

## Early Colonial Natural Resources

# Colonial Natural Resources Research Cards

### Sassafras

Sassafras is a tree that smells like cinnamon. *Settlers* used the tree bark for medicine. They made the twigs into tea. They sold the tea to make money.



sassafras

*Thanks for checking out  
this product! I hope you'll  
find it exciting and easy to  
use.*

*Sandie Flynn*

### Sassafras

Sassafras is a tree that smells like cinnamon. The colonists made tea from the twigs of the tree. They sold the tea in Europe where it became very popular. The bark was used to make medicine. It could heal wounds and prevent infections. We don't use sassafras today.

### Sassafras

Sassafras is an *aromatic* tree similar to cinnamon. Native Americans used the bark for healing fevers and rheumatism. The colonists made a tasty tea from the twigs, and were soon *exporting* sassafras to Europe, where the tea quickly became popular. Up until the 1960s, sassafras was used as an antiseptic by dentists, and put in toothpaste, root beer, and chewing gum. At that time, the Food and Drug Administration decided that the oil in the plant, safrole, was dangerous and should no longer be used.

39 Research Cards,  
Nonfiction Texts at 3 Levels  
PS-1, Grades 2-3, Grades 4-5  
Aligned with Common Core State Standards



# Settling the New World

# Natural Resources Research Cards

Images for All Grades

Students can use these **Natural Resources Research Cards** in a variety of ways to learn about the materials used by the early American colonists. Each card shows a natural resource image on the front (the images are the same for all grade levels) and a textual description on the back explaining how the item was used. The textual information comes at 3 reading levels (**preschool-grade 1**, **grades 2-3**, and **grades 4-6**). The titles of each card are color coded for easy identification.

**Objective:** *Students will read the pictures and/or the information on the cards to learn about natural resources used by the early colonists. They will identify the difference between primary and secondary sources.*

These materials can be used to develop **CCSS**. See file "Common Core State Standards" for a list of specific standards for grades K-5.

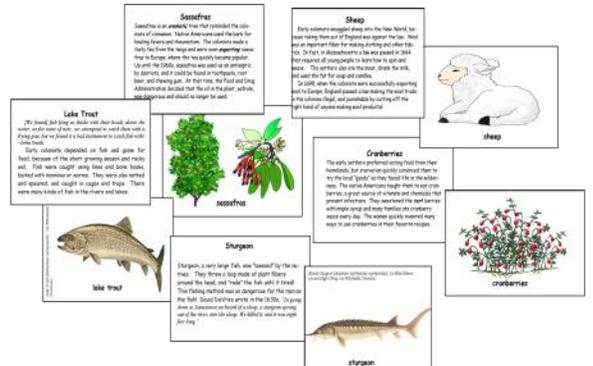
**Preparation:**

1. Print the image file (file a) on cover stock single sided. Keep the pages in order as they come out of the printer.
2. Print the textual file (**b for grades preschool-1**, **c for grades 2-3**, and **d for grades 4-6**) on the back of the images. Make sure each page prints correctly so the text matches the image.
3. Laminate, and cut apart.
4. Tape the Title Card (above) to a zipped baggie and place the cards in the baggie to store in your classroom museum or center.



**Uses:**

- **Identifying Specific Resources of the Early Colonial Era** (*small groups or whole class*) Place the "Natural Resources Research Cards" in a colonial hat, plastic cauldron, or fry pan, and have each student select one. Each student reads their own card, and then retells the information to the class or small group. Some of the cards contain primary source material. Discuss the difference between the primary and secondary sources, and give each student a special treat (I use butterscotch candy to represent gold, NOT a good idea for little kids) every time someone finds a primary source. This will help them realize how special these sources are. (Continue "celebrating" finding primary sources throughout your study of colonial America in any way you choose.)
- Place the cards in your classroom mini museum or center as research materials.
- Use them to help your students develop settings for stories or reports written about the period. Students can select or draw cards that they want to incorporate in their writing.
- Students pull a card out of a hat and do more research on the item. They share the new information with the class by telling about it, or making a set of new resource cards to add to the center. (A blank Microsoft® Word file (file 3e) is included for this purpose.)
- Use them with the Natural Resources game board. Before taking his turn, each student will read a card, locate the item on the game board, or look at the picture and identify how the item was used.
- Make a number of image cards (run them on copy paper at a fast print level) and use them as rewards or trading cards during the unit.

