



CLASSROOM MATERIALS

The Reluctant Revolutionaries

Overview:

Typically, students see the American Revolution as an organized rebellion of a united people against an oppressive tyrannical government. In their estimation, the colonies simply rose up and gained their independence.

In actuality, the truth was far from that. Although many colonists felt they deserved the equal rights and liberties of those in the mother country, they were not ready or willing to totally break away from the British Empire and start a new nation. In essence, they were “reluctant revolutionaries” who believed they were being denied basic rights and freedoms, but were not ready to take the “big step”. Many would agree with the remark of a woman during the conclusion of Episode 1 of *Liberty!* who stated, “I pray there be some, decent, honorable way to put to an end this conflict, to be once again reconciled with old friends”.

In this lesson, students will explore what drove these reluctant colonists to become “revolutionaries.”

Related Resources for the Lesson

In this lesson, students will use the following resources:

1. Episodes 1 & 2 of *Liberty!* Teachers may elect to have their classes watch the entire length of both episodes, or may wish to “pick and choose” specific instances and portions which highlight the theme of the lesson.

Suggested segments include:

Episode 1: *The Reluctant Revolutionaries*

- a. Chapter 2 *Insignificant Provincials* (6:40-15:06)
- b. Chapter 7 *The Cockpit* (47:01-51:41)
- c. Chapter 8 *The Fleet Arrives in Boston* (51:42-53:22)

Episode 2: *Blows Must Decide*

- a. Chapter 2 *The Continental Congress Meets* (5:16-11:48)
- b. Chapter 3 *A Sense of Betrayal* (11:50-13:53)
- c. Chapter 8 *An Olive Branch* (33:02-39:00)
- d. Chapter 9 *Common Sense* (39:01-43:59)
- e. Chapter 10 *Independence* (44:00-53:35)

2. The text of *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine (links at bottom of page)
<http://www.bartleby.com/133/>
3. Question Sheet PDF (for students)
4. Question Sheet PDF (for teachers, with answers)

Relevant standards

This lesson addresses the following national content standards established by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>)

US History:

- Understands the social, political, and religious aspects of the American Revolution (e.g., decisions leading to crisis of revolution, efforts by Parliament and colonies to prevent revolution, the ideas of different religions and the economic and social differences between Loyalists, Patriots and neutrals)
- Understands the events that contributed to the outbreak of the American Revolution and the earliest armed conflict of the Revolutionary War (e.g., opponents and defenders of England's new imperial policy, the idea of "taxation without representation" and the battle at Lexington and Concord)
- Understands the major developments and chronology of the Revolutionary War as well as the roles of its political, military and diplomatic leaders (e.g., George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Samuel Adams, John Hancock and Richard Henry Lee)
- Understands how political, ideological and religious ideas joined economic interests to bring about the "shot heard round the world" (e.g., leaders of resistance to imperial policy, the English tax on the colonists to help pay for the Seven Years War and the interests and positions of different economic groups, such as northern merchants, southern rice and tobacco planters, yeoman farmers and urban artisans)
- Understands the social and economic impact of the Revolutionary War (e.g., problems of financing the war, wartime inflation, hoarding and profiteering and the personal and social economic hardships brought on by war)

Strategy for the Lesson

The teacher should begin this lesson with a viewing of the episodes (or segments) and then conduct an overview of issues and conflicts between the British and the colonists in the years leading to the Declaration of Independence. Brainstorm with the class about what these issues and conflicts might be. (Students will most likely include the ideas of "taxation without representation," higher prices paid by the colonists for goods because

of British trading policies, restrictions on manufacturing and selling colonial products because of the trade practices.) The teacher may wish to have students create a chart on the chalkboard or overhead projector, which highlights the following issues:

- Resentments/Distrusts of the British toward the colonists
- Resentments/Distrusts of the colonists toward the British
- What issues angered the colonists toward the British?
- What issues angered the British toward the colonists?
- For what reason(s) were the colonists dependent on the British?
- For what reason(s) were the British dependent on the colonists?

The teacher may also wish to divide the class into groups, asking one side to represent the British point of view and the other side to represent the colonial point of view in a discussion/debate of British policy or legislation that includes the Stamp Act or the Intolerable Acts. Students should also consider the “Loyalist” point of view. Why would some colonists feel compelled to remain allied with the British even though they lived side by side with those who felt the best course of action was to break away and form a new nation?

After the discussion and viewing, distribute the question sheets to students.

Allot sufficient time for students to answer the questions. Once students have completed the questions, the teacher should evaluate them according to the depth of answer desired, the amount of time allowed for the assignment, as well as any other criteria established by the teacher, such as spelling and grammar.

Extension Activity

Ask students to look at other revolutionary movements in world history (for example, the French Revolution or the Russian Revolution). Ask them to write reports highlighting the various factions/sides in those revolutions, the groups’ differing viewpoints and the revolution’s influence or impact. Have students explore the outcomes as well as the social upheaval of those revolutions in comparison to the impact of the American Revolution.

Question Sheet (with answers)

1. During the decade before the outbreak of war, what were the two major attitudes of the colonists toward Parliament and the British Empire?

The majority of colonists fully expected a compromise would occur. Even after Lexington and Concord, most colonists simply saw themselves as defending their rights as citizens of the British Empire. They believed in a peaceful settlement. Others believed that if the Crown could tax them without representation, then other rights might be taken away from them. They felt that, sooner or later, all free colonists would be reduced to slaves, particularly after the passage of the Intolerable Acts, and they felt compelled to fight back.

2. Why were they glad to be in the British Empire?

Possibly the best reason was that because under the benign rule of King George III, Americans were the freest, most prosperous and least taxed people on earth. They may have also seen the British government as the legitimate government of the Empire, which would protect them from harm and protect their financial investments as well.

3. Describe how colonists who were leaders of the colonial opposition to Parliament's authority might have seen themselves and/or what they believed.

They did not see themselves as "Founding Fathers" or even revolutionaries. They simply were defending their rights as citizens of the British Empire. These people more frequently saw themselves as "reluctant revolutionaries," because they wanted more to protect their rights of property as well as protect their wealth. They also were somewhat reluctant to set up a large scale democracy or a republic. They believed that democracy was synonymous with anarchy and mob rule.

4. Why would George Washington feel it more necessary to join the "other side" against the British?

Some students may note that since Washington was a landholder as well as a man of wealth, it was important to him that he seek ways to protect his livelihood and assets. Other students may note that since Washington also sought ambition, he may have felt that joining the colonial side would give him the recognition and social status he thought he deserved.

5. Is it possible to separate the American Revolution (a new way of thinking about government, where power lay in the hands of the people) from the American Revolutionary War (American's fight for independence)? Why or why not? How do the views of Thomas Paine in *Common Sense* help to separate the idea of the war from the overall Revolution?

Answers will vary. Some students will note that the *Revolution* came after the war began. In other words, the ideas that Jefferson included in the Declaration of Independence actually postdated the start of the *Revolutionary War* by more than a year. In addition, students may also note that most Americans simply wanted to maintain the rights of British citizens, which led to the war, but the idea of the Revolution was something entirely different.

6. What could have prevented the colonists' declaring independence and going to war?

Answers will vary. Most students, however, will note that if Parliament had acquiesced to the colonial notion of representation in government, colonists may have been satisfied, and the Revolutionary war might never have occurred. If the war never occurred, the Revolution may not have occurred either.

7. Why did a minority of colonists continue to move toward independence and volunteer to fight for this cause?

Answers will vary. It's possible that some felt the idea of sovereignty was more important than anything else and decided to fight for that idea.

Question Sheet

1. During the decade before the outbreak of war, what were the two major attitudes of the colonists toward Parliament and the British Empire?
2. Why were they glad to be in the British Empire?
3. Describe how colonists who were leaders of the colonial opposition to Parliament's authority might have seen themselves and/or what they believed.
4. Why would George Washington feel it more necessary to join the "other side" against the British?
5. Is it possible to separate the American Revolution (a new way of thinking about government, where power lay in the hands of the people) from the American Revolutionary War (American's fight for independence)? Why or why not? How do the views of Thomas Paine in *Common Sense* help to separate the idea of the war from the overall Revolution?
6. What could have prevented the colonists' declaring independence and going to war?
7. Why did a minority of colonists continue to move toward independence and volunteer to fight for this cause?

The Declaration of Independence An Analytical View

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation...

