Welcome to Historic Philadelphia!

Use the handout below to record what you learn as you travel back in time through historic Philadelphia (note form is fine). You may not visit the locations in chronological order, but try to keep track of the three distinct areas of focus:

I. Daily life and society in the 18th Century (1700-1800)
II. Revolutionary Philadelphia (1760s-1780s)
III. Philadelphia during the Republic (1780s-1790s)

I. Daily life and society in 18th century (1700-1800)

Site A: Elfreth's Alley – established 1702; Current buildings built 1720s-1830s.

1. Your first impressions as you walk into Elfreth’s Alley (just 2 or 3 words is fine):

2. As you walk down the alley, record at least one unusual feature about the structures in the alley – consider the architectural differences on the left and right sides of the alley, the style of brickwork, ornamentation on the buildings, how the alley is paved, and anything else you might notice!

3. Try to imagine (or find out from your guide) the purpose of the feature you noticed for life in the 18th century:

4. From your tour in the museum (model house), notice one detail and explain its function in daily life in the 18th century.

5. Do you think it would be fun to live in a house or a street like this in the 18th century? Why or why not?
Site B: Independence Living History Center and Archaeological Center

1. What kind of work is done by the archaeologists here?

2. Describe one or more of the recently found artifacts. What do you think these artifacts show about 18th century daily life?

3. The archaeological record doesn’t show EVERYTHING – what groups do you think are usually overrepresented? What groups are underrepresented? Why? What does the speaker have to say about that?

4. Do archaeological digs reveal any interesting scientific or biological results? Ask the archaeologist.
Site C: Franklin Court – “Fragments of Franklin Court” and “Ghost houses”

1. What is your first impression upon walking into the “Fragments of Franklin Court” exhibit (aside from, “Thank goodness we’re out of the cold!”)?

2. Pay attention to the small glass cases along the walls, and pick ONE ARTIFACT you like. Describe it, and explain what it might show about life in this house.

3. After looking around for a little while, what do you think of this “museum format?” Is it easy/hard to understand? Interesting/uninteresting? Why?

4. What is your first impression of the “ghost houses?”

5. Pick one tile with a quotation from Benjamin and Deborah’s letters and briefly explain what it says and what it shows about the house.

6. What do you think about this approach to commemorating Franklin’s home?
II. Revolutionary Philadelphia

Site A: **Carpenters' Hall** – *Built between 1770 and 1773 by the Carpenters' Company, a guild of skilled “master builders.”*

1. List the many uses of this building in the 1770s and 1780s. What groups used this space? What important events took place here?

2. Describe the architectural details of the front of the building that make it a classic example of the Georgian style of architecture.

3. Why do you think the popularity of the Georgian style declined during and after the Revolutionary War?
Site B: Independence Hall – Constructed from 1732 to 1756.
1. What was the original purpose of this building when built, and how did its purpose change over time?

2. What important events took place in this hall?

3. Stepping into the room where the Declaration of Independence was debated over and signed, and where the Constitutional Convention took place, what details do you notice?

4. How does being in the room compare with seeing it portrayed in the John Adams episodes we saw? What does it make you think about our Constitutional Convention simulation?
III. Philadelphia during the Republic

Site A: The President’s House -- Constructed in 1767, occupied by the Washington and Adams families from 1790-1800, excavated 2007-the present.

1. Which two Presidents lived here? Why only two?

2. What is important about the bay window whose foundation was found in the most recent excavation?

3. About how many slaves did Washington own in VA? How many lived here with him while he served his two terms as president?

4. Give two names of Washington’s slaves and describe them briefly.

5. How did Washington keep his slaves in bondage in Pennsylvania, a state that had passed a number of laws promoting the gradual abolition of slavery?

6. Should the exhibition, when it is completed, focus on the story of Washington’s slaves who lived in this house from 1790-1797? Why or why not?
Site B: Congress Hall – Constructed between 1787 and 1789; used as meeting place for U.S. Congress between 1790 and 1800.

1. Which house of Congress met on the bottom floor and which on the top? How might you have guessed this (without being told by the Ranger – you will only be able to answer after seeing both floors)?

2. What important events took place here?

3. Why did Congress only meet here for 10 years? What changed in 1800?

4. Look at the ceiling and the carpet in the upstairs chamber. Describe them. What do the images symbolize? (Ask the Ranger if you are not sure.)
Site C: First National Bank – Bank chartered 1791-1811; Building constructed 1795-1797
1. What do you notice about the architecture? Prominent features, material, shapes, style? What civilization does it remind you of?

2. Find out from your guide the name of this style and why that style was used during the early Republic (after gaining independence).

3. Find out a few facts from your guide about why the creation of this First National Bank was such a controversial issue.
Site D: **Second National Bank** – Bank chartered 1816-1836; Building constructed 1819-1824.

1. Make some observations about the architectural style of this building, then find out the name of the architectural style it was built in.

2. Why did the Federal Style of architecture (popular mainly from 1785-1815) draw so heavily on Ancient Greek and Roman styles?

3. Find out a few facts from your guide about the controversy surrounding the charter of this Second National Bank.

4. Select one portrait from the gallery and write the subjects’ name, years of birth and death, and a brief description of his/her role in American society.

5. What interests you about this painting?

6. Describe the personal details depicted – clothing, hairstyle, any other objects. What do these choices show you about how the subject wants to be perceived?

Site E: **National Constitution Center**
1. Record your first impressions of the “Freedom Rising” presentation. What did you learn about our country’s earlier history (1600s-1800s)?

2. What did you learn about our country’s more recent history (1900-present)?

3. In the presentation, what references did you hear to the American ideals of equality, rights/freedoms, representation, and faithfulness to founding documents? (Pick one or more and explain what the message was.)

4. After visiting Signer’s Hall, what additional ideas do you have about the Constitutional Convention and the America’s Founders?
Site F: **Arch Street Friends Meeting House** – *Built 1803-1804; enlarged in 1811*

1. What makes this Meeting House special (2 things)?

2. How does the architecture of this building differ from other buildings being constructed at the time? Why was this style chosen?

3. Why did Quakers gradually lose the majority in the colony and their political influence in the Pennsylvania Assembly?

4. Looking at the exhibit in the East Wing, pick William Penn in one of his “superhero roles." Describe what you learn from the window display and accompanying text (1 sentence is fine.) Why was this important?

5. What are your impressions from being inside the Meeting House (the West Wing; where worship happens)?