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| PROJECT TITLE:<br><b>Fighting for Someone Else's Freedom: What was the Role of Slaves in the American Revolution?</b> |                                                                    |
| AUTHOR: <b>Emily Dooley</b>                                                                                           | SUBJECT & GRADE LEVEL<br><b>United States History<br/>Grade 11</b> |

## CLASSROOM PRACTICE

### 1. HI Overview & Teaching Thesis:

- This lesson will ideally be taught at the end of a unit on the American Revolution, but could be included in the initial study of the war as well. American history courses do not address the role slaves played in the Revolutionary War, nor do these courses address the dual paradoxes of our Founding Fathers enlisting slaves while fighting for independence and a slave fighting for someone else's freedom. There is also no mention in history courses of the impact freed slaves at the end of the war had on the global economy and slave trade. This lesson is an important opportunity for students to address multiple perspectives and experiences of an event. This is an underrepresented subject in American history textbooks and state history standards and as such, students should recognize important contributions of African Americans in the Revolutionary War while practicing important historical skills like primary source analysis and writing.

### 2. Suggested Grade Level and Length of Activities:

- 11<sup>th</sup> grade United States History
- Two 90-minute class periods

### 3. Significance & Relevance:

- The purpose of creating this resource is to ensure that an aspect of the American Revolution is taught. The participation of black Americans in the Revolutionary War and their experiences after manumission is not addressed in the Virginia Standards of Learning nor is it fully realized in most American History textbooks. This resource will allow teachers to incorporate this component of American history in his or her course. Additionally, this resource will allow students to analyze primary and secondary source documents, an essential historical skill.

#### Selected State & National Standards

- VUS.1 The student will demonstrate skills for historical and geographical analysis and responsible citizenship, including the ability to:
- identify, analyze, and interpret primary and secondary source documents, records, and data, including artifacts, diaries, letters, photographs, journals, newspapers, historical accounts, and art, to increase understanding of events and life in the United States;

- e) communicate findings orally and in analytical essays or comprehensive papers;
  - f) develop skills in discussion, debate, and persuasive writing with respect to enduring issues and determine how divergent viewpoints have been addressed and reconciled;
- VUS.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of events and issues of the Revolutionary Period by
- a) analyzing how the political ideas of John Locke and those expressed in *Common Sense* helped shape the Declaration of Independence;
  - b) evaluating how key principles in the Declaration of Independence grew in importance to become unifying ideas of American democracy;
  - c) describing the political differences among the colonists concerning separation from Great Britain;
  - d) analyzing reasons for colonial victory in the Revolutionary War.
- OAH Historical Inquiry Skills –
    - Historical Issues Analysis and Decision Making: Students will identify the key issues/problems encountered by slaves fighting in the American Revolution. The incentives for enlisting, experiences, and outcomes of those involved will be reflected in a final piece of writing. The writing will take the form of a letter to the editor where students will advocate for the inclusion of their individual in their history textbook.

#### 4. Lesson Objectives –

- Students will know that African Americans served in the Revolutionary War for both the Patriots and the Loyalists.
- Students will identify the text (or lack thereof) in their history textbooks that address the role of slaves in the American Revolution. [Assessed: Do Now: Think/Pair/Share]
- Students will discuss why textbook editors have to make choices about what to include in the text. [Assessed: Exit Slip/Concluding Discussion]
- Students will write a letter to a textbook editor advocating for the inclusion of information of a slave who fought in the American Revolution. [Assessed: Letter to the Editor]
- Students will analyze various primary sources related the enlistment of African Americans in the Revolutionary War. [Assessed: Primary Source Analysis on Web Guide]
- Students will identify the contributions of an African American soldier in the American Revolution. [Assessed: Individual Analysis on Web Guide]
- Students will recognize that the promise of emancipation for service was not always kept. [Assessed: Alternate Endings]
- Students will identify the Caribbean, Nova Scotia, and Liberia as the locations to which many freed slaves were sent at the end of the war. [Assessed: Alternate Endings]

#### 5. Lesson Plans or Instructional Activities –

- Day 1: Students will use a wikisite to read and analyze primary source documents about the policies adopted by the British and Americans to prohibit and then encourage slaves to fight on their side. Students will also use the wikisite to learn about an African American individual who fought and contributed to the American Revolution.
- Day 2: Students will then write a letter to their textbook editor advocating for the inclusion of their individual in the text. Students will form expert groups to discuss their letters and then share the individual slave experiences with students who studied a different slave. Finally, students will analyze the varying outcomes for slaves who fought in the war.
- See lesson plan for detailed instruction

## 6. Technology (if applicable) -

- Students will use computers to access a wikisite that includes video, primary source documents, and online biographical information on selected African Americans who participated in the American Revolution.
- Teacher will project a PowerPoint slide with the guiding questions throughout the lesson.
- An extension activity using Skype to contact a textbook editor is an additional option to integrate technology into the lesson.