Thomas Jefferson
The Declaration of Independence (1776)

Overview

Perhaps no document in history has undergone as much scrutiny as the Declaration of Independence. In this formal statement announcing the severed ties between the thirteen colonies and Great Britain, Thomas Jefferson wrote essentially of a new theory of government, in which the government itself was expected and required to protect “natural rights” of citizens.

Since Thomas Jefferson’s writing of the Declaration, many groups have interpreted the document to mean different ideas, and frequently, the Declaration has been used to justify other political and social movements. While the Declaration is an important historic document and incorporates many of America’s most basic beliefs, it has no effect of law in 21st Century America.

In this lesson, students will question the importance of the Declaration of Independence, its meaning during the time of the Revolution and its impact today.

Related Resources for the Lesson

In this lesson, students will use the following resources:

1. Episode #2 of *Liberty!*, entitled, “Blows Must Decide”. (Note: The segment of the episode that deals with the Declaration of Independence begins at the 44 minute mark in the video and runs until 53:35.)
2. An analysis of John Locke’s “Two Treatises of Government”, located at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/>. Specifically, students will be looking at the following entries:
 - a. The Social Contract Theory (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/#3.3>)
 - b. Function of Civil Government (<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/locke/#3.4>).
 - c. The text of the Declaration of Independence, which can be found as part of the National Archives “Charters of Freedom” online exhibit (http://www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/declaration.html).
3. Question Sheet PDF (for students)

4. Question Sheet PDF (for teachers, with answers)

Relevant Standards

This lesson addresses the following national content standards established by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>).

US History:

- Understands the creation of the Declaration of Independence (e.g., historical antecedents that contributed to the document and individuals who struggled for independence)
- Understands how the principles of the Declaration of Independence justified American independence
- Understands differences and similarities between the Declaration of Independence and other documents on government (e.g., the French “Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen” and John Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*)
- Understands contradictions between the Declaration of Independence and the institution of chattel slavery

Civics:

- Knows the essential ideas of American constitutional government that are expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and other writings (e.g., the Constitution is a higher law that authorizes a government of limited powers; the Preamble to the Constitution states the purposes of government such as to form a more perfect union, establish justice, provide for the common defense and promote the general welfare)
- Knows major historical events that led to the creation of limited government in the United States (e.g., Magna Carta (1215), common law, and the Bill of Rights (1689) in England; colonial experience, Declaration of Independence (1776), Articles of Confederation (1781), state constitutions and charters, United States Constitution (1787) and the Bill of Rights (1791) in America)
- Knows basic values and principles that Americans share (e.g., as set forth in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and the Gettysburg Address)
- Understands how the basic premises of liberalism and democracy are joined in the Declaration of Independence, in which they are stated as "self-evident Truths" (e.g., "all men are created equal," authority is derived from consent of the governed and people have the right to alter or abolish government when it fails to fulfill its purposes)

Strategy for the Lesson

The teacher may elect to begin this lesson by having students discuss what they see as the advantages and disadvantages of declaring independence from Britain. The teacher might open this discussion by noting that the Continental Congress did not consider independence for more than a year after the first shots were fired at Lexington and Concord. Ask students to speculate or discuss what other options were being considered to reconcile the colonists with the British.

The teacher should write student responses (or designate a student as the “secretary”) regarding the advantages and disadvantages of independence on the chalkboard or on an overhead transparency.

Suggested answers include:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Possibility of foreign aid from France	Might lose friends in England who supported cause of colonists in regard to representation in Parliament but not independence
Legitimacy in the world community	Might cause division within the colonies
Captured soldiers treated as POWs not spies or rebels	If Revolution failed, the and leaders might be tried and executed as traitors.
Independence might unite different Areas of the colonies	Colonies were poorly prepared for war Fighting the largest military power in the world
Stating for the word the ideological Basis of this new country	No weapons nor manufacturing to make them
Freedom from subservience to the King	Dependent on England for elements needed to fight a war. Chances of winning the war were slim.
	Colonists would be cutting themselves off from the biggest, freest empire in the world.

Sentimental attachment to
homeland.

Once the students have finished brainstorming, the teacher and class should overview the immediate situation and conditions that prompted colonists to declare independence, either through the textbook or using the *Liberty!* Web site. The teacher should remind students that the idea of independence was not necessarily embraced by all colonists, and that while many believed the British had violated the colonists' basic rights, the violation was not enough to warrant a rebellion.

Students may also wish to research some of the issues or questions brought up by Thomas Paine in *Common Sense* during their brainstorming.

Next, the teacher should either direct students to access the Declaration of Independence online or distribute copies in handout form. Once students have their copies, it is suggested that the teacher help students divide the Declaration into three basic parts and define those terms.

Those parts include:

1. The *preamble*: A preamble is a preliminary statement, especially the introduction to a formal document that serves to explain its purpose. In this instance, Jefferson used the preamble to discuss the basic rights of man. It has since become the most famous part of the document.

The Preamble of the Declaration runs from Jefferson's opening of the Declaration to the words, "To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world."

Note: Jefferson derived many of his ideas for the preamble from the Virginia Declaration of Rights written by his friend George Mason as well as from his own draft preamble to the Virginia Constitution, which in turn were based upon Locke but much more "radical".

2. A list of *grievances* against King George III: A grievance is
 - a. An actual or supposed circumstance regarded as just cause for complaint
 - b. A complaint or protestation based on such a circumstance

The list of grievances runs from "He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good." to "He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions."

Note: In the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson listed several complaints against King George, in which he hoped to lay the foundation for the case supporting independence.

3. A formal declaration of war, in which the colonists pledged their “lives, fortunes, and sacred honor.”

The formal declaration includes the rest of the document.

Next, the teacher should distribute the question sheets to the class. Allow sufficient time for students to complete the questions. Once students have completed the questions, the teacher should evaluate them according to the depth of answer desired, the amount of time allowed for the assignment as well as any other criteria established by the teacher, such as spelling and grammar.

Extension Activities:

1. Ask students to evaluate other political documents in regard to the influence of the Declaration on their creation. Two documents that students might evaluate include:
 - a. French “Declaration of Rights of Man” (<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/rightsof.htm>), written in 1789
 - b. Seneca Falls Conference “Declaration of Sentiments” (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/Senecafalls.html>), written in 1848
2. Ask students to compare these documents with the Declaration (the teacher may wish to substitute other documents if they are available) and in chart form, show specific instances where the authors of these documents borrowed from Jefferson. Have students compare the final draft of the Declaration of Independence with Locke’s writing and George Mason’s documents.

Question Sheet for the Declaration Activity (with answers)

1. Jefferson chose to begin the Declaration with the words, “The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.” Do you feel this was necessary? Why or why not? Could the 13 colonies have declared independence if they were not unanimous? Why or why not?

Answers will vary. Most students might note that it was necessary for Jefferson to prove that the Continental Congress presented a united front to the world in order to prove that independence was the true goal of the colonies. Others may state that since each state provided signers to the document, it was obvious that all thirteen colonies accepted it.

As to the question of whether the 13 colonies could have declared independence if they weren't unanimous, answers will vary. Most students might state that independence would be difficult without the support of all thirteen colonies, but some might say independence without consensus was still possible. For instance, colonies that objected could be absorbed into Canada or find a way to peacefully co-exist with those that seceded.

2. How does Jefferson explain the reason for a formal declaration of independence? Why do you think it was necessary for Jefferson to state the “causes which impel them to the separation”?

Answers will vary. However, some students may note that other nations, such as France and the Netherlands, also had colonial interests in North America and may have been concerned if British colonists declared independence for groundless reasons. Also, because of Jefferson's background as a lawyer, it might have also been true that he was building his case for independence before the world community, similar to what he might do if he were pleading a case before a jury.

3. Next, review the two sections of John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*. In your own words, how does Jefferson use Locke's ideas in the preamble of the Declaration?

Students will note similarities between Locke's thoughts on natural rights and Jefferson's mention of “inalienable rights, including “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” They may also note Jefferson's view that “all men are created equal.”

4. According to Jefferson, what was the purpose of government? What does Jefferson suggest should happen whenever government becomes “destructive of the ends for which it was created?” According to Jefferson, how do governments derive their powers?

Jefferson would note that the purpose of government was to protect the “inalienable rights” that man received from “their Creator.” In his view, if government became “destructive,” it was the right of the citizens to “alter or abolish” that form of government and replace it with a better one. Jefferson believed that governments derived their power “from the consent of the governed.” In other words, the citizens of the nation permitted the government to rule.

