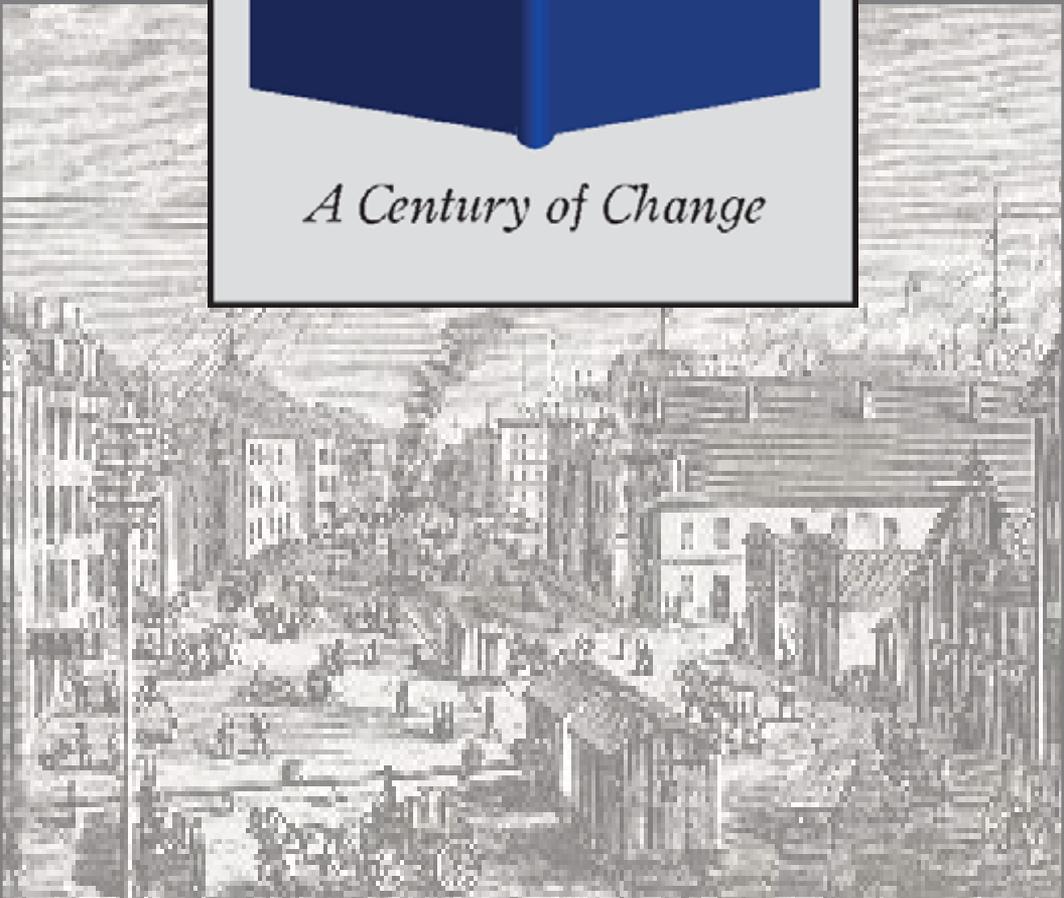




*A Century of Change*



# An Interdisciplinary Educational Program

*by Victoria Mansion*

# *Welcome to Victoria Mansion*

Victoria Mansion is widely recognized as one of the highlights of 19th century architecture and interior design in America, but there is so much more that it can offer students than just being an “important” historic site. The Mansion was constructed at an exciting time in American history, on the eve of the Civil War when technological developments were happening more rapidly than ever before and the world was becoming smaller thanks to advances in communication, transportation, and education.

Portland was, in 1860, a major hub of shipping for both goods and people, and it was as advanced in terms of comforts and services as much larger cities. The Mansion, having been built for a man who spent most of his time in the luxury hotels of larger cities, incorporated the best of everything, making it stand out from its surroundings. Inside are examples of art, literature, technology, immigration patterns, the political climate of the time, and glimpses of what life was like for privileged classes in the mid-19th century. The story doesn't stop there, however, and Victoria Mansion can just as easily be used to tell the story of those who worked in and who labored to build this grand summer home, and what was going on both inside and outside its walls.

