



New York City and the Nation
From Seaport City to Metropolis, 1790-1898

Spring Institute 2006

Teacher-Generated Unit Outlines: American Revolution

These unit outlines and sample lessons were produced in advisory groups during the seven-day institute.

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Teacher-Generated Units of Study

Essential Question: What is independence?

Topic: The American Revolution

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Essential Question

What is independence?

Focus Questions	Lessons/Activities
1 What were the causes of the American Revolution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1a The French and Indian War: creating before and after maps• 1b Taxation without Representation: writing persuasive letters to King George• 1c The Stamp Act and Declaration of Independence: translating documents into students' own words• 1d Propaganda: analyzing political cartoons• 1e Key organizations: field trip to Fraunces Tavern
2 How did people fight for freedom during the American Revolution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2a Important Battles and Turning Points: recording battle locations using push pins and maps on corkboard-• 2b Cost of War: comparing modern costs of war with those of 18th century• 2c Loyalists vs. Patriots: mock debate between two sides• 2d Style of Battle and Importance of Geography: reenactment of battle formation• 2e Voices not Heard: P.O.V. journals
3 What was the aftermath of the American Revolution?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3a Emergence of Political Leaders: writing speeches as a political leader• 3b Hidden and Evident Costs of Freedom: class discussion• 3c The Treaty of Paris: document analysis• 3d Responsibilities of Winning a War and Gaining Independence: brainstorming ideas for a constitution and then creating one

Culminating Project:

Students will create a museum exhibit on the American Revolution including, but not limited to, displays of maps, letters, timelines, drawings, personal narratives, and articles covering key events, as well as skits. The material will be displayed in chronological order. Students will take on roles such as tour guides, curators, program designers, and presenters. Other classes and parents will be invited to attend.

Lesson Title: Voices Not Heard

Unit’s Essential Question: What is independence?

Focus Questions: What were the causes of the American Revolution? How did people fight for freedom? What was the aftermath?

Skills/Strategies

- Making inferences and drawing conclusions
- Gathering text evidence to support historical points of view
- Restating information in the first-person
- Writing a journal entry as a first-person narrative

Materials, Supplies, and Equipment

- Zell, Fran. A Multicultural Portrait of the American Revolution. NY: Benchmark Books, 1996.
- Chart paper and markers
- Document packets: African American, women, Native American, and children’s perspectives
- Journal paper

Mini-Lesson

- Briefly review with students what point of view is
- Model how to make the chart (see sample)
- Read aloud excerpts from A Multicultural Portrait of the American Revolution
- Underline text evidence to be used for the chart. The underlined portion should provide information that will lead students to think about an individual’s experience during the war.
- Model completing the chart
- Distribute packets
- Active involvement: student pairs choose excerpts from the packets and one or two are added to the class chart. Students actively participate in completing the next two columns of the chart.

Independent Work Time

Students will meet in assigned groups and create their own charts showing evidence, drawing conclusions, and writing a narrative in the first person.

Share/Assessment

Homework: Students will write a journal, using the journal paper provided for them, based on the third column of the chart they created. Students will write at least one journal entry based on a piece of evidence they gathered in class.

Connection to Culminating Project

Student-created journals will be included in the museum exhibit.

Appendix

Sample Chart

Text Evidence	My Conclusions	First-Person Narrative
“Boys were eligible to fight at age 16 . . . “	The boys must have been scared to death to leave their families. They must have had training to fight.	My dad went off to war and fought. I want to be like him and protect my family but I’m scared, even though I’m trained to fight.
“In her diary, Margaret Hill Morris related that an American officer once threatened to shoot her small son as a spy because he lingered too long around the military boats docked near the Morris home . . . “		

Brainstorming Chart

The American Revolution: What is independence?	
Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxes, tariffs and duties • Quartering • Trading commerce • Paper money • Cost of war; who provides military funding • Boycotting/sanctions • Garment industry: role of factories • Steel and iron industries
History: U.S./World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aftermath of Revolution • England's relationship with the colonies: focus on New York • French and Indian War • Relationship between England and France • Treaty of Paris • Commerce/funding/trading • Communication • Prisoners of war • Homefront advantage • Spies • Important battles/turning points • England's reputation • Important figures on all sides • All cultural groups involved in the Revolution
Culture/Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in daily life during wartime • Background of the decision makers • Background of Loyalists vs. Patriots (narratives of soldiers) • The blending of different cultures with different value systems: the haves and have-nots • Media and propaganda • Art, music, speech, journalism
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapons • Factories • Communication on a grand scale • Communication devices • Navigation and maps
Civics, Citizenship, and Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How decisions were made • Formal and informal organizations • Patriots vs. Loyalists • Influence of North Americans on decision making • Constitution/Declaration of Independence • European political and philosophical influences • Voices in decision making or lack thereof

Geography

- Strategic locations (rivers, waterways, palisades, harbors, ports)
- Battles (locations, movements)
- The Colonies (locations)
- The Freedom Trail
- England
- France
- Maps of the time (importance of mapmaking)
- Natives' familiarity with the land gives them upper hand