5. Jefferson noted that “all men are created equal,” suggesting that this was “selfevident.” Speculate as to what he meant by that statement. What sorts of conflicts and misconceptions may have stemmed from this statement?

Answers will vary as to what Jefferson meant by the “all men are created equal” statement. Some students may note that Jefferson made this statement as a slave owner and had no intention of granting citizenship status or equality to his black slaves. Other students might speculate that Jefferson believed in a literal interpretation of this phrase and had no intention of granting equality or the right to vote to women. Also, students may note that some white men (if they were not property owners) did not have the right to vote.

6. Next, look at the list of grievances that Jefferson lists as reasons that the King has violated the natural rights of the colonists. Below, list the three grievances that you feel are the worst violations. Explain why you believe them to be important. Also, note that Jefferson points to King George III in his list of grievances despite the fact that Parliament passed the acts and approved the taxes that led to the colonists calling for independence. The King, on the other hand, was a monarch with limited power. Why would Jefferson blame the King for the problems leading to the Declaration? Explain your view.

Answers will vary. Based on their study of the American Revolution and viewing of the series, many students may point to grievances that allowed the British military occupation of colonial cities (for example, the Boston Massacre), imposing taxes without consent (a grievance that is typically mentioned in textbooks), grievances that limit selfgovernment and possibly grievances that caused insurrections of Native Americans. Most students would probably note that it would be easier for the colonists to focus their anger on one individual, King George, than on the Parliament. His likeness was on colonial money, so he was known by all the colonists, while most members of Parliament were not known to the average colonist. Focusing anger and displeasure on one individual could provide a great psychological boost to the independence movement.

7. In the summer of 1776, Jefferson may not have recognized that his declaration would be studied and revered by generations. However, the Declaration *has* gained that status over time. Write a paragraph that explaining your view of why that has happened. If you do not feel that the Declaration is revered, explain why.

Many students who feel that the Declaration is revered will probably note that Jefferson’s statements regarding fundamental rights are representative of our government’s foundation today. In addition, they may also note that the Declaration is displayed in a similar manner (and in a similar location) as the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights, thereby giving it the same status. Other students may note that the document helped unite various factions in the Continental Congress, paving the way for independence.

Some students may note that in 21st Century America, the Declaration has no legal “force,” and therefore while it is an important historic document, its importance is significantly overstated.

8. The colonists had been fighting British soldiers for over a year before the Declaration was written and the formal declaration of war against Britain was announced. Why do you feel it took so long for the colonists to formally announce a declaration of war against the British?

The length of time between the fighting at Lexington and Concord and the actual declaration of war probably occurred because most colonists (and many delegates to the Continental Congress) hoped for some sort of reconciliation with Britain. They felt that a declaration of war might antagonize the British and make reconciliation difficult, if not

impossible.

Answers will vary.

9. John Locke died in 1704, over 70 years before Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. In your estimate, would Locke be happy with the way Jefferson used his *Two Treatises* to justify independence from Britain, which was Locke's native country? Below, either write a fictitious letter from Locke to Jefferson critiquing his use of *Two Treatises* in the Declaration of Independence or a fictitious letter from Jefferson to Locke explaining how he adapted Locke's theory in writing the Declaration.

Answers will vary.

Question Sheet for the Declaration Activity

As directed by your teacher, use the related resources from John Locke, as well as the Declaration of Independence, to answer the following questions.

1. Jefferson chose to begin the Declaration with the words, “The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.” Do you feel this was necessary? Why or why not? Could the 13 colonies have declared independence if they were not unanimous? Why or why not?
2. How does Jefferson explain the reason for a formal declaration of independence? Why do you think it was necessary for Jefferson to state the “causes which impel them to the separation”?
3. Next, review the two sections of John Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government*. In your own words, how does Jefferson use Locke’s ideas in the preamble of the Declaration?
4. According to Jefferson, what was the purpose of government? What does Jefferson suggest should happen whenever government becomes “destructive of the ends for which it was created?” According to Jefferson, how do governments derive their powers?
5. Jefferson noted that “all men are created equal,” suggesting that this was “selfevident.” Speculate as to what he meant by that statement. What sorts of conflicts and misconceptions may have stemmed from this statement?
6. Next, look at the list of grievances that Jefferson lists as reasons that the King has violated the natural rights of the colonists. Below, list the three grievances that you feel are the worst violations. Explain why you believe them to be important. Also, note that Jefferson points to King George III in his list of grievances despite the fact that Parliament passed the acts and approved the taxes that led to the colonists calling for independence. The King, on the other hand, was a monarch with limited power. Why would Jefferson blame the King for the problems leading to the Declaration? Explain your view.
7. In the summer of 1776, Jefferson may not have recognized that his declaration would be studied and revered by generations. However, the Declaration *has* gained that status over time. Write a paragraph that explaining your view of why that has happened. If you do not feel that the Declaration is revered, explain why.
8. The colonists had been fighting British soldiers for over a year before the Declaration was written and the formal declaration of war against Britain was announced. Why do you feel it took so long for the colonists to formally announce a declaration of war against the British?
9. John Locke died in 1704, over 70 years before Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. In your estimate, would Locke be happy with the way Jefferson used his *Two Treatises* to justify independence from Britain, which was Locke’s native country? Below, either write a fictitious letter from Locke to Jefferson critiquing his use of *Two Treatises* in the Declaration of Independence or a fictitious letter from Jefferson to Locke explaining how he adapted Locke’s theory in writing the Declaration.

The Continental Army & Washington

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman...

Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis*

Overview

On Christmas night 1776, the eve of the famous crossing of the Delaware River, Washington and his troops were encamped nine miles from Trenton on the banks of the Delaware preparing for a surprise offensive that, Washington hoped, would save his position as general and invigorate his troops. His soldiers were beyond weary. They did not have tents or proper winter clothing, the weather had turned bitterly cold and they were losing battle after battle. Washington's poor military record had sparked open talk in Congress about replacing him.

Hoping to inspire soldiers and save his own job, Washington ordered all his officers to read Thomas Paine's "The American Crisis" to their troops. Paine, the passionate pamphleteer, was embedded with Washington's troops and had just written a now-famous essay on the back of a drumhead. The opening refrain had a stirring beat of its own: "These are the times that try men's souls..." The next day, Washington's soldiers went on to win the Battle of Trenton. It was a small victory, but it changed the entire psychological makeup of the war.

In the winter of 1777, George Washington's Continental Army found themselves, once again, overwhelmed. After suffering several major defeats at the hands of the British, in particular the Howe brothers, American morale was at a low, and Washington was concerned that the army might mutiny entirely. Washington decided to encamp that winter at Valley Forge close to the continental capital Philadelphia, which had fallen into British hands. While it was a strategic location, the Continental Army went through a winter of cold, hunger and extreme discomfort. At Valley Forge, Albigence Waldo, a surgeon in the army, kept a diary of his experiences and observations.

In this lesson, students will use both Waldo's diary (a primary document) and the scenes of crossing the Delaware from Episode 3 of *Liberty!* which document the Continental Army on the eve of the Battle of Trenton to better understand American soldiers' experiences as well as the significance and impact of Washington's leadership skills.

Related Resources for the Lesson

In this lesson, students will use the following resources:

1. Episode #3 of *Liberty!* ("The Times That Try Men's Souls")

2. Excerpts from the diary of Albigence Waldo found at <http://odur.let.rug.nl/~usa/D/1776-1800/war/waldo.htm>.
3. Military Journal written at Valley Forge (George Ewing) (very long) <http://www.sandcastles.net/military1.htm>
4. Valley Forge and Monmouth (<http://www.usahistory.info/Revolution/Valley-Forge.html>)
5. Letters from Valley Forge (<http://www.americanrevolution.org/vlyfrgeltrs.html>) (various sources)
6. The Winter at Valley Forge (<http://www.americanrevwar.homestead.com/files/VALLEY.HTM>)
7. Map of the Battle of Philadelphia and Valley Forge (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/national_parks/valley_forge_battle97.pdf)
8. In addition, the teacher should also supplement the reading with various segments of “Liberty!”, in particular Episode 5, which has a small discussion of Valley Forge.
9. The text of “The American Crisis” <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/paine/pframe.htm>
10. A newspaper-like description of The Battle of Trenton on The Liberty Web site, with many related links embedded at http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/chronicle_trenton1776.html
11. Question Sheet PDF (for students)
12. Question Sheet PDF (for teachers, with answers)

Relevant Standards

This lesson addresses the following national content standards established by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>)

US History

- Understands the major political and strategic factors that led to the American victory in the Revolutionary War (e.g., the importance of the Battle of Saratoga, the use of guerilla and conventional warfare and the importance of King's Mountain in defining the war)
- Understands the social and economic impact of the Revolutionary War (e.g., problems of financing the war, wartime inflation, hoarding and profiteering and the personal and social impact of economic hardships caused by the war)
- Understands the strategic elements of the Revolutionary War (e.g., how the Americans won the war against superior British resources, American and British military leaders and major military campaigns)

Strategy for the Lesson

The teacher may wish to begin the lesson with a discussion of primary historic sources, explaining they are sources that come “direct from the past”, in other words, from an eyewitness who was at the scene of the event. Primary source material includes photographs, home movies, speeches, diaries, and letters. Discuss with students how primary source documents might differ from historians’ accounts.

