

Philadelphia: America's First World Heritage City

“Globally Important Ideas and Globally Transformative Human Accomplishments”

Philadelphia: America's World Heritage City film is a 28-minute documentary written and narrated by University of Pennsylvania Professor of History of Art, David B. Brownlee and produced and directed by filmmaker and founder of History Making Productions, Sam Katz. The film offers an exceptional glimpse into the formation and development of Philadelphia, illustrating the city's leadership role in the fields of art, transportation, urban planning, medicine and more. The film spans centuries, touching upon the formation of some of Philadelphia's unique neighborhoods and how far Philadelphia has come from the idealistic plan envisioned by William Penn in the 17th century.

Brownlee's enthusiastic narration and the many vibrant images of Philadelphia past and present will engage students from elementary grades through college. The guide that follows is designed to help teachers use this film in their classrooms. Rather than providing a series of lesson plans, this guide is intended to spur ideas and to encourage teachers and students throughout the region to join the effort to celebrate our city's rich heritage. *Philadelphia: America's World Heritage City* is available on the websites of Global Philadelphia, History Making Productions, and also on YouTube.

I. Enlightenment City

A. Before Viewing

- The Enlightenment was an intellectual movement of the late 17th and 18th century that emphasized reason, rationality, and individualism. Enlightenment concepts challenged traditional and religious norms and led to breakthroughs in science and political thought.
- The Great Fire of London (1666) destroyed much of the medieval city. William Penn, a London native, recognized that the city's dense housing patterns and cramped, circuitous streets contributed greatly to the damage wreaked by the flames.

B. After Viewing

- How was Thomas Holme's and William Penn's grid plan a reflection of Enlightenment thinking?
- In what ways was the plan for Philadelphia more of an idea than a reality during the early years of the city's founding?

C. More from History Making Productions (HMP)

- To learn more about the Penn/Holme plan for the city, see the 5-minute webisode *Philadelphia: Planning a City* and accompanying educational materials
 - <https://www.historymakingproductions.com/webisode>

D. Activity Idea

- Philadelphia, Penn's "Greene Countrie Towne," was planned as his vision of a utopia. Have students develop their own ideal cities.

II. City of Ideas: The Athens of America

A. Before Viewing

- Athens, which remains the capital of Greece, is known as an ancient site of artistic flourishing, scientific accomplishment, and political breakthroughs. During the post-Revolutionary period, Philadelphia experienced a comparable era of innovation and optimism.

B. After Viewing

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- Ask students to name as many Philadelphia institutions they can think of that originated during the Athens of America era and record their answers. Which of these institutions have had the most global impact? Which have had the most impact on Philadelphia? Which are most significant in the students' lives?
 - Ask students to name the ideas, documents, and movements that originated in Philadelphia during the Athens of America era (e.g. the Constitution, abolition, prison reform, Bill of Rights) and record their answers. Which of these have had the most global impact? Which have had the most impact on the United States?
- C. More From HMP
- To learn more about the Fairmount Waterworks, see the 9-minute webisode and accompanying educational materials *Fairmount Waterworks: First in the Nation*
 - historymakingproductions.com/webisode
 - To learn more about Benjamin Franklin's many innovations, see *Franklin's Spark, 1720-1765* and accompanying educational materials
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment-2
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment
- D. Activity Idea
- Students research and then design “trading cards” for their favorite invention or institution from the Athens in America era.

III. Interlude: Off the Grid

A. Before Viewing

- Show the neighborhood of Germantown on a map. Explain that Germantown was founded in by 1683 by Quaker and Mennonite settlers from Germany and is one of the oldest neighborhoods of the city that is now Philadelphia. The first written protest against slavery in the Americas was issued in Germantown in 1688. A Revolutionary War battle known as the Battle of Germantown occurred in 1777. In 1793, President George Washington fled to the Deshler – Morris house in Germantown to escape the yellow fever epidemic raging in Philadelphia. In 1854, Germantown became part of the City of Philadelphia. Like many areas of the city, Germantown experienced “white flight” in the post-World War II years. Today it is a vibrant, mostly black neighborhood that contains many intact buildings from the colonial era.

