

Word Ladders Model Lesson



Standards

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.



Procedures

Introducing the Verse Text

- Allow students to read the poem silently.
- Then, read the poem aloud as students follow along. Be sure to model fluent, expressive reading. Have students reread the poem chorally with partners and again as a class.
- Engage in a class discussion about the poem. You may choose to ask questions about the main idea of the poem, discuss and define any unfamiliar words, ask how the poem makes students feel, ask what they think various phrases in the poem mean, and so on.

Vocabulary Strategy Steps

1. Before the lesson, use the *Word Ladder Template* (page 27, [wordladders.pdf](#)) to create a word ladder for the words in the poem you are sharing with students. (A Microsoft Word® version of this template is available with the digital resources online.) You can have anywhere from 6 to 12 clues. The template on page 27 has space for 10 clues. There are three additional templates (6, 8, and 12 words) provided as part of the digital resources online. (Also included with the digital downloads are examples of word ladders to help you get started.) Make copies of your completed page for your students.
2. Introduce word ladders and explain how they should be completed. The key aspects of word ladders are that all the words need to be connected in some way and that you start from the bottom and move up the ladder.
3. Distribute the word ladder you created. Have students work in pairs or small groups to complete your word ladder. Provide guidance to students as needed.
4. Many students will enjoy creating their own word ladders. Provide them with copies of the templates and let them create their own ladders using the words from poems or other texts. After students finish creating their word ladders, have them exchange papers with other groups or students and complete them.