The class should also brainstorm other instances of primary sources familiar to them in World or American History. Familiar contemporary examples might include:

- “The Diary of a Young Girl” (Anne Frank)
- “Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Sarajevo”
- The “Zapruder Film” chronicling President John F. Kennedy’s assassination
- And, comparable exhibits on the National Archives and Records Administration (<http://www.archives.gov/>), Library of Congress (<http://www.loc.gov>) or other similar resources.
- The teacher should also highlight other primary source material from the Revolutionary period as featured in the *Liberty!* series. Several sources are available for Joseph Plumb Martin, an enlisted man in the Continental Army, including excerpts from his diary on the “History Matters” web site (<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6597/>). Students can use these sources to collaborate or discount other accounts of the period.

The teacher should note that the primary source used in this lesson not only highlights Valley Forge but the overall conditions faced by American soldiers throughout the Revolutionary war.

Next, the teacher should ask students to discuss important issues regarding the hardships faced by soldiers at Valley Forge and on the banks of the Delaware, and the role of George Washington as commander-in-chief of the army. These include:

- The difficulty in fighting for the “abstract concept” of liberty, and the style of leadership needed to command a more egalitarian army
- Difficulty in maintaining troop morale amidst such awful conditions
- Washington’s strategy as “de facto” leader of the country to keep the army (the only symbol of the nation which existed at that point) together at all costs
- Differences between the British “professional army” and the American army (usually made up of militia and “minutemen” who participated when fighting was nearby, but then returned to their homes and farms)
- The uniqueness of the Revolutionary war as a war about ideals rather than territory or treasure

The teacher should have students view Episode 3 of *Liberty!* and note points in the film which show Washington’s “despairing mood” as well as concern about losing the war.

The teacher may also wish to read (or have a student read) the famous “These are times that try men’s souls” excerpt from Thomas Paine’s *The American Crisis*.

Next, the teacher should distribute copies of the question sheets for this lesson to the students. Direct the students to either access the Waldo diary online or copy and distribute the diary excerpts.

Allow sufficient time for students to read the diary excerpts and to answer the questions. Once students have completed the questions, the teacher should evaluate them according to the depth of answer desired, the amount of time allowed for the assignment, as well as any other criteria established by the teacher, such as spelling and grammar.

Extension Activities:

1. Have students compare conditions and circumstances which affected soldiers in other situations, such as weather affecting a battle or military maneuver. For example, the teacher might ask students to research and report on the impact of weather on the D-Day invasion or the Battle of the Bulge as well as the German advance into Russia during World War II or Napoleon’s attack on Russia during the early 19th Century. The teacher may decide to ask students to write essays on the comparisons or may ask the students to produce multimedia projects.
2. Ask students to further research Valley Forge, pretend they are soldiers in the Continental Army encamped there and write letters “home” describing the conditions and hardships soldiers faced there.

Question Sheet for The Continental Army & Washington (with answers)

1. Who is the author of the source? What was his position (his duty) at Valley Forge?

The author of the source is Albigeance Waldo, a surgeon in the Continental Army who was stationed at Valley Forge.

2. What sort of military action does the source describe that occurred on December 11? What does he note as the outcome of this action?

Waldo notes, "At four o'clock the Whole Army were Order'd to March to Swedes Ford on the River Schuylkill, about 9 miles N.W. of Chestnut Hill, and 6 from White Marsh our present Encampment. At sun an hour high the whole were mov'd from the Lines and on their march with baggage. This Night encamped in a Semi circle nigh the Ford. The enemy had march'd up the West side of Schuylkill - Potter's Brigade if Pennsylvania Militia were already there, and had several skirmishes with them with some loss on this side and considerable on the Enemies...."

3. Next, look at the diary entry for December 13. In your view, is this entry critical or supportive of the commanding officers at Valley Forge? What evidence in the entry supports your conclusion?

Answers will vary, but most students will say it is critical of the officers. Waldo writes that, "It cannot be that our Superiors are about to hold consultations with Spirits infinitely beneath their Order, by bringing us into these utmost regions of the Terraqueous Sphere. No it is, upon consideration for many good purposes since we are to Winter here....," and then goes into a series of statements about what Valley Forge does *not* offer.

4. Read the diary entry for December 14. In this entry, list at least four conditions described by Waldo that either he or other soldiers at Valley Forge are enduring. In your view, are these conditions that are unique to Valley Forge, or do you think soldiers in all conflicts experience the same thing?

Answers will vary, depending on which of the conditions students identify.

5. After reading the excerpt for Waldo's diary, describe how you see his morale. List at least three examples from the reading to back up your description.

Answers vary depending on student view and examples.

6. In your view, based on your reading and viewing of episodes from *Liberty!*, would Waldo's account be fairly consistent of the experience of the average soldier during the Revolutionary War? Write a paragraph explaining your view.

Answers will vary.

7. Do you think that the conditions Waldo discusses were common of both enlisted men and officers? Why or why not?

Answers will vary.

8. Assume that you were George Washington and received a copy of Waldo's diary. What concern, if any, would you have about the conditions stated in it?

Answers will vary. Some students might say that Washington would be appalled at the conditions his men were forced to endure and would want to do whatever he could to help them. Other students might note that Washington might have been more concerned about public opinion and would not have wanted information that put the military and war effort in a bad light to be released.

9. In Episode #3, Pauline Maier notes, "...this means you have a different kind of an army. A more democratical army maybe, a more egalitarian army maybe. And in some ways it was a style of leadership that was going to be much more important for a republican government later on..." In your view, would this method of leading an army be more or less effective than the opposing armies' leadership styles described by the narrator of *Liberty*? Explain your view.

Answers will vary. Some students may note that it would be very difficult to enforce discipline in an army similar to what Maier describes. Others may note that if soldiers feel as though they are "equal", it might give them more incentive to fight effectively, because they have parity with officers and commanders and are more able to share in the rights and freedoms available once the Revolution ends and a new nation is created.

10. Why do you think George Washington had his officers read *American Crisis* to troops on the eve of the Battle of Trenton?

Washington probably believed that crossing the Delaware for a surprise attack was his last chance to rally troops and save his own job as general. By reading *American Crisis* to his army, Washington probably hoped to convince soldiers they were fighting for a worthwhile "cause." If he could inspire their beliefs even for one night, his chances of success would increase greatly. Washington also probably understood that he was fighting a very different kind of war. His troops were not compensated monetarily like the professional British soldiers; they were not fighting for a tangible goal like wealth or territory. Therefore, Washington needed to take extra care that his soldiers felt empowered by the greatness of their cause – the goal of liberty for all men – and Thomas Paine's words such as, "The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph." helped to plead that case.

11. John Shy, in the end of Episode #3, looks at Washington's victories at Trenton and Princeton as watershed events, noting, "From that point, he seems to be able to do no wrong. Washington, after these two little military victories, seems to exemplify the Revolution. He *is* the Revolution." Presume you are a soldier in Washington's army and are a veteran of the battles at Princeton and Trenton. Write a "letter" home to your parents describing how you see Washington's leadership in these battles. Use information from the episode as well as information from your textbook and other sources.

Answers vary.