B. After viewing

- In what ways is Germantown similar to other neighborhoods in Philadelphia? In what ways is it unique?
- If the “interlude” section of the film had focused on your neighborhood rather than Germantown, which institutions, buildings, individuals and events would be featured?

C. More from HMP

- For more about the 1688 Germantown Protest Against Slavery and accompanying educational materials, see *In Penn's Shadow*
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment-2
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment

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D. Activity Idea

- Students make a short film about their own neighborhoods
- Students plan a visit to Historic Germantown. What sites do they most want to see?

IV. Workshop of the World: City of Neighborhoods

A. Before Watching

- Ask students the current population of Philadelphia (approximately 1.6 million). Indicate that the city grew from 81,000 people in 1800 to 1.3 million in 1900. Ask for predictions about why the population increased so much during the nineteenth century. What might have been the impact, both positive and negative, of this rapid growth?
- Consolidation describes the 1854 process through which Philadelphia grew from the original grid to incorporate all of Philadelphia County. By combining numerous townships, districts and boroughs into one municipality, greater effectiveness in law enforcement and improved efficiency in city services were achieved.

B. After Viewing

- Nineteenth century Philadelphia was an era of both great achievement and tremendous strife within the city. Ask students for examples of both types of events. Which of these are most significant in terms of how the city developed? How is twenty-first century Philadelphia similar to and different from the city of the 1800s?

C. More From HMP

- To learn more about the “Bible Riots” between Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, see *Urban Trinity: The Story of Catholic Philadelphia* and accompanying educational materials
 - historymakingproductions.com/urban-trinity-2
 - historymakingproductions.com/urban-trinity
- To learn more about the streetcar desegregation campaign led by Octavius Catto, see *Octavius V. Catto: A Legacy for the 21st Century*
 - historymakingproductions.com/ovc
- To learn more about the Centennial in Fairmount Park, see *World Stage, 1872-1899* and accompanying educational materials
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment-2
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment
- To learn more about the building of City Hall, see *World Stage, 1872-1899* (minutes 21-25).
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment-2
- To learn more about the PTC strike of 1944, see the first five minutes of *Promise for a Better City, 1944-1965* and *Shortcut: Richard Moore: Carolyn Davenport Moore*
 - historymakingproductions.com/philadelphia-the-great-experiment-2
 - historymakingproductions.com/webisode

D. Activity Idea

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- Students research and then design an advertisement for a made-in-Philadelphia product, either past or present

V. The City Beautiful

A. Before Viewing

- Ask students if they have ever been to any of the major institutions or events on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. Show a zoomable map of Philadelphia from before 1907 such as the 1876 Mitchell Map of Philadelphia (available on Wikimedia Commons). Indicate the route of the “future” Parkway, from Center Square (at the intersection of Broad and Market), through Logan Square, to the Reservoir. Why would city leaders want to insert a direct route from one point to the other? Who might have supported such a decision? Who might have objected?

B. After Viewing

- How has the Benjamin Franklin Parkway changed since it opened in 1918?

C. Activity Ideas

- Students work in small groups to research and create advertisements for the many institutions along the Parkway

VI. A Better Philadelphia

A. Before Viewing

- Ask students if they have ever been to Society Hill or show images of the neighborhood today. Indicate that Society Hill is one of the wealthiest neighborhoods in Philadelphia but was not always so. Have they seen other areas of the city become more affluent in recent years? Perhaps define the term “gentrification” and ask what might be positive and negative consequences of this type of neighborhood transformation.

B. After Viewing

- Society Hill was a rundown area that is now both a tourist destination and an affluent neighborhood. Were there any downsides to this transformation? What are other areas of the city that are going through similar transitions?

C. More From HMP

- To learn more about Edmund Bacon and the transformation of Society Hill see *Urban Renewal: The Remaking of Society Hill* and accompanying education materials
 - historymakingproductions.com/webisode

D. Activity Idea

- Students interview parents, grandparents, neighbors, or others who grew up in Philadelphia about the changes they have seen in the city.

