

## **General Overview**

What could be more profoundly American than the American Revolution? Students must learn that American history did not occur in a vacuum. Colonists were, first and foremost, British citizens and to understand the colonists' mindset, students must have some knowledge of British history.

## **Teaching Thesis and Guiding Questions**

The ideas of the American Revolution were not as revolutionary as we teach them. They are rooted in our common history and experience with Great Britain. In the teaching of American history, how can we help students to understand that the United States does not operate in a vacuum? How can students understand that something as American as the American Revolution had European roots?

By looking at the causes of the English Civil War, students will see similarities between them and the causes of the American Revolution. By truly understanding the basics of the English Civil War, they will have a better understanding of their own history, and will be better able to understand "what comes next."

## **Significance and Relevance**

Where to place these lessons in a unit on the American Revolution will depend upon your students and allows for an easy differentiation of the lessons. For gifted or honors level students I would use this as an introductory activity to a unit on the American Revolution. For my gifted students, this was taught after a lesson on the idea of revolution and then a reading on the Magna Carta. Students would then understand why both groups believed their rights were being infringed.

For other students, I would teach this after ensuring they had a pretty good background on the run up to the American Revolution. This would work best after students had a solid understanding of the Stamp Act, taxation without representation and the Declaration of Independence.

I used portions of this module with my sixth grade students. The idea that the American Revolution might have some ideological roots in Europe was fascinating to them. They demanded to know more and wanted to know why we hadn't discussed the English Civil War during our colonial America unit. Their knowledge of the English Civil War and its consequences added richness to our discussions of their next unit which involved the formation of the new government.

## **Time period**

5-6 50-minute periods

Some activities can be scaled back. Assessments need not be done for each activity, which will also cut down on time. If only one assessment is done at the end could be cut back to 3-4 days)

## **Subject(s) and Appropriate Grade Level(s)**

American Revolution and English Civil War, Middle and High School

## **Learning Objectives**

Students will be able to

- compare and contrast the causes, people, and outcomes of the English Civil War and the American Revolution.
- put the events of the English Civil War and the American Revolution in chronological order
- to understand the basic facts of the English Civil War and the American Revolution
- debate if the English Civil War influenced the American Revolution

## **Historical Skills Used:**

- Chronological Thinking
- Historical Comprehension
- Historical Analysis and Interpretation
- Historical Research Capabilities

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*Activity Three: Annotated Bibliography*  
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- Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision Making

### **VA SOL and/or national standards**

- USI.6 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the causes and results of the American Revolution by
- a) identifying the issues of dissatisfaction that led to the American Revolution;
  - b) identifying how political ideas shaped the revolutionary movement in America and led to the Declaration of Independence;

**Students Should Understand: The causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory.**

#### **1A Demonstrate understanding of the causes of the American Revolution by:**

- Explaining the consequences of the Seven Years War and the overhaul of English imperial policy following the Treaty of Paris in 1763, demonstrating the connections between the antecedent and consequent events. [Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances]
- Comparing the arguments advanced by defenders and opponents of the new imperial policy on the traditional rights of English people and the legitimacy of asking the colonies to pay a share of the costs of empire. [Consider multiple perspectives]
- Reconstructing the arguments among Patriots and Loyalists about independence and drawing conclusions about how the decision to declare independence was reached. [Consider multiple perspectives]

#### **1B Demonstrate understanding of the principles articulated in the Declaration of Independence by:**

- Explaining the major ideas expressed in the Declaration of Independence and their sources. [Marshal evidence of antecedent circumstances]

### **Technology**

- Students could use the British National Archives to access the primary source documents for the English Civil War. (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/civilwar/> )
- The Treaty of Paris and the Declaration of Independence can also be found online at the United States National Archives (<http://www.archives.gov>)
- Students could also use the Colonial Williamsburg website for information (<http://www.history.org/Almanack/people/ranhdr.cfm>). This website contains valuable information on the American Revolution and the people involved.
- PBS also has a site that goes with their DVD, *Liberty!* <http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty/index.html>, which could be used for research purposes.

### **Modifications, Differentiation and Extensions**

Differentiation:

- Cut back the text-driven primary sources to just the absolute minimum
- Use fewer sources (less information to process)
- Use more visual sources
- Adapt the text so that it is more easily read by students
- Pair weaker readers with stronger readers

Further exploration:

- How does the English Civil War affect who chooses to settle in North America and where they decide to settle?
- How did the aftereffects of the English Civil War play a role in the type of government that was created during and after the American Revolution?

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