Question Sheet for The Continental Army & Washington

1. Who is the author of the source? What was his position (his duty) at Valley Forge?
2. What sort of military action does the source describe that occurred on December 11? What does he note as the outcome of this action?
3. Next, look at the diary entry for December 13. In your view, is this entry critical or supportive of the commanding officers at Valley Forge? What evidence in the entry supports your conclusion?
4. Read the diary entry for December 14. In this entry, list at least four conditions described by Waldo that either he or other soldiers at Valley Forge are enduring. In your view, are these conditions that are unique to Valley Forge, or do you think soldiers in all conflicts experience the same thing?
5. After reading the excerpt for Waldo's diary, describe how you see his morale. List at least three examples from the reading to back up your description.
6. In your view, based on your reading and viewing of episodes from *Liberty!*, would Waldo's account be fairly consistent of the experience of the average soldier during the Revolutionary War? Write a paragraph explaining your view.
7. Do you think that the conditions Waldo discusses were common of both enlisted men and officers? Why or why not?
8. Assume that you were George Washington and received a copy of Waldo's diary. What concern, if any, would you have about the conditions stated in it?
9. In Episode #3, Pauline Maier notes, "...this means you have a different kind of an army. A more democratical army maybe, a more egalitarian army maybe. And in some ways it was a style of leadership that was going to be much more important for a republican government later on..." In your view, would this method of leading an army be more or less effective than the opposing armies' leadership styles described by the narrator of *Liberty!*? Explain your view.
10. Why do you think George Washington had his officers read *American Crisis* to troops on the eve of the Battle of Trenton?
11. John Shy, in the end of Episode #3, looks at Washington's victories at Trenton and Princeton as watershed events, noting, "From that point, he seems to be able to do no wrong. Washington, after these two little military victories, seems to exemplify the Revolution. He *is* the Revolution." Presume you are a soldier in Washington's army and are a veteran of the battles at Princeton and Trenton. Write a "letter" home to your parents describing how you see Washington's leadership in these battles. Use information from the episode as well as information from your textbook and other sources.

Factors that Handicapped the British

Overview:

At the outbreak of fighting between England and the colonists in 1775, the British military was considered the strongest in the world. Britain had defeated France in the French and Indian War and had secured a place as the world's superpower. Conversely, the colonists were frequently forced to rely on state militia, farmers and merchants who volunteered for duty only when fighting was close to their homes.

Yet despite Britain's overwhelming military superiority, the British found themselves unable to subdue the colonists. In fact, it is often said that the American Revolution was not so much won by the Americans as it was lost by the British—a statement with obvious parallels to the Vietnam War, in which another superpower fought a much weaker enemy and failed to achieve its military and political objectives. In this lesson, students will examine some of the mistakes and misjudgments made by the British that led to the failure to win the Revolutionary War.

Related Resources for This Lesson

In this lesson, students will use the following resources:

1. Episode Four of *Liberty!* (The related web page for the episode is at <http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/chronicle/episode4.html>)
2. A companion resource to this lesson, called “Factors That Handicapped the Crown.” (See the end of the lesson).
3. Question Sheet PDF (for students)
4. Question Sheet PDF (for teachers, with answers)

Relevant Standards

This lesson addresses the following national content standards established by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>)

US History:

- Understands the major developments and chronology of the Revolutionary War and the roles of its political, military and diplomatic leaders (e.g., George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Samuel Adams, John Hancock and Richard Henry Lee)
- Understands the social and economic impact of the Revolutionary War (e.g., problems financing the war, wartime inflation, hoarding and profiteering and the personal and social economic hardships brought on by war)
- Understands contributions of European nations during the American Revolution and how their involvement influenced the war's outcome and aftermath (e.g., the

assistance of France and Spain in the war, the way in which self-interests of France and Spain differed from those of the United States after the war, the effect of American diplomatic initiatives and the contributions of the European military leaders on the war's outcome)

Historical Understanding:

- Analyzes the effects of specific wartime decisions and how outcomes might have been different in the absence of those decisions
- Analyzes how specific historical events can be interpreted differently based on newly uncovered records and/or information
- Knows how to perceive past events with historical empathy
- Evaluates the validity and credibility of different historical interpretations

Strategy for the Lesson

Using a world map, the teacher might begin the lesson by demonstrating the relative distance between Britain and the 13 colonies. Ask students to speculate how difficult it might be to maintain a prolonged war effort over such a distance. The teacher might ask the class to consider or compare the British task with that of the United States in fighting a prolonged conflict in Europe and Asia in World War II, the Vietnam War, or in the liberation of Iraq in 2003-2004. The teacher can also have the class look at military tactics by asking them to discuss the traditional fighting methods of the British compared to the guerilla warfare tactics used by the colonists. The class might also look at the ability of British commanders such as Howe, Cornwallis, and Burgoyne compared to the ability of American commanders such as Washington, Gates, and Benedict Arnold.

(Note: should the teacher want to expand on the American experience in Vietnam, the following sources are recommended:

1. "How Could Vietnam Happen – An Autopsy", by James C. Thompson, from *The Atlantic Online*, April 1968.
(<http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/68apr/vietnam.htm>)
2. *Vietnam Online* (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/>) A comprehensive site to supplement students' knowledge of the Vietnam War and its effects.

Next, distribute copies of the question sheets for the lesson as well as copies of the "Factors that Handicapped the Crown's Ability to Wage Effective War" handout, which are included at the end of this lesson.

Allot sufficient time for students to answer the questions. Once students have completed the questions, the teacher should evaluate them according to the depth of answer desired,

the amount of time allowed for the assignment as well as any other criteria established by the teacher, such as spelling and grammar.

Extension Activities:

After students have completed the activity, ask students to presume they are “ministers” to King George III. Have them write “position papers” in which they suggest changes in Revolutionary War strategy and outline the potential benefits their suggestions strategy.

Factors that Handicapped the Crown's Ability to Wage Effective War

- The royal government and generals had no firm purpose for waging the war. They had no logical aim. Military victories and control over a section of land could not create favorable postwar conditions and/or relations. They sought some type of compromise; yet, there was no real basis for negotiations. Once the war had started, the Americans could not see anything of value in what Britain offered in return for a permanent peace.
- There was no center of the enemy that Britain could capture and end the war. The Continental Congress moved from city to city, and each Continental army fought almost as an independent army. There was no one that the British army could defeat that would quickly bring about the surrender of the entire colonial opposition.
- Britain greatly underestimated the colonists' resolve to win the war once it began. They expected the people to give up their resistance once thousands of troops landed in America. They expected colonial support for their leaders to crumble, especially because none of the colonial leaders had had any previous experience in leading a national government or a major war.
- British commanders seriously underestimated the skills, talents, maturity, and charisma of George Washington.
- Because of its huge debts, the royal ministry had to wage war economically. It had to take shortcuts or do without certain things; these actions added to the caution and delays.
- Fighting against their own countrymen was both a psychological and emotional handicap for soldiers as well as civilians on both sides of the ocean.
- The element of time continuously handicapped British operations. Communications and transportation, both across the Atlantic and within the colonies, were slow and ineffective. The typical transatlantic voyage took four to six weeks. Seasonal weather conditions played a major role in the quality as well as length of the journey.
- Delays in news, orders, and supplies were costly. The uncertainties surrounding arrivals or replies frequently led to either undue caution, unnecessary delays, or uncertain expectations in key situations, which later proved costly. Speed of communications and transportation was never considered so vital so frequently in any of Britain's previous wars.
- The use of foreign mercenaries proved a useful propaganda weapon for the colonial press. These foreigners were viewed as hired killers of the king to fight against the king's own people.
- The Crown's army suffered from extreme overconfidence. Regular officers and men were sure of victory, especially after examining the appearance of the colonial militia and initial battle behaviors of the colonists.
- The British depended on the bayonet instead of shooting accuracy. This was crucial in some areas where accurate distance shooting could change conditions on the battlefield.