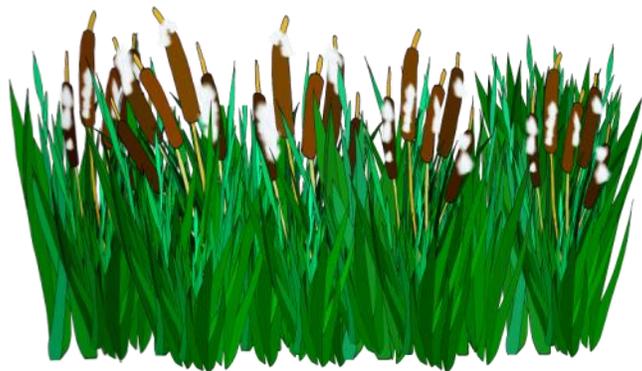


These cards come in 3 reading levels—

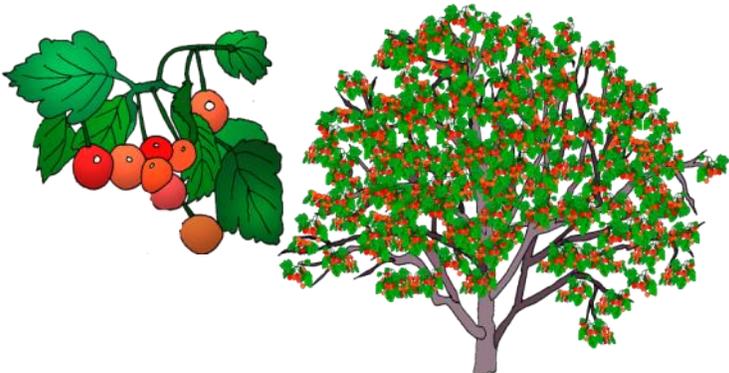
- PS-Grade 1
- Grades 2-3
- Grades 4-5

The New World

**Natural Resources  
Research Cards**



**cattails**



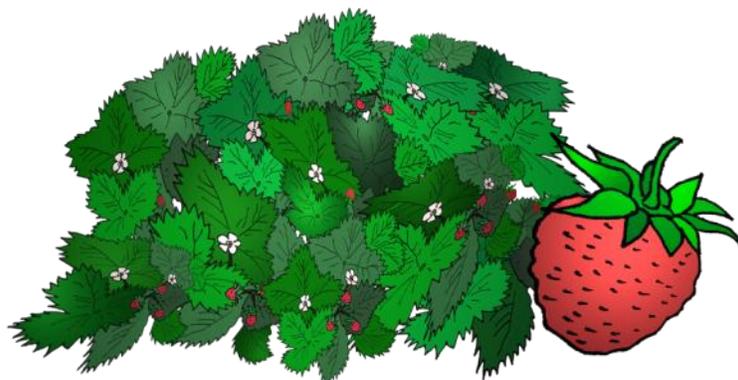
**crabapple**



**cranberries**



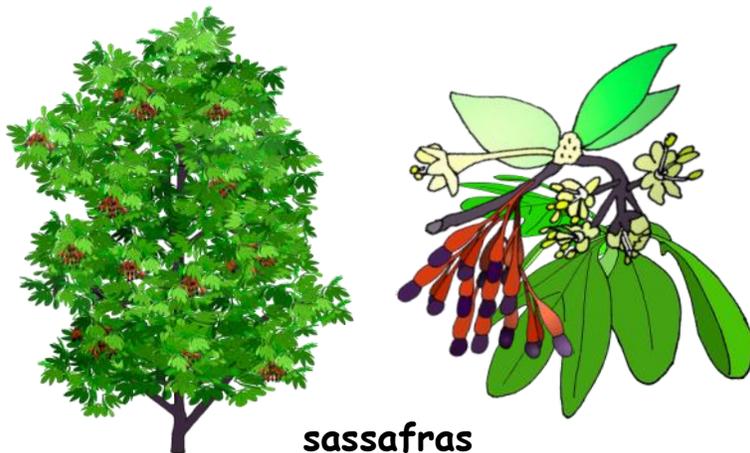
**wild onions**



**wild strawberries**



**eastern white pine**



**sassafras**

## Cattails

Cattails grow near rivers and lakes. The *settlers* made a roof for their house from the leaves. They ate the roots. They stuffed their beds with the flower fluff.

## Cranberries

Cranberries are full of good things to make strong bodies. They help people stay well. The *colonists* ate cranberries at almost every meal.

## Strawberries

Strawberries grew all over the New World. One man said, "*My horse's legs were all red from walking in the strawberries.*" The strawberries were as big as your fingernail.

## Sassafras

Sassafras is a tree that smells like cinnamon. *Settlers* used the tree bark for medicine. They made the twigs into tea. They sold the tea to make money.

## Natural Resources Research Cards

Here are some things to do with the Natural Resources Research Cards:

- Look at the pictures.
- Read the words.
- Find the items on the game board.
- Make up a story using the cards.
- Act out what the *colonists* did.

## Crabapple

Crabapples are the only apples that grew in America when the *settlers* first came. They are a little sour, but they are good for people to eat. We still eat them today.

## Onions

The *colonists* really liked onions. The people used wild onions. They put them in soup and stew. Onions helped to keep them healthy.