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# *Program Overview*

*Victorian Portland: A Century of Change* is an interdisciplinary program designed to draw deep and meaningful connections between classroom and field trip experiences for third grade students. Using the city of Portland and Victoria Mansion as concrete examples of the themes covered, students are given four-part units on one of eight topics. At each stage of the program, the lesson's over-arching theme is emphasized, helping students retain the information provided to them and to make connections between the classroom, the museum, and their own lives. These lessons help to bridge the gap between the Colonial era and the 20th century by focusing on a specific site and the factors that contributed to its creation and making clear connections between the past and present.

Each unit has a primary subject area (social studies, English language arts, science, visual arts) but all span many topics and are truly interdisciplinary. Units are based on technology, travel and transportation, symbolism, etiquette, immigration, portraiture, architecture, and brownstone.

While there is an emphasis on Portland (stronger in some lessons than in others), this program is in no way meant to be exclusive for Portland students and all lessons could easily be adapted by the classroom teacher to be more applicable to other cities and towns.

# *Program Design*

**Each unit consists of four parts:**

## **Classroom Presentation**

Conducted by a Victoria Mansion educator  
Approximately 40-50 minutes or one class period  
Includes interactive/creative activity

## **Tour of Victoria Mansion**

Led by a Victoria Mansion guide and tailored specifically to the unit

## **On-site Activity at Victoria Mansion**

Led by a Victoria Mansion educator  
Direct tie-ins to classroom presentation  
Engaging lesson that allows for creativity, curiosity, and exploration

## **Classroom Extension Activity**

Provided by Victoria Mansion to the classroom teacher  
To be done following the tour of the Mansion  
Activities relate to the unit theme and vary based on topic  
Teachers are provided with a unit-specific vocabulary list at the beginning of the program

*While striving to meet the needs of classroom teachers, we have taken into consideration standards put in place as part of the Common Core, as well as other educational parameters recognized by the state of Maine. For a list of which requirements are met by each lesson or with any questions regarding the sources we have used to determine these, please send an email to [victorianportland@gmail.com](mailto:victorianportland@gmail.com) with the subject heading “standards.”*

# GABLES, CORNICES, AND QUOINS

(Architecture)

## Classroom Lesson

An exploration of the architectural styles most common in Maine, this unit teaches students where their familiar landscape fits in a broader context based on politics, immigration, fashion, and engineering. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## On-site Activity

Architectural walking tour of the Victoria Mansion neighborhood

## Extension

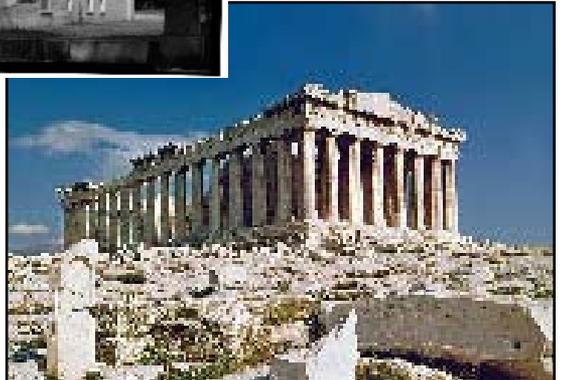
Spot the style inspiration

## Sample Vocabulary

revival, Gothic, ornate



Clapp House, Portland, ME



Parthenon, Athens, Greece

# FROM PORTLAND STONE TO PORTLAND, MAINE

*(Brownstone)*

## **Classroom Lesson**

The brownstone lesson combines geology, architecture, technology, and history to explain the reason for choosing this material for Victoria Mansion. Time permitting there will be an interactive activity following the presentation.