- Military etiquette used on European battlefields, as developed by Frederick the Great, had to be modified. The British preferred to fight in the traditional Continental style throughout the war.
- Crown officers were more gentlemen than soldiers. They were used to the comforts of life as if they were still in England. Every Crown general's way of life as an English gentleman had to be maintained at all times—even on the march and near the battlefield.
- There were few advocates of a so-called soft peace with the colonists. Many ministers of Parliament wanted harsh terms and payments. Thus, the colonists assumed that it was a do or die struggle on their part.
- Britain was mostly self-sustaining. Britain's ability to maintain a large army overseas and to support its population at home was limited. Britain's merchant marine was further handicapped due to the lack of protection from attack or capture on the open seas. For example, over 750 military and nonmilitary cargo ships were captured by colonial ships in one twenty-month period. The merchants were also restricted because of the closing of colonial and ally ports to their ships.
- Britain was not prepared for a war, much less a long, intense war. Not until after the Battle of Bunker Hill in July 1775 did England even begin to think in terms of war rather than merely rebellion. It tried to avert a war. Even as late as July 1776, it still hoped to end all hostilities. Britain never planned for a long war and always waited for the one decisive victory.
- Britain had no allies to help fight a war to protect its overseas empire. After the Seven Years' War, no one would support it. With the exception of hiring troops from Germany, Britain had to fight entirely alone.
- Britain tried not to go to war with France. A war with France meant a war with Spain. Britain had to avoid a two-front war effort because it could not finance or capably wage a two-front world war. It hoped a concentrated effort in the colonies would bring about a quick conclusion before the Americans could convince the French to aid them.
- Britain constantly sought and hoped for Loyalist support on a large scale. This support was never received. Its armies could never get a large number of Loyalists to help them control any particular area. Moreover, the generals and Parliament also never did what was needed to gain and keep the Loyalists' support because they tended to ignore or de-emphasize the support that the Loyalists did give.
- Overseas warfare was difficult to wage due to the problem of distance. The 3,000 miles that separated the colonies from the British Isles took between four and twelve weeks to cover. In addition, the troops often arrived sick and weary from the voyage, and most of their horses died in transit.
- The Royal Navy was in poor condition many old or poorly repaired ships, and thus it was very ill-prepared for any heavy-duty operations. After 1765, few warships were kept in full condition and even fewer were built.
- Britain frequently won with smashing victories at the last minute. It did not begin to really try to win the war until 1778. By then it was too late because France and Spain had entered the war.

Question Sheet (with answers)

1. Consider the military strategies employed by the British during their involvement in the Revolution. Which one, in your view, is the most damaging to the British cause? Explain your answer?

Answers will vary. Many students might note that the British insisted on traditional fighting styles while the colonists fought as guerillas. In addition, the typical belief of the British was that war was “gentlemanly,” and therefore, officers were not to be targeted during battle. The colonists disagreed with that particular view.

2. The first handicap describes how the royal government and general had no firm purpose for waging the war and no logical aim. How might this flaw have caused the British to fail?

Most students will note that without some concrete “game plan” it would be difficult to focus British resources on a concentrated effort to defeat the American forces.

3. How did the British underestimate the “American resolve” to win the war?

First, the British believed that American resistance would crumble when thousands of British troops landed on US shores. Secondly, they also believed that the American military and political leadership was inexperienced and unable to fight a sustained war against an organized government and military force, such as Britain.

4. How did geography hinder the British war effort?

Distance made it difficult for the British to move men, supplies, news and orders. Sailing conditions from Britain to the colonies were difficult, and troops often arrived exhausted and ill. Communication and transportation systems were usually slow and ineffective. Other hindrances included supply shortages, the lack of roads which necessitated creating paths through the wilderness and harsh climate extremes in the Northeast.

5. What impact did the British impression of George Washington have on their war effort?

The British underestimated the ability, skills, talents, maturity and charisma of Washington. They probably considered him unfit for command and unable to lead.

6. In your view, how did the presence of Indians affect the war effort of the British and the colonists?

Answers vary. Some might say that the Indians had to weigh the “lesser of two evils” between the colonists and British when deciding which side to join, given that both groups had previously attempted to seize Indian lands. In the end, Indians fought on both sides but were probably more prevalent on the British side. In the beginning, Indians helped the British navigate through wilderness, serving as their eyes and ears. British use of Indians sometimes backfired, however, as it did during the famous incident involving colonist Jenny McCrea who was scalped and killed by Indians. The colonists used this story to create propaganda against the British, encouraging men to join the militia in response to the atrocity.

7. What impact did a “long, prolonged conflict” have on the British in the Revolution?

The British economy was already struggling with huge debts because of the Seven Years’ War. To continue another long conflict would drive the British treasury into bankruptcy. In addition, as casualty counts increased, many in Britain found themselves less and less in favor of the war and more and more opposed to it.

8. Describe how the “hard peace” advocates undermined the British war effort.

Most people in Britain demanded a “hard peace” which would include harsh terms for the colonists as well as payments for war debts and reparations. Since the colonists saw this as a threat, they figured it was a “do or die” situation and fought harder for independence with little inclination towards negotiation.

9. In your view, could the British have overcome the obstacles listed in the “Factors” list and still won the war? Give an example how they might have done this. If you feel the obstacles were too complex to overcome, give a short explanation explaining your view.

Answers will vary. Some students may note that since the British were the great superpower of the period, they should have concentrated more effort towards subduing the colonists. Others may note that the British government could have adapted their policy to be more accepting of a soft peace. Still, others may note that the British could have equipped their army from Canada or from the West Indies and effectively defeated the colonists.

10. In your view, if the British had been less insistent on a “hard peace” from the colonists, do you think we would be part of the British Empire today? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Some students may note that if the British had been conciliatory toward the colonists, there would have been no reason for the colonists to break away, and the British Empire in North America would probably have been maintained. However, other students may note that because of the distance and the gradual development of a uniquely “American” identity (as opposed to a British identity) America would have eventually pushed for independence but on more congenial terms.

Question Sheet

1. Consider the military strategies employed by the British during their involvement in the Revolution. Which one, in your view, is the most damaging to the British cause? Explain your answer?
2. The first handicap describes how the royal government and general had no firm purpose for waging the war and no logical aim. How might this flaw have caused the British to fail?
3. How did the British underestimate the “American resolve” to win the war?
4. How did geography hinder the British war effort?
5. What impact did the British impression of George Washington have on their war effort?
6. In your view, how did the presence of Indians affect the war effort of the British and the colonists?
7. What impact did a “long, prolonged conflict” have on the British in the Revolution?
8. Describe how the “hard peace” advocates undermined the British war effort.
9. In your view, could the British have overcome the obstacles listed in the “Factors” list and still won the war? Give an example how they might have done this. If you feel the obstacles were too complex to overcome, give a short explanation explaining your view.
10. In your view, if the British had been less insistent on a “hard peace” from the colonists, do you think we would be part of the British Empire today? Explain your answer.

Revolutionary War Music

Overview:

Music frequently plays an important role in military and social history. Often, songs become standards of troops fighting in war, such as the “Battle Hymn of the Republic” during the Civil War, “God Bless America” during the World War years, “Ballad of the Green Berets” in the Vietnam era and, most recently, Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless the USA” in the Gulf War years.

This lesson will investigate some of the more familiar and famous songs of the Revolutionary War period and will examine how music helped convey messages of patriotism and highlighted popular sentiments.

Related Resources for the Lesson

In this lesson, students will use the following resources:

1. Episode 5 of *Liberty!*, in particular the segment on the British surrender at Yorktown, which is included in Chapter 10, from 45:47-53:42.
2. The *Songs of the Revolution* page on the *Liberty!* web site (<http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/chronicle/songs.html>).
3. The lesson draws on several song lyrics available at the Franklin (Tennessee) Special School District “A Time In Music” web site (http://www.fssd.org/PGS/PGS_Digital_Museum/music%20Folder/index.html). The songs can be found at http://www.fssd.org/PGS/PGS_Digital_Museum/music%20Folder/songs.html. While the teacher may wish to have students view lyrics to some/all of the Revolutionary-era songs on the site, the following songs will be used for the lesson:
 - a. “God Save the Thirteen States” (http://www.fssd.org/PGS/PGS_Digital_Museum/music%20Folder/save.txt)
 - b. “The World Turned Upside Down” (http://www.fssd.org/PGS/PGS_Digital_Museum/music%20Folder/world.txt)
 - c. “Johnny Has Gone For A Soldier” (http://www.fssd.org/PGS/PGS_Digital_Museum/music%20Folder/johnny.txt)
 - d. “The Liberty Song” (http://www.fssd.org/PGS/PGS_Digital_Museum/music%20Folder/liberty.txt)

Note: The teacher may also wish to play the melody of a specific song. Each song is also available for play as a .midi file. The teacher should prepare ahead of time by ensuring that the web browser has the correct plug-in installed to play .midi files and that the system has a working sound card and speakers.

4. Information about the roots of the Liberty! Soundtrack at http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/liberty_music.html
5. Question Sheet PDF (for students)
6. Question Sheet PDF (for teachers, with answers)

Relevant Standards

This lesson addresses the following national content standards established by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) (<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>).

