Make history come alive with our interactive, immersive programs at Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center! Our programs for students in pre-K through high school connect past and present through storytelling, hands-on activities, interactive lessons and primary source investigation. Programs are led by experienced school docents and are customized for students of all ages and abilities.

Our programs help students develop a sense of place and community where they live and go to school. Students will discover historical events that occurred in their home town and state/region, which provide a window into the larger themes of American society surrounding race, gender, privilege and opportunity. Students learn about the lives of the site’s past residents by visiting the rooms where they lived and by investigating primary source materials from our collections that pertain to everyday life at this site.


"The Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center is not a field trip. It is an extension of my classroom. It is a vibrant, engaging, living curriculum that breathes the inquiry arc and C3 framework. All this, and it is local history. We are very lucky to be part of their program." –C. Petersen, Scotts Ridge Middle School, Ridgefield, CT

Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center School Programs by Grade Level (Fall 2018)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM</th>
<th>PRE-K, K</th>
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<th>5-6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Let's go to the Museum!</td>
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<td>Colonial Life</td>
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<td>National Connections: The American Revolution</td>
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<td>The Battle of Ridgefield</td>
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<td>National Connections: The American Civil War</td>
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<td>Ridgefield during the Civil War</td>
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<td>Ridgefield, the Gilberts, and the Gilded Age</td>
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<td>Examining race, gender, opportunity through the Arts and Historiography.</td>
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<td>Classroom Outreach: Colonial Life</td>
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<td>Classroom Outreach: The American Revolution and the Battle of Ridgefield</td>
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<td>#HandsOnHistory: A rotating, interactive exhibition of Museum artifacts during the month of October. STEM.</td>
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<td>Building of the American Nation: Program being developed for 19th century America.</td>
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Elementary School Programs (PreK-6)

Through living history programs, students meet and interact with costumed interpreters portraying the residents of the Keeler Tavern during colonial times.

Let’s go to the Museum!
Museum visit for our pre-school students that includes a walk through the tavern with a costumed docent, a lesson on museum manners, and provides opportunities for them to get a feel for colonial life.

Colonial Life Program
Esther’s Kitchen & Timothy’s Tavern
Meet Esther and Timothy Keeler, owners of the Keeler Tavern, as they introduce students to family and community life in Early America. Students make connections between life in Early America and present day as they explore Esther’s Kitchen and help her prepare her herbs for a variety of uses, while Timothy introduces students to his tavern and post office, the center of town life. Basic economic principles are woven throughout the program to engage students in interdisciplinary learning.

Extension Activities for this program engage students through hands-on learning. The following activities can be combined for a unique experience depending on interest, time and season: Colonial outdoor games or Tavern games (weather dependent); Colonial dance; quill pen writing; embroidery; ice harvesting; period farm tools to learn about the planting cycle and dairy farming (STEM); and early ledgers to learn about the cash and barter transactions as the economic drivers that shaped Colonial town life (STEM). Students can also debate whether or not to join the Revolution in the very same Assembly Room in which the citizens of Ridgefield would have discussed this issue.

Early Settlement Program
Students will learn about early 18th century life as Ridgefield was being settled as an archetypal New England town. Historic maps of Native American settlements, early European settlements, and Connecticut on the eve of the Revolutionary War will be compared to modern maps as students discuss the importance of natural resources. Students will also engage with costumed interpreters to participate in a bartering game, learn about the process of Ridgefield’s settlement, and interact with a Native American interpreter. The principles of economics and geography are woven throughout the program to engage students in interdisciplinary learning and reinforce learning. This is a full day program.

Middle and High School Programs

Local history programs help students develop a sense of place and connection to their community. Local history is also a window onto the national stage, introducing students to national events that affected their own communities.

The American Revolution: The Battle of Ridgefield
The Battle of Ridgefield, on April 27, 1777, was the only inland battle in Connecticut during the Revolution. To answer the question, “Who was victorious in the Battle of Ridgefield?”, students meet and interact with 6 protagonists from the Battle of Ridgefield and study primary and secondary source documents, including letters, maps and newspapers. They learn about a Revolutionary War soldier’s life, and field medicine of the time.