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Film Overview

The fast-paced America's First World Heritage City film mentions dozens of people, institutions, ideas, and events that have made Philadelphia a unique city that has both influenced and been influenced by other places around the world. The tables below list the major topics touched upon by David Brownlee. These can be used to:

- Help you review content with your students
- Guide you in choosing key concepts and topics on which to develop related lessons
- Design an activity in which students do further research to add to the information provided in the film and in the tables below

The time-line that follows serves a similar purpose.

I. Enlightenment City

| People | Institutions | Ideas/Innovations | Events |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| -William Penn -Thomas Holme | | -1683 grid plan -Religious tolerance | -Settlement along the Delaware River |

II. City of Ideas; Athens of America

| People | Institutions | Ideas/Innovations | Events |
|--|--|---|--------|
| -Charles Wilson Peale -Ben Franklin -Benj. Henry Latrobe | -New World Museum -Penn. Hospital -University of Penn. -Penn. Academy of Fine Arts -Academy of Natural Sciences -Franklin Institute -Eastern State Penitentiary -American Philosophical Society | -Declaration of Independence -Constitution -Abolition -Prison reform -Steam-powered water system -Fairmount Waterworks -Solitary confinement -Bill of Rights | |

III. Workshop to the World: City of Neighborhoods

| People | Institutions | Ideas/Innovations | Events |
|--------|--|--|--|
| | -Baldwin Locomotive -Navy Yard -Cramps Shipyard -Broad Street Station -Building of City Hall (1871-1908) | -City of Neighborhoods: ⇒ Textiles in Irish Kensington ⇒ Coal docks of the Reading RR/Cramps shipyard in German, Polish Frankford/Port Richmond ⇒ Textiles in Scots-Irish, English, | -Burning of Pennsylvania Hall -Anti-black riots -Nativist riots -Growth from 81k in 1800 to 1.3 million in 1900 -Consolidation increases city from 2 to 130 sq. miles -Centennial celebration |

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|--|--|--|--|
| | | German Manayunk ⇒ Waterfront jobs for blacks, Irish, Italians in South Philadelphia -Fairmount Park | |
|--|--|--|--|

IV. City Beautiful

| People | Institutions | Ideas/Innovations | Events |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| -Jacques Gréber | | -Benj. Franklin Parkway | |

V. A Better Philadelphia

| People | Institutions | Ideas/Innovations | Events |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| -Ed Bacon | -Society Hill Towers -Reading Terminal -Penn. Convention Center -Please Touch Museum -Restored Navy Yard | -Urban renewal | -Transformation of Society Hill |

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Philadelphia Time-Line

- 1682 – Founding of Philadelphia
- 1723 – Arrival of Benjamin Franklin
- 1731 – Founding of Library Company of Philadelphia
- 1735 – Building of Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall)
- 1743 – Founding of American Philosophical Society
- 1751 – Founding of Pennsylvania Hospital
- 1775 – Founding of Pennsylvania Abolition Society
- 1776 – Signing of the Declaration of Independence
- 1784 – Founding of Charles Wilson Peale's New World Museum
- 1787– Convening of the Constitutional Convention
- 1791 – Founding of the University of Pennsylvania
- 1805 – Founding of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
- 1817 – Incorporation of the Academy of Natural Sciences
- 1824 – Founding of the Franklin Institute
- 1829 – Building of the Eastern State Penitentiary
- 1831 – Establishment of Baldwin Locomotive Works
- 1838 – Burning of Pennsylvania Hall
- 1842 – Rioting against blacks along Lombard Street corridor
- 1844 – Rioting by nativists against Irish Catholics
- 1854 – Consolidation of City of Philadelphia and County of Philadelphia
- 1876 – Opening of Centennial International Exhibition
- 1893 – Opening of Reading Terminal station
- 1901 – Completion of City Hall
- 1926 – Completion of Benjamin Franklin Parkway
- 1956 – Establishment of Independence National Historical Park
- 1964 – Completion of Society Hill Towers