US History:

- Understands the social, political, and religious aspects of the American Revolution (e.g., decisions leading to crisis of revolution, efforts by Parliament and colonies to prevent revolution, the ideas of different religions and the economic and social differences of Loyalists, Patriots and neutrals)
- Understands the social and economic impact of the Revolutionary War (e.g., problems of financing the war, wartime inflation, hoarding and profiteering and personal and social economic hardships brought on by war)

Music

- Knows various roles that musicians fulfill (e.g., entertainer, teacher and transmitter of cultural tradition) and representative individuals who have functioned in these roles
- Classifies unfamiliar but representative aural examples of music (e.g., by genre, style, historical period and culture)
- Knows sources of American music genres (e.g., swing, Broadway musical and blues), the evolution of these genres and musicians associated with them

Strategy for the Lesson:

The teacher may wish to begin this lesson with a quick overview of the historical importance of the songs used in this lesson as well as other songs on the web site. For example, the teacher may specifically note that “The World Turned Upside Down” was played during the British surrender at Yorktown or that some of the specific lyrics might have served to generate sympathy for the colonial cause.

Next, the teacher should distribute copies of the song lyrics to each student or direct the student to access the lyrics on the web site. (*Note: One suggestion to reduce the number of pages might be for the teacher to “copy and paste” the lyrics into another word processing document in a layout which uses fewer pages*). Distribute the question sheets.

Allow sufficient time for students to complete the questions. Once students have completed the question sheets, the teacher should evaluate them according to the depth of the answer desired, the amount of time allowed for the assignment, as well as any other criteria established by the teacher, such as spelling and grammar.

Extension Activities:

1. Have the students write song lyrics or poetry regarding a battle or event depicted in the *Liberty!* series. They may either write lyrics that fit the tune of a Revolutionary-era song, or if students are able, they might want to write their own music *and* lyrics for a song.
2. Ask students to compare a song from this lesson with another war/protest song from more recent times. Have them write a comparative essay regarding the two songs.

Question Sheet for Revolutionary War Music (with answers)

1. First, review the lyrics for “God Save the Thirteen States.” The song was sung to the tune of “God Save the King.” Why do you think the writer of this song wanted to have the song sung to the tune of a British song?

Answers will vary, but many students might note that “God Save the King” would be an easily recognizable song for many people, and the music would be easy to remember. Other students may note that “God Save the King” was a tribute to King George III, and if the colonists wrote a song that would support the independence movement, then that might be considered a “slap” against George.

2. Look at the third stanza of the song. How does this sum up the reason for revolution?

In the stanza, reference is made to “slavery” from oppressive policies of the British. Also, in this stanza, the author notes that the colonists tried to negotiate with Britain (“Oft did her grievance state”), but in the lines, “But Britain, falsely great, Urging her desp’rate fate, Turned a deaf ear,” we learn that the British refusal to listen to colonial issues was, in the song’s context, the impetus for Revolution.

3. Next, view the lyrics for “The World Turned Upside Down.” Legend is that this song was played when Cornwallis surrendered to Washington at Yorktown. Why would this song be fitting according to Britain’s view?

Some students may note that the song highlighted the end of the British Empire. Others may feel that the song symbolized how the British Army felt having been beaten by colonial troops, who they frequently considered inferior to their better trained, better equipped army.

4. From whose viewpoint is “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier” sung? How are these lyrics different than the lyrics sung at the end of each episode of *Liberty!*?

In this version of the song, the viewpoint is of a woman whose “Johnny” has left her to join the army. Based on the lyrics on the site, it is difficult to tell whether she is mourning Johnny’s death in battle or if she is sad because Johnny has left her all alone. At the end of each episode of the series, James Taylor sings this song in the third person. Rather than using “I,” he uses “She”.

5. What do the words in the last stanza of “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier” symbolize, in your view?

Answers will vary. Most students may look at the line, “And through the streets I’ll beg for bread...” as a symbol of the hardships endured by spouses of soldiers. Members of the army were often unable to provide a living for the families they left behind while they fought.

6. Next, study the lyrics for *Liberty Song*. In the first stanza, what do you think the author means by “No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim or stain with dishonor America’s name”.

Answers will vary. Some students may note that this, again, is a slap against the British and a way of highlighting injustice against the colonists. Still, others may view that the line refers to something internal that affected the American cause, such as Benedict

Arnold's treason.

7. What do you think the message in the chorus of this song is?

Most students will infer that the meaning of the chorus is an attempt to get colonists to support the colonial cause, not only with their beliefs, but by assisting financially as well.

8. How do these songs compare in scope and tone to a song such as "Yankee Doodle," which is probably more well-known as a Revolutionary-era song? What was the original purpose of "Yankee Doodle?" (*Note: the song and lyrics are included in the Franklin School District site and are also discussed in the related music page on the Liberty! site*).

Answers will vary. Most students will probably note that "Yankee Doodle" was originally considered a derogatory song by the British, but the Patriots simply took it and made it "their own".

9. Which one of these songs, in your view, tended to unite colonists the most? Which one the least? Explain your view.

Answers will vary. Most will probably say that "The World Turned Upside Down" probably doesn't explain the cause of liberty and that "Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier" is more a lament than a unification song.

Most students would probably feel that either "Liberty Song" or "God Save the Thirteen States" would be most likely to unite colonists because of the lyrics' tone.

10. Speculate on whether music today has the same impact on political, military, and social issues as it did in the 18th Century. Is the impact greater? Less? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary.

Question Sheet for Revolutionary War Music

1. First, review the lyrics for “God Save the Thirteen States.” The song was sung to the tune of “God Save the King.” Why do you think the writer of this song wanted to have the song sung to the tune of a British song?
2. Look at the third stanza of the song. How does this sum up the reason for revolution?
3. Next, view the lyrics for “The World Turned Upside Down.” Legend is that this song was played when Cornwallis surrendered to Washington at Yorktown. Why would this song be fitting according to Britain’s view?
4. From whose viewpoint is “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier” sung? How are these lyrics different than the lyrics sung at the end of each episode of *Liberty!*?
5. What do the words in the last stanza of “Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier” symbolize, in your view?
6. Next, study the lyrics for *Liberty Song*. In the first stanza, what do you think the author means by “No tyrannous acts shall suppress your just claim or stain with dishonor America’s name”.
7. What do you think the message in the chorus of this song is?
8. How do these songs compare in scope and tone to a song such as “Yankee Doodle,” which is probably more well-known as a Revolutionary-era song? What was the original purpose of “Yankee Doodle?” (*Note: the song and lyrics are included in the Franklin School District site and are also discussed in the related music page on the Liberty! site*).
9. Which one of these songs, in your view, tended to unite colonists the most? Which one the least? Explain your view.
10. Speculate on whether music today has the same impact on political, military, and social issues as it did in the 18th Century. Is the impact greater? Less? Explain your answer.

Creating a New Nation

Overview:

At the end of the Revolutionary War, the new nation was faced with another extremely difficult task—creating a single, unified country out of a loose association of states, transforming the “United States” from a plural to a singular noun. America had thrown off one oppressive form of government, but now they had to develop a *new* form of government strong enough to enforce the law, yet based on the democratic and economic premises of the Revolution.

The result was a Constitution that has lasted longer than other document of its kind in world history. This lesson will examine the tensions that existed between proponents of individual liberty and advocates of national strength and how the evolution of their debate shaped the Constitution and the new government.

Related resources for the Lesson

In this lesson, students will use the following resources:

1. Episode Six of *Liberty!* (The related web page for the episode is at <http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/chronicle/episode6.html>). Students should view the episode prior to completing this lesson.
2. The Articles of Confederation (<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/artconf.htm>)
3. The US Constitution (<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/usconst.htm>)
4. The Bill of Rights (<http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/rights1.htm>)
5. Question Sheet PDF (for students)
6. Question Sheet PDF (for teachers, with answers)

Relevant Standards

This lesson addresses the following national content standards established by the Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

(<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>)

Civics:

- Understands some of the major competing ideas about the purposes of politics and government (e.g., achieving a religious vision, glorifying the state, enhancing economic prosperity, providing for a nation's security) and knows examples of past and present governments that serve these purposes
- Understands how constitutions, in the past as well as in the present, have been disregarded or used to promote the interests of a particular group, class, faction, or

- a government (e.g., slavery, exclusion of women from the body politic, prohibition of competing political parties)
- Understands how constitutions may be used to preserve core values and principles of a political system or society (e.g., prohibition of religious tests for public office and protection of private property by the United States Constitution)
 - Knows the advantages and disadvantages of confederal, federal, and unitary systems in fulfilling the purposes of constitutional government
 - Understands how various provisions of the Constitution and principles of the constitutional system help to insure an effective government that will not exceed its limits

US History:

- Understands the efforts of the Continental Congress and the states to rebuild the economy after the American Revolution (e.g., by addressing issues of foreign and internal trade, banking and taxation)
- Understands political and economic issues addressed by the Continental Congress (e.g., the accomplishments and failures of the Continental Congress, the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, revolutionary war debt and the dispute over the sale of western lands)

Strategy for the Lesson

Prior to viewing Episode Six of *Liberty!*, the teacher should highlight the basic concerns and issues that faced the new nation after the war.