The American Civil War: Ridgefield During the Civil War
Anna Marie Resseguie kept detailed diaries of her life at the Resseguie Hotel (previously, the Keeler Tavern) during the Civil War years. Students meet Anna Marie and five other protagonists to discover how the Civil War affected
those at home in Ridgefield. They study primary source materials to learn about the Civil War’s impact on Ridgefield and the nation. Through hands-on exploration of artifacts, they learn about life on the home front during the war. In addition, they hear from a Civil War soldier re-enactor about life at the front.

The Gilded Age: Ridgefield, the Gilberts, and the Gilded Age
Famous architect Cass Gilbert (credits include the Woolworth Building and the U.S. Supreme Court building) was the last noteworthy resident of the Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center property. He and his wife Julia moved into what he called the “Cannon Ball House” in 1907 and became active citizens of Ridgefield. Through studying the lives and contributions of these and other Ridgefield residents, students will discover how their own community’s history exemplified aspects of the nation’s Gilded Age.

“Sisters”: Examining race, gender, opportunity through the Arts and Historiography.
SISTERS is based on the real-life stories of two women - one white and one black - who lived in the mid-19th century at what is now Ridgefield’s Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center. It exposes the raw disconnects between “sisters” whose relationship was forever skewed by one of them having to live under a completely different set of rules, due solely to the color of her skin.

CLASSROOM OUTREACH
Programs run one period (45 minutes) and are designed to be presented to one classroom. The American Revolution and the Battle of Ridgefield can be presented as a lecture.

Colonial Life
In this outreach program, trained docents in costume lead students in examining artifacts from colonial times to learn more about life during that time period. Students also learn about the use of herbs and spices in everyday life through a sensory exploration of the most common herbs and spices used by colonial people. Additionally, docents will explain Colonial clothing while dressing one boy and one girl in authentic Colonial outfits.

The American Revolution and the Battle of Ridgefield
Students learn about the causes of and events leading up to the Revolutionary War and the Battle of Ridgefield. This classroom outreach program is customized according to the teacher’s request. Possibilities including a whole-class presentation, or small-group work on primary sources.

Ridgefield Inventors
Students will look at the story of two brothers in Ridgefield and how they exemplified 19th century inventors. Students will look at patents and handle historic inventions. This program is designed to support the Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks for 3rd grade.

The Civil War and Ridgefield
Museum educators will engage students in using primary resources to better understand the events leading up to the Civil War. Documentary artifacts from the museum’s collection will use local history as a way to learn about national events.

The Gilded Age and Ridgefield
Students will learn about how the Gilded Age developed differently in Ridgefield in preparation for their onsite classroom experience.
HANDS ON HISTORY & STEM
*Exhibits rotate annually. Please contact the Museum for more information on this year’s exhibit.*
*These programs adhere to the National Academy of Science’s recommendations for out-of-school STEM experiences.*

“Living off the Land” – Farming Practices
Through hands on activities, learn about historic farm tools and implements used in all stages of food production: preparing the soil, planting the seeds, tending the fields, harvesting the crops, and the final processing for food or animal feed. See how people harnessed the power of simple machines to engineer devices to reduce time and labor and increase yields.

“It Takes a Village” – 18th + 19th Century Trades and Village Life
Using the Museum’s collection of early daybooks and ledgers used to record cash and barter transitions, students explore STEM concepts in an historical setting with an emphasis on **Money, Math, and Merchants**.

“Threading the Needle: From Field to Fabric” – Story of Textiles in Connecticut
From the shearing of sheep to the growing flax, follow the story of how innovative Connecticut people used natural resources to clothe themselves. STEM focus is on the chemistry of dying and the geometry of weaving.

RESERVATIONS

Phone: 203-438-5485  
Email: education@keelertavernmuseum.org
Reservations are required for all groups and must be made at least 4 weeks in advance.

PROGRAM LENGTH

School programs last from 45 minutes to 4 hours, depending on the program chosen and whether or not extension activities are added. Programs can be tailored to individual needs and requirements. Please contact our education staff for more information – we’d love to be a resource for your classroom!

FEES

45 minute program: $5-10/student.  
3-4 hour program (all day): $15-20/student.  
Classroom Outreach Program: $50/period, mileage contingent.  
Teachers **FREE**; one adult chaperone per 10 students free for all programs.

CONTACT US

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