## **On-site Activity**

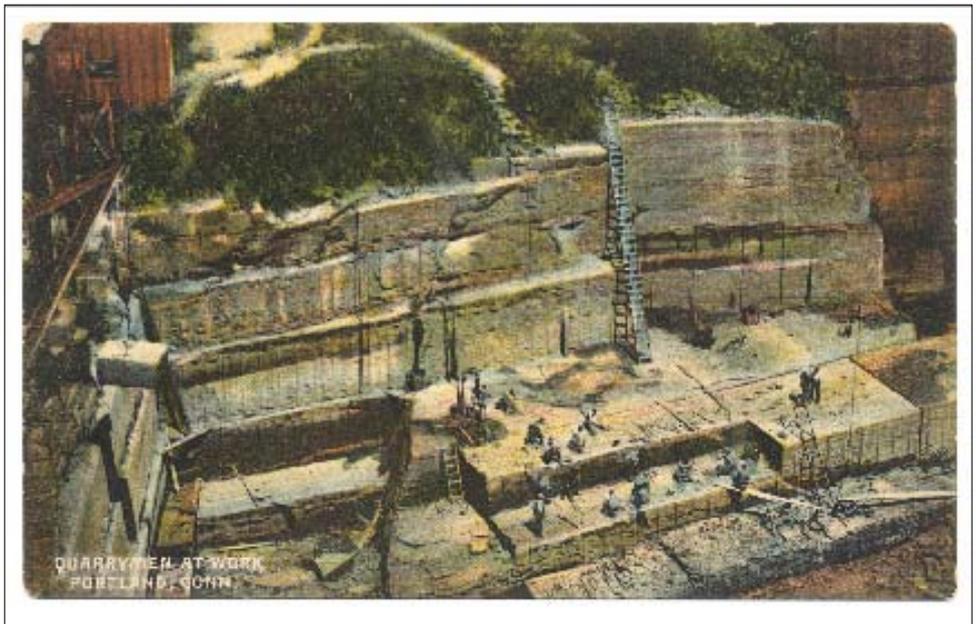
Building material scavenger hunt: What is Victoria Mansion really made of?

## **Extension**

Make your own sedimentary rock

## **Sample Vocabulary**

striation, quarry, restoration



Portland, CT Brownstone Quarry ca. 1911

# MANNER MATTERS

(Etiquette)

## Classroom Lesson

Students explore the differences between proper manners in Colonial, Victorian, and contemporary America using examples from published etiquette books, artistic representations, and diaries. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## On-site Activity

Learn about Victorian visiting customs and make calling cards

## Extension

Use excerpts from Mansion resident Mary Louise Chamberlain's diaries and publications to compare and contrast Victorian and contemporary manners

## Sample Vocabulary

etiquette, behavior, culture



Detail, *Dinner at Haddo House*, Alfred Edward Emslie, 1884

# WHERE DID THEY COME FROM, WHAT DID THEY DO?

*(Immigration & Backstairs Life)*

## **Classroom Lesson**

The history of Portland is largely a history of immigrants and the changes they made to the city. This unit looks at immigrants and working class who made up most of the Forest City's 19th century population, where they came from, where they lived, and where they worked. It provides a context in which students can place Victoria Mansion as the exception to the rule of the 19th century Portland experience. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## **On-site Activity**

Design your own organization banner based on the banners of the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association

## **Extension**

Explore immigration close to home either by having students delve into their own family histories or the neighborhoods in which they live/study

## **Sample Vocabulary**

census, textile, resident



Advertisement for Reuben Ruby, *Portland City Directory*, 1838

# SMILE FOR THE CAMERA?

*(Painted Portraits & Photography)*

## **Classroom Lesson**

This lesson examines the evolution of portraiture in America. Beginning with painted portraits in the 18th century, students will see how the information communicated by a portrait changed over time as styles, tastes, and technologies evolved over the course of the 19th century. Portraits examined in the lesson are drawn in part from the collections of Victoria Mansion. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## **On-site Activity**

Kinds of Victorian photography: cute cats, headless portraits, and hidden mothers

