# **Fairmount Water Works: Ingenuity in Water Supply**

**GATHERING THE INFO:** As you watch the webisode, complete this sheet. You may need to pause the webisode and/or watch it more than once to get all of the information.

**1.** Why was water so important in the early history of Philadelphia?

## The port made Philadelphia the trading capital of the new world.

**2.** Fill in the blanks to describe Latrobe's original water system for Philadelphia as described by John Van Horne.

"Latrobe proposed an unorthodox approach to bring fresh water into the city from the Schuylkill River. He wanted to install a steam engine at the foot of Chestnut Street and from there the water would flow underground through a brick conduit to Center Square, where City Hall now stands. From there he wanted a second steam engine that would raise the water into a series of raised cisterns or tanks and from there the water would be distributed by gravity through the city through six miles of wooden, white oak pipes."

**3.** Fill in the chart below with information about the 1801 Pump House.

Successes	Challenges
<ul> <li>Revived Philadelphia's reputation as a progressive city</li> <li>Became popular gathering place</li> <li>Fountain built alongside (The Water Nymph; nation's first example of public art.)</li> <li>Beautiful building</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Noisy</li> <li>Dangerous</li> <li>Threat of explosion</li> <li>By 1801, not enough capacity for population of growing city</li> </ul>

4. Why were Charles Dickens and others so impressed by Philadelphia's Fairmount Water Works?

Water was plentiful and inexpensive for city residents. The area and the building itself were considered beautiful—"a combination of technology and beauty".

#### **EXPLORING PRIMARY SOURCES:**

**I.** Pause at 5 minutes, 21 seconds. What <u>two</u> engineering marvels are depicted?

### **Water Works**

## Dam across the Schuylkill River

**2.** Pause at 5 minutes, 54 seconds. What observations can you make about the people outside of the Water Works? Why do you think they are there?

They are dressed up in fancy clothes. Families as well as couples and individuals. Most seem to be wealthy. They seem to be there just strolling and enjoying leisure time.

**ANALYZING THE INFO:** According to Professor Steven Conn, "The Internet is as nothing when compared to drinkable water." What does he mean by this statement? What evidence did you find in the webisode that supports this comparison?

Answers will vary.