



Grade 5 Social Studies - Unit 2 - The American Revolution (*Interdisciplinary Unit*)

Unit Focus

This interdisciplinary unit explores the causes, key events, and lasting impacts of the American Revolution. Students begin by examining the French and Indian War, the Proclamation of 1763, and British taxation policies, including the Sugar Act, Stamp Act, Townshend Acts, and Intolerable Acts. Through debates, journal entries, and case studies, students analyze how these events heightened tensions between the colonies and Britain and consider the perspectives of different groups—including women, African Americans, and Native American nations—on the challenges of the time.

Students study the Revolutionary War itself, exploring major battles such as Bunker Hill, Trenton, Saratoga, and Yorktown, and learning about key figures. They analyze primary sources, poems, propaganda, and historical songs to evaluate evidence, understand multiple perspectives, and recognize bias.

Language Arts is fully integrated into this unit through the historical novel *My Brother Sam Is Dead* by James Lincoln Collier. Reading this book allows students to experience the Revolution through the eyes of a family living in Connecticut, deepening empathy and providing a personal lens for understanding historical events. Students use the novel as a springboard for social studies learning, connecting story details to historical facts, making inferences, and drawing conclusions about how the Revolution affected people.

Through hands-on activities—such as creating timelines, developing claims about Connecticut’s role in the war, designing propaganda, and producing visual sketches—students gain a comprehensive understanding of how the Revolution shaped American identity and democratic principles. By the end of the unit, students can explain both the causes and consequences of the Revolution and articulate how individuals and groups influenced its course.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

Standard(s)	Transfer	
<p>Common Core English Language Arts: 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1) Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text, including how characters in a story or drama respond to challenges or how the speaker in a poem reflects upon a topic; summarize the text. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.2) Compare and contrast two or more characters, settings, or events in a story or drama, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., how characters interact). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.3) Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.1) Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RI.5.2) 	<p><i>Students will be able to independently use their learning to...</i></p> <p>T1 Apply historical knowledge while engaging in an iterative process of researching, creating, and refining a product so that it effectively communicates meaning to a specific audience for a clear and purposeful goal.</p>	
	Meaning	
	Understanding(s)	Essential Question(s)
<p><i>Students will understand that...</i></p> <p>U1 There are many factors and causes that create major historical events such as the American Revolution.</p> <p>U2 Individuals’ perspectives on which side to align with in any conflict may be dependent on various factors and are not universal to demographic groups.</p>	<p><i>Students will keep considering...</i></p> <p>Q1 Was the American Revolution inevitable?</p> <p>Q2 In what ways did the American Revolution shape the national identity of the United States?</p>	

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RI.5.3) • Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.4) • Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.RI.5.7) • Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.9) • Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3.) (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.4) • Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.7) • Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; summarize or paraphrase information in notes and finished work, and provide a list of sources. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.8) • Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.10) • Summarize a written text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.SL.5.2) • Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.SL.5.3) • Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.SL.5.4) • Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, using formal English when appropriate to task and situation. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.6) • Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal contrast, addition, and other logical relationships (e.g., however, although, nevertheless, similarly, moreover, in addition). (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.5.6) 	<p>U3 Historical records provide a window into a time period but do not always include various perspectives due to the context of the time the record was created.</p> <p>U4 Individual and group actions that occurred during the American Revolution illustrated the spirit of democracy that continues to shape the national identity of the United States.</p>	
Acquisition of Knowledge and Skill		
Knowledge		Skill(s)
<p><i>Students will know...</i></p> <p>K1 The key events leading to the American Revolution and be able to recall their sequence in order to create a comparative timeline.</p> <p>K2 The benefits and costs of both government policies and individual actions prior to the American Revolution and be able to compare their impacts on the colonies.</p> <p>K3 The political and economic beliefs that shaped the perspectives held by Patriots and Loyalists.</p> <p>K4 Why members of the Northeastern Woodland Native American tribes and Black communities had conflicting views about support for the American Revolution.</p> <p>K5 That the perspectives of people in the American Revolution—such as colonists, British officials, enslaved people, women, and Native Americans—are represented to varying degrees in historical records, and they will be able to identify which voices are present and which are missing.</p> <p>K6 How to compare information from multiple historical sources to understand people and events of the American Revolution and identify similarities, differences, and possible biases.</p>	<p><i>Students will be skilled at...</i></p> <p>S1 Using chronological thinking to understand and compare different events leading up to the American Revolution.</p> <p>S2 Comparing benefits and costs of government and individual actions prior to the American Revolution.</p> <p>S3 Explaining the political and economic beliefs that shaped the perspectives held by Patriots and Loyalists.</p> <p>S4 Explaining why members of the Northeastern Woodland Native American tribes and Black communities had conflicting views about support for the American Revolution.</p> <p>S5 Describing how the perspectives of people in the American Revolution are found or not found in historical records.</p> <p>S6 Comparing information from multiple historical sources about people and events in the American Revolution.</p> <p>S7 Explaining probable causes and effects of major turning points in the American Revolution using multiple sources.</p> <p>S8 Using evidence to develop a claim about the role of Connecticut in the American Revolution.</p>	