## Pine Trees

Pine trees grow fast. The *settlers* used the wood to build houses and furniture. They used the sticky sap to make glue.

## Cattails

Cattails grow along rivers and lakes. Colonists ate the roots which tasted like cucumbers. They stuffed the flower fluff into a sack to make a bed. The strong leaves were made into roof thatch, and woven into floor mats, chair pads, and baskets. Leaves dipped in *tallow* could burn for 45 minutes.

## Cranberries

The native Americans taught the colonists to eat cranberries. The berries were very sour, so they sweetened them with maple syrup. The berries have a lot of vitamins in them, and help prevent infections. Many families ate cranberry sauce every day.

## Wild Strawberries

Wild strawberries grow in open land where they get lots of sun. When the colonists first came to the New World, there were so many strawberry fields that one man wrote that his horse's legs were all red from walking through them! Wild strawberries are much smaller than the ones we grow.

## Sassafras

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## Natural Resources Research Cards

Here are some things to do with the Natural Resources Research Cards:

- You can use these cards to help you learn about plants and animals used by the early American colonists.
- Choose some resources and include them in a story you write about early colonists.
- Choose an item to learn more about. Make a new set of cards to add to our museum.
- Use the cards with a game board. Read a card before you take a turn.
- Quiz yourself or a friend on how the item was used.

## Crabapple

Crabapples are the only native apples in America. They are smaller than the apples we grow, and are a little sour. The colonists ate the crabapples, made them into applesauce, apple butter, and baked them into pies and bread.

## Wild Onions

Onions have a lot of vitamin C in them, which helps to prevent diseases, and heal wounds. The colonists planted onions they brought with them, and used wild onions, too. They used the onions in making sauces, stews, and soups.

## Eastern White Pine

Eastern white pine is the tallest of the pine trees in North America. The wood is strong and doesn't rot easily. The wood was used to build homes, furniture, and ships. The pitch sealed the ship's beams to make them water tight. Turpentine was used to make paint.

## Cattails

The tender, under water shoots of cattails in early spring were an excellent food source and tasted much like cucumbers. The roots were eaten raw or dried, peeled, and boiled like potatoes. Tough cattail leaves were used to make roof thatch. They were harvested in late summer, tied into bundles and layered on the roof frames. They were also good for weaving floor mats and chair pads, and making baskets. The flower fluff was stuffed into sacks to make pillows and mattresses. Leaves dipped into *tallow* (animal fat) made "candles" that burned for 45 minutes.

## Cranberries

The early settlers preferred eating food from their homelands, but starvation quickly convinced them to try the local "goods" as they faced life in the wilderness. The native Americans taught them to eat cranberries, a great source of vitamins and chemicals that prevent infections. They sweetened the *tart* berries with maple syrup and many families ate cranberry sauce every day. The women quickly invented many ways to use cranberries in their favorite recipes.

## Wild Strawberries

Wild strawberries grow *voraciously* in land that has been cleared of trees by felling or fire. In the early days of colonial America, strawberry fields could be miles long. Wild strawberries are much smaller than the *domesticated* berries of today, but they made up for their small size in number. One man wrote that his horse's legs were dyed red from the berries as they passed through the field. The colonists *transplanted* some of the wild berries into their gardens. When they did, they found the berries grew a little bigger! They were also used for medical purposes.

## Sassafras

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## Natural Resources Cards

Here are some things to do with the Natural Resources Cards:

- You can use these cards to help you with your research.
- Use them as game cards with a game board. Read a card, or ask/answer a question before taking your turn.
- Get ideas to use in writing historical narratives or research reports. Add some of the resources to your setting, or use them to solve a problem experienced by a character.
- Use them to help you learn new information or review the information you will need to know for your test.

## Crabapple

Crabapples are the only native apples in America. The colonists used the small fruit of these trees during the early years as they tried to establish orchards of apple trees brought over from Europe. Crabapples are smaller than *domesticated* apples and are a little *tart*. They can be used in all the ways our apples can be used: eaten raw, baked in pies, turned into sauce, and baked into bread.

## Wild Onions

Native Americans used wild onions for food, and as medicine for the treatment of wounds, insect bites, and colds. Onions are a great source of vitamin C and aid in the prevention of scurvy, so the Pilgrims carried loads of them in the hold of the *Mayflower*. They planted these European onions in their gardens, and used wild onions to add to what they grew. The colonists used onions *primarily* in sauces, stews, and soups.

## Eastern White Pine

Eastern white pine is the tallest of the pine trees in North America. The lumber is strong, light weight, and very *resistant* to rot. This made it easy for colonial carpenters to work with. The settlers began *exporting* the lumber around the world only 20 years after they first arrived in the New World. The lumber was used for building homes, furniture, ships, and masts. The pitch and tar were used for sealing items to make them water tight, and the *turpentine* that came from these trees was used to make paint.