Some of these issues might include:

- Sovereignty of each individual state to conduct its own affairs without what it considered “undue influence” from a central government
- Protections against an oppressive central government
- Economic issues, such as taxation without representation, as well as maintaining a laissez-faire system which would protect business and industrial interests
- The ability of the national government to protect business interests from foreign interference
- The ability of the national government to protect itself and the nation from foreign military power as well as protecting itself from internal sedition.
- The division of the new nation into two camps – those who feared a strong, powerful central government and wanted to preserve individual liberties as well as the local sovereignty of each state and those who believed that the union would fall apart without a strong central government.

Next, allow students to view Episode Six of *Liberty!* The teacher may wish to cue specific chapters in the film, including the following:

- Chapter 3, *A National Vision* (14:14-19:04), which discusses the development of the Articles of Confederation as well as the debate over limited versus strong national government
- Chapter 4, *All Is Not Well* (19:06-24:30), which discusses the failings of the Articles to serve as a suitable government for the new nation
- Chapter 5, *A Convention in Philadelphia* (24:32-30:58), which discusses the Constitutional Convention as well as the varied interests and philosophies of the framers
- Chapter 6, *Blueprint for a New Nation* (31:00-34:16), discusses the make-up of the Constitution itself
- Chapter 7, *Reactions Are Divided* (34:18-40:54) deals with the controversy and resistance to the Constitution.
- Chapter 8, *Compromise and Approval* (40:56-45:59) describes the compromises and debate that led to ratification of the Constitution as well as the development of the Bill of Rights

After viewing, distribute question sheets to students. Allot sufficient time for students to complete the worksheets. Once students have completed the questions, the teacher should evaluate them according to the depth of the answer desired, the amount of time allowed for the assignment as well as any other criteria established by the teacher, for example, spelling and grammar.

Extension Activities:

Have students work in groups to evaluate the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Ask them to assume they are a newly-appointed “Constitutional Convention.” What provisions in the Constitution or amendments might they be likely to re-write or eliminate? Students should develop “position papers” to defend their choices.

Question Sheet for Creating a New Nation (with answers)

1. In the opening minutes of Episode 6, Historian Gordon Wood remarked that George Washington's resignation of his commission and taking leave of public life at the end of the Revolutionary War was an "electrifying event throughout the world." Why was it so electrifying?

Wood was referring to the fact that Washington, who had just led a successful revolution and commanded a large army, gave up control of that army rather than using it to seize power himself. Wood remarked that no other commander in world history had done anything like that before.

2. Wood also mentions the difficulty of "bringing together separate states." Why do you think the states might have resisted having a national government instead of 13 separate governments?

Students will probably note that the states were worried about "trading one tyrant (George III) for another (a strong central government)." They may also note that the states might have resisted because they had developed separate identities as independent states, and it would have been very difficult for them to give up sovereignty and give authority to a central government.

3. In Episode 6, Abigail Adams writes a letter to her sister in which she refers to the "inherited power" of British nobility and aristocracy saying, "There's a servility of manners here, a distinction between nobility and common citizens, which, happily, is foreign to Americans." Do you agree with Abigail Adams's statement? Explain your view.

Many may disagree, due to treatment of African-American slaves or women during the period. However, some may note that the end of the war allowed all white men some level of equality in society and gave all an opportunity to raise themselves in society.

4. In the episode, Alexander Hamilton laments the inaction of the government to enforce the law put forth by the Articles of Confederation. Review the Articles. List at least three issues or problems you see that would back up Hamilton's view.

Student answers will vary, but some possible examples include:

In Article 2, each state is given its own sovereignty, freedom and independence, making it very difficult for a central government to carry out its actions or enforce laws or foreign policy.

Since each state would be sovereign, each state could develop its own currency, which would undermine the national economy.

No national government would be able to compel states to send troops, obey national law, levy national taxes or regulate trade.

In Article 5, each state was given one vote, making it impossible to allocate representation reflective of big states' populations versus small ones.

There is no mention of a national executive in the Articles

There is no mention of a national court system.

An “extraordinary majority” was required to pass legislation, as a mere four states could block actions desired by the other nine.

5. After Shay’s Rebellion, it became obvious that something needed to be changed, so the Constitutional Convention was called to revise the Articles of Confederation. The first vote of this Convention was to, in the words of the narrator, “keep their proceedings absolutely secret”. Why do you feel the convention was not open to the public? Could this be done today? Explain your answers.

Most students would recognize the need for secrecy in light of the fact that if the meetings were held in public, most of the delegates would be fearful to say or do anything. Having meetings in secret would allow them to freely say what they believed or felt.

Most students would feel that it would be difficult for a convention today to be private, especially with the number of American homes with television sets, and with news networks and public affairs broadcasting such as C-SPAN, CNN, Fox News, and others “chomping at the bit” to cover the story.

6. Compare the preamble to the Articles of Confederation with the preamble to the US Constitution. Why would the framers of the Articles write the names of all the states in the preamble, while the framers of the Constitution simply wrote, “We, the People...”?

First, the framers of the Constitution wanted to highlight that the power of government, according to the Constitution, lay in the people. Second, by simply stating “We, the People...”, the framers hoped to prove that the new Constitution was a product of a national government instead of thirteen independent nations.

7. In Episode 6, the narrator mentions that the role of checks and balances in a large democracy is to protect the rights of minorities from potential tyranny. How do you think checks and balances might accomplish this? Give at least two examples, either hypothetical or historical, from your reading and/or studies of the Constitution.

The system of checks and balances was designed to keep any branch of government in the new Constitution from gaining too much power. In this way, the other two branches of government could protect the rights of minorities, because they had some leverage over the third branch.

Some examples (“real world”) where rights of the minorities have been protected by checks and balances include the following:

- The Supreme Court ruling in 1954 which desegregated public schools
- The use of Federal troops to integrate the University of Alabama and University of Mississippi during the early 1960s, as ordered by the President.
- The Supreme Court ruling in 1974 which forced President Richard M. Nixon to release the “White House Tapes” in relation to the Watergate scandal. Within days of being forced to release the tapes, Nixon resigned.
- The role of the Congress in the process of impeachment of the president and members of the Federal judiciary.
- The War Powers Act of 1973, which restricts the President’s power to send troops to foreign countries indefinitely without Congressional approval.

8. As the Constitution is completed and submitted for ratification, the supporters of the document are known as “Federalists” and the opponents as “Anti-Federalists”. One issue that divided the two groups was whether the Constitution should contain a “Bill of Rights”. What arguments both for and against a Bill of Rights might the two groups have developed?

The Federalists would probably say that they felt checks and balances along with the separation of powers would protect the rights of individuals more effectively than a bill of rights. In addition, they might have also felt that since state constitutions already included a bill of rights, it would be wrong for a federal constitution to overrule those state documents.

The Anti-Federalists would probably advocate the Bill of Rights as a way to protect the rights of individuals from abuses of a strong national government.

9. Gordon Wood notes that the Bill of Rights is “what makes us a single people... We’re the first nation, I suppose, in modern times, to make ideology the basis of our existence.” In your view, does the Bill of Rights fill that role? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Most students will probably say the Bill of Rights does make us a single people, because it gives everyone equality through the basic freedoms listed, such as freedom of speech and the press. Even the poorest man has a right to state his opinion in an open forum or the right to due process of law in the judicial system.

10. Historian Pauline Maier states in the closing minutes of Episode 6 that, “I think it’s one of the greatest ironies of human history that the American Revolution is sometimes considered no revolution at all. That honor goes to others -- the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution -- revolutions that fail to realize their promise of liberty, revolutions that ultimately failed. Our revolution, I think, is underestimated mainly because it succeeded.” Do you agree with this assessment? Explain your answer.

Answers will vary. Some students may note that the statement is true, because in many other revolutions of the same period, revolution was marked by consistent disruption and turmoil in the country which as Maier states, can be regarded as a failure. In the case of the American Revolution, a nation was created which, with minor adjustments, remains intact to this day.

Some students may note the statement is false, because while other revolutions did incur substantial turmoil over a long period of time, they also caused a dynamic change in those governments -- monarchs fell and governments were overhauled, just as they were in the American Revolution.



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