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which ideas are logically grouped to support the writer's purpose. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1.A)
- Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.W.5.1.B)
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.2.B)
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3.B)
- Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.SL.5.1.A)
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles. (CCSS.ELALITERACY.SL.5.1.B)
- Pose and respond to specific questions by making comments that contribute to the discussion and elaborate on the remarks of others. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1.C)
- Review the key ideas expressed and draw conclusions in light of information and knowledge gained from the discussions. (CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.1.D)

Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards (2023)

Grade 5 - United States History I

- Gather relevant evidence from multiple sources about a person, event, or issue in United States History while using the origin, structure, and context to guide selection. (5.Inq.3.a)
- Identify evidence response to a compelling question while determining among fact and opinion to determine the credibility of multiple sources. (5.Inq.3.b)
- Critique arguments and explanations. (5.Inq.4.c)
- Present a summary of arguments and explanations about early United States History using print, oral, and digital technologies in classrooms, schools, and out-of-school contexts. (5.Inq.4.d)
- Explain the challenges and opportunities, both present and past, in addressing local, regional, and global problems in United States history. (5.Inq.4.e)
- Employ chronological thinking to create timelines comparing the events that led to the American Revolution (e.g., Seven Years War, Parliamentary acts of taxation, Boston Tea Party, Boston Massacre, Declaration of Independence). (5.His.1.a)

- K7** The probable causes and effects of major turning points in the American Revolution.
- K8** How to use evidence from historical sources to develop and support a claim about the role of Connecticut in the American Revolution.
- K9** How to develop a claim about the significance of a person, place, or event in Connecticut and support it with historical evidence.
- K10** The economic interdependence of the three regional colonies during the American Revolution.
- K11** The causes and effects of the Treaty of Paris

- S9** Developing a claim about a significant person, place, or event in Connecticut.
- S10** Explaining the economic interdependence of the three regional colonies during the American Revolution by creating a flow chart illustrating the flow of resources.
- S11** Explaining the causes and effects of the Treaty of Paris.

Stage 1: Desired Results - Key Understandings

- Compare the benefits and costs of governmental and individual choices leading to the American Revolution (e.g., taxation, homespun movement, right to property). (5.Eco.1.a)
- Explain how political and economic beliefs shaped the perspectives held by Patriots and Loyalists leading to the American Revolution (e.g., individual rights, liberties, representation, sovereignty, trade and taxation). (5.His.4.a)
- Explain why members of the Northeastern Woodland Native American tribes and Black communities held conflicting views regarding support for the American Revolution. (5.His.4.b)
- Describe how people’s perspectives of the American Revolution are documented in historical records while noting representation of marginalized voices (e.g., journals, letters, newspaper articles, pamphlets). (5.His.6.a)
- Compare information provided by multiple historical sources about the people and events of the American Revolution (e.g., purpose, maker, significance, fact, opinion, bias). (5.His.10.a)
- Explain probable causes and effects of major turning points in the American Revolution (e.g., Battle of Bunker Hill, Boston Massacre, Saratoga, Valley Forge). (5