

GET ME TO PHILADELPHIA!

A Colonial Map Discovery Activity

Nowadays, you can get from Boston to Philadelphia in hours.

All you need is a car, train or plane!

But in 1776, our Founding Fathers had none of these contraptions! When John Hancock (Boston, Massachusetts), Roger Sherman (New Haven, Connecticut), and Thomas Jefferson (Charlottesville, Virginia) needed to attend the first Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia, even a shiny new four-horse carriage could only be expected to travel 7-8 miles per hour in summer with no more than 8 hours at a time so that the horses could rest.

How long would they need for an overland journey? Here's a chance to take a trip back in time, using historical maps and a little math to get there!

American Colonies, 1776



What to Do:

1. Where's Philadelphia? Mark it with a star!
2. Find each man's home town, and mark it with an X:
John Hancock
Roger Sherman
Thomas Jefferson
3. Since we don't have an accurate map of all colonial roads in 1776, we'll do this activity "as the crow flies." Draw a line between each man's home town and his destination, Philadelphia. Using the map legend, calculate how far:
Boston to Philadelphia _____
New Haven to Philadelphia _____
Charlottesville to Philadelphia _____
4. Speed: if each colonist traveled 8 hours in a day at the rate of 7 mph how many miles could he expect to cover in a day?
5. So...how many days would it take
Hancock _____
Jefferson _____
Sherman _____
to make it to Philadelphia, just based on this "straight line" calculation?

Psst: Hey kids, would YOU have been willing to make a trip like this in 1776? _____