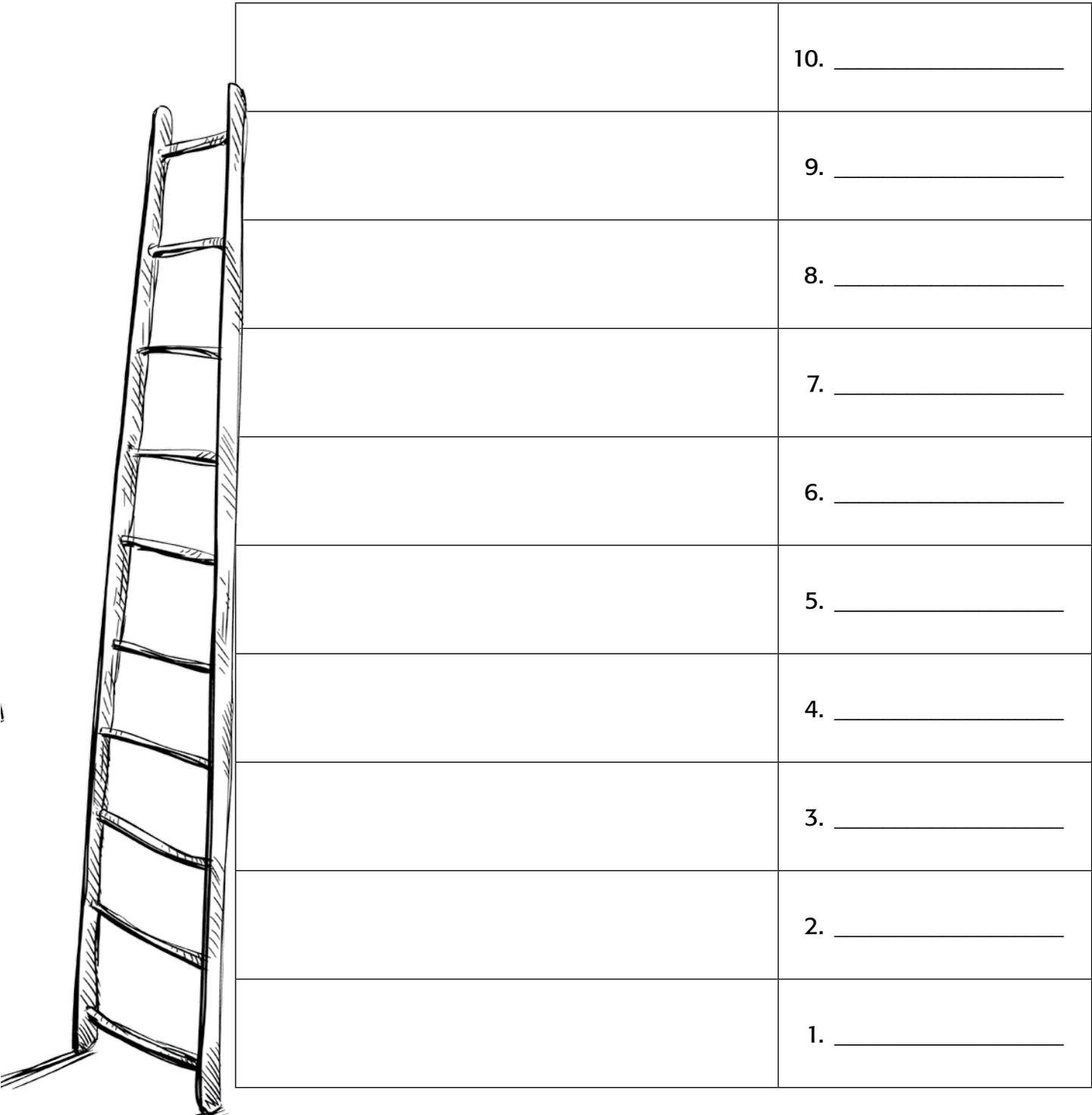
Materials

- copies of a verse text for the lesson
- *Word Ladder Template* (page 27)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Word Ladder Template

Directions: Starting at the bottom of the ladder, read the clues in the left column to figure out the missing words in the right column.



	10. _____
	9. _____
	8. _____
	7. _____
	6. _____
	5. _____
	4. _____
	3. _____
	2. _____
	1. _____

Word Ladder Example Lesson Featuring “Original Thirteen Colonies”



Standards

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.



Procedures

Introducing the Verse Text

- Allow students to read “Original Thirteen Colonies” (page 29) silently.
- Then, read the poem aloud as students follow along. Be sure to model fluent, expressive reading. Have students reread the poem chorally with partners and again as a class.
- Engage in a class discussion using the following questions as a guide:
 - * The poem says there were many differences among the people who came to the New World. What were some of these differences?
 - * What things did these people have in common?
 - * According to the poem, what kinds of risks did the colonists take?



