

WORKSHEET 1: BOSTON THEN & NOW T-CHART

NAME _____

THEN: _____

NOW: _____

SEE

HEAR

Boston was not so much quieter then than now, but its noises were different. From hundreds of shipyards and shops, from sunup to sundown, came the tapping of hammers, the thump of hand looms, the creak of wooden machinery. The hooves of horses on cobbles and the rattle of carts may have been louder than the meshing of gears and swishing of tires. But one still heard the crying of gulls and the beat of the sea upon headlands, or the croak of frogs along Frog Lane (now Boylston Street). At night the stars were as close and wonderful as they still seem to us on dark, country roads...

The skyline was dominated by steeples and the whole town by bells. Everyone knew Christ's "royal peal" and that New North's had a sour note. King's Chapel was deep and sad. Old Brattle and Hollis had their bells...

The bells rang wildly for fires or to call out the mob, joyfully for the repeal of certain acts of Parliament or the withdrawal of an especially unpopular royal governor. They tolled over 'tyranny.' They opened and closed the markets and twice on Sabbath called all to church or meeting. These were the great bells—the very voice of Boston. Besides there were countless smaller ones. Handbells rung on the street advertising 'wonders' and sales, or that it was two o'clock and 'The Bunch of Grapes' was about to serve dinner. Schoolmasters rang for school, cowbells drowsed through the blueberry bushes and hard tack of the Common, and all day long, in hundreds of shops and houses, the tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, of doorbells. In winter-time came the frosty sparkle of sleighbells as citizens rode out in their [sleds.]

The music of bells is almost forgotten by modern ears. Then it was everywhere.

IMAGE 1: OLD NORTH CHURCH

Old North Foundation



IMAGE 2: BOSTON SKYLINE, 2008



IMAGE 4: OLD NORTH BELLS