## 7. Modifications, Differentiation, and Extensions –

- An easy modification would be to allow students to work in pairs or small groups to research their individual.
- This lesson addresses the contributions of three African Americans in the American Revolution. If time and resources were available, students could investigate additional individuals (Crispus Attucks, Prince Whipple, etc). Students could also examine the role of African American women in the Revolutionary War.
- If a student is working with a textbook that *does* cover the contributions of African Americans in sufficient detail, students could tailor their letter to the editor to commend the text for its inclusion of the topic and explain why it is important to keep those sections in the book.
- Invite an editor in to the classroom to discuss the process by which textbooks are written and edited. Have students present the information they studied that is not included in the textbook. If an editor is unable to visit in person, consider using technology like [Skype](#).

## 8. Related Materials and Resources

- [www.slavesamerrev.wikispaces.com](http://www.slavesamerrev.wikispaces.com)
- Slaves in the American Revolution Web-Guide
  - i. Video viewing questions
  - ii. Primary source document analysis
  - iii. Individual biographical organizer
  - iv. Letter to the editor
- Slaves in the American Revolution Web-Guide Answer Key
- Letter to the Editor Rubric
- Jigsaw Handout
- Jigsaw Teacher Handout
- Alternate Endings Handout
- Exit Pass

## 9. Annotated Instructional Bibliography

- **James O. Horton *Slavery in the Founding Era*** – this video (4:21) from the Gilder Lehrman Institute is a discussion of the paradox between the Founding Fathers embarking on the journey for freedom while simultaneously holding slaves. Horton addresses the differences between the North and South at the time of the Revolution.  
[\[http://www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/era\\_slaveryabolition.php\]](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/institute/era_slaveryabolition.php)
- **Lord Dunmore's Proclamation** – this document, issued by the Governor of Virginia on November 7, 1775, called for the slaves of Patriot owners to join the Royal Army in exchange for emancipation. Dunmore's forces were depleted and he hoped to reinforce his numbers while also creating chaos for the colonists with this proclamation. It is estimated that thousands of slaves escaped their masters to join his army.  
[\[http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-revolution/4238\]](http://www.learnnc.org/lp/editions/nchist-revolution/4238)

- **Resolution passed by the Massachusetts Committee of Safety, May 1775** – This resolution, passed just prior to Lord Dunmore’s Proclamation, stated that only freemen would be admitted in the Patriot Army of Massachusetts. No slaves were to be admitted, “upon any consideration whatsoever.” [<http://slavesamerrev.wikispaces.com/MA>]
- **Excerpts from an Act of the Rhode Island legislature, February 1778** – This act, passed in the years following Dunmore’s Proclamation and the inclusion of slaves as soldiers in the British Army, changed colonial policy in Rhode Island to allow for the enlistment of every, “able-bodied negro, mulatto, or Indian man-slave” in the state. Furthermore, this act emancipated any slave who fought. [<http://www.americanrevolution.org/firstri.html>]
- **William Flora** – William “Billy” Flora was a black man born to free black parents. He is known for fighting for the Patriots in the Revolutionary War. Flora is credited with halting the British attack at the Battle of Great Bridge by firing on the Loyalist troops while other soldiers were fleeing and also dismantling the bridge, making it impossible for the British to cross. [<http://www.libarts.uco.edu/history/faculty/roberson/course/4753/Biographies/1/4753WilliamFlora/periodI.htm>]
- **Colonel Tye** – Colonel Tye was a slave who escaped his Quaker master to serve for the British. He escaped his master in response to Dunmore’s Proclamation and is known for leading the guerrilla groups of the Ethiopian Regiment and the Black Brigade. [<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part2/2p52.html>]
- **James Armistead Lafayette** – Lafayette was a slave who fought for the French who were allied with the colonists. Lafayette served with the consent of his owner and is remembered as an adept spy who was able to infiltrate the British side. [<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/lafayette-james-armistead-1760-1832>]
- **Quarles, Benjamin** – *The Negro in the American Revolution* - This text is seen as the preeminent source in the field of African American service in the Revolutionary War. It is a relatively easy read and if a teacher or student were to read one text on the subject, this should be it! [<http://www.amazon.com/Negro-American-Revolution-Chapel-Books/dp/0807846031>]
- **Heinemann** – *A Song Full of Hope (1770-1830)* – This sourcebook is an excellent resource on the subject of African Americans in United States history. This book has lesson plans about slaves in the Revolutionary War and comes with a CD loaded with documents, photos, and other primary sources. [[http://www.amazon.com/Song-Full-Hope-1770-1830-Sourcebook/dp/0325005168/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1291568476&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Song-Full-Hope-1770-1830-Sourcebook/dp/0325005168/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1291568476&sr=1-1)]
- **National Archives** – This website has worksheets prepared for teachers to download to assist in the analysis of documents. [<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/>]