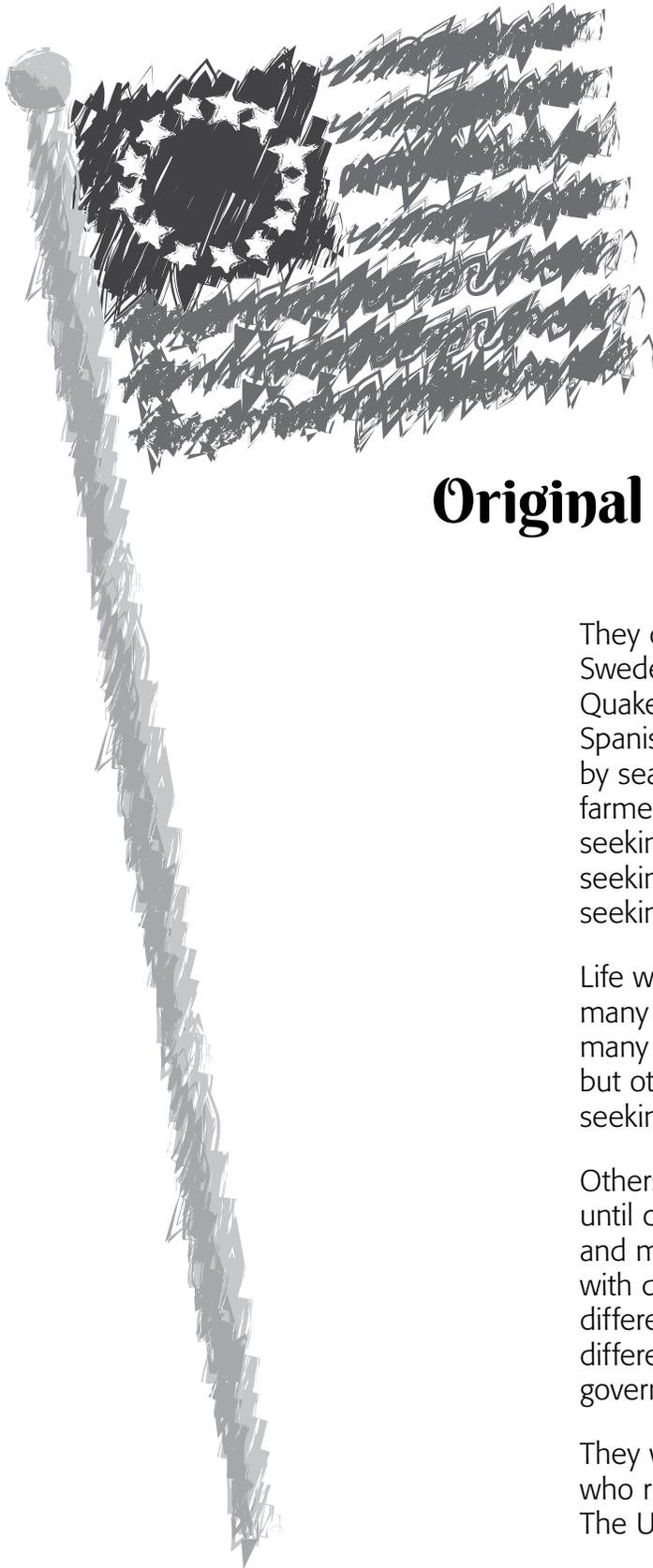
Materials

- “Original Thirteen Colonies” (page 29)
- *Word Ladder for “Original Thirteen Colonies”* (page 30)

Vocabulary Strategy Steps

1. Introduce word ladders and explain how they should be completed.
2. Distribute *Word Ladder for “Original Thirteen Colonies”* (page 30, wordladder_colonies.pdf). Have students complete the ladder either independently or in small groups. Provide guidance to students as needed.
3. Check students’ work.

10. free	5. line
9. tree	4. lice
8. tee	3. rice
7. tin	2. rise
6. tine (Be prepared; this one is hard!)	1. risk



Original Thirteen Colonies

By David L. Harrison

They came, the Dutch,
Swedes, Finns, English,
Quakers, Puritans,
Spanish, French, adventurers
by sea in crowded, pitching ships—
farmers, soldiers, men of trade,
seeking their way,
seeking freedom,
seeking new life in a new world.

Life was harsh,
many died;
many died
but others came,
seeking their way.

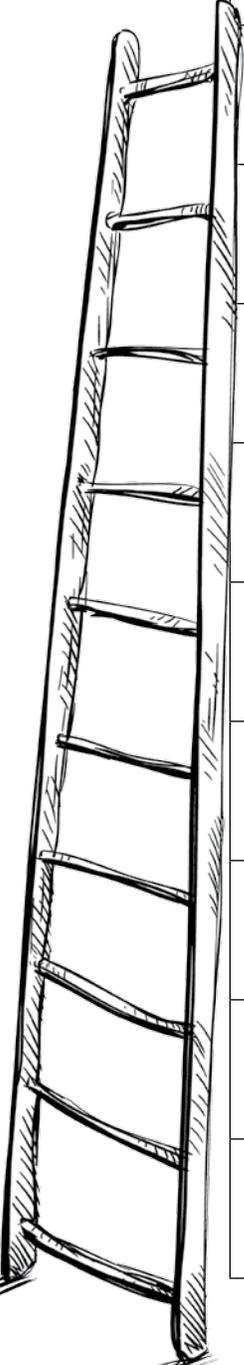
Others came and others came
until colonies grew
and many people
with different beliefs,
different customs,
different languages,
governed themselves in peace.

They were the ones
who risked all to become
The United States.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Word Ladder for “Original Thirteen Colonies”

Directions: Starting at the bottom of the ladder, read the clues in the left column to figure out the missing words in the right column.

 <p>The colonists risked everything so they could be _____. (change: first letter)</p>	10. _____
<p>These grow outside and provide shade on a sunny day. (change: add one letter)</p>	9. _____
<p>A golfer hits the ball from a _____. (change: last two letters)</p>	8. _____
<p>Metal used in cans (change: drop one letter)</p>	7. _____
<p>A prong on a fork (change: the first letter)</p>	6. _____
<p>In school, everyone walks down the hallway in a straight _____. (change: one letter)</p>	5. _____
<p>These little critters can live in people’s hair. (change: first letter)</p>	4. _____
<p>You might eat this food as a side dish with your dinner. (change: one letter)</p>	3. _____
<p>The sun does this every morning. (change: last letter)</p>	2. _____
<p>When the people came to the New World, they knew they were taking a _____.</p>	1. _____