## **Extension**

Animation and how it works

## **Sample Vocabulary**

itinerant, landscape, limner



Ruggles & Olive Morse, ca. 1855

# COLORS AND IMAGES: WHAT DO THEY SAY?

*(Symbolism)*

## **Classroom Lesson**

Using historical and contemporary symbols, students discuss significance attributed to images. The relationships between pictures and meanings are explored in order to help students decode images and gather information from non-text based documents. The visit to Victoria Mansion demonstrates the way that meaning can be gathered from visual cues and prompts students to look deeply at what is in front of them to understand both the people who lived in the house and the era in which it was created. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## **On-site Activity**

Use symbols to indicate function: room design

## **Extension**

Research several state seals/flags and decode the images

## **Sample Vocabulary**

represent, niche, illiterate



*Columbia, Victoria Mansion, ca. 1860*

# INVENTIONS AND INNOVATIONS OF THE VICTORIAN AGE

*(Technology)*

## **Classroom Lesson**

Victoria Mansion, completed in 1860, was equipped with the most advanced technology available. Looking at the “luxury” technologies included in the Mansion, students learn about the rapid advances taking place in technology in the mid-nineteenth century. Connections are drawn to show how these changes continue to influence the way we live today. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## **On-site Activity**

Matching game for Victorian inventions

## **Extension**

Students explore the evolution of common technology

## **Sample Vocabulary**

cistern, ducts, piston



Tremont House, Isaiah Rogers, Architect, 1824

# FROM HERE TO THERE, FROM THEN TO NOW

(Transportation & Travel)

## Classroom Lesson

An exploration of travel beginning in the Colonial era focusing on hotels and transportation, this lesson introduces students to the technologies that made travel more convenient, frequent, and comfortable in the 19th century. Time permitting, there will be a creative activity following the presentation.

## On-site Activity

Mapping your travels, why maps matter

## Extension

Use Mansion resident Mary Louise Chamberlain's diary excerpt regarding the wreck of the steamship *Portland* to talk about communication methods and speed then vs. now

## Sample Vocabulary

steamship, cistern, necessary chair



Steamship, *Portland*, Antonio Jacobsen, 1890

# *Funding/Price Structure*

Classroom presentations are free of charge (one unit per academic year) for Cumberland County schools when a visit to Victoria Mansion is booked. The on-site components are \$3 per student (this covers both the tour and the lesson).

For additional lessons there is a cost of \$25 per classroom plus mileage reimbursement for the Mansion educator.

For classes interested in a classroom presentation and extension activities only, lessons are \$40 per class plus mileage reimbursement.

Mileage reimbursement for the Mansion educators based on the IRS standard mileage rate.

Most lessons can be adapted for other grade levels. Prices will vary based on lesson and grade level.

Further information on pricing is available on request.

Financial assistance may be available for groups facing hardship, particularly regarding busing fees. Inquiries may be directed to **victorianportland@gmail.com** with the subject heading “assistance.”

# *Other Educational Offerings*

In addition to *Victorian Portland*, Victoria Mansion offers the following educational events and programs:

***Stories on the Staircase***, a free, pre-school story hour and kid-focused mini-tour, occurs throughout the year.

***Victorian Doll Tea***, held annually the Sunday after Mothers' Day, guests receive etiquette instruction, fun activities, and a full tea service.

***Night of the Nutcracker with Portland Ballet***, held annually in December, dancers perform excerpts from the Victorian Nutcracker in the stair hall at Victoria Mansion.

***Tales of Terror***, held annually two nights in October, performers recite scary stories from the Victorian era in the stair hall with lights dimmed to gas light level.

***Victorian Fair***, held biennially in September, this event features a variety of artists, craftspeople, historians, and entertainers all recreating Victorian era life on the lawn of the Mansion.

For more information about any of these events, please visit [www.victoriamansion.org](http://www.victoriamansion.org) or call (207) 772-4841 ext. 104.

If you have questions, would like more information, or to schedule programming for your classroom, please contact Lucinda Hannington, Director of Education & Visitor Services, at (207) 772-4841 ext. 104 or [victorianportland@gmail.com](mailto:victorianportland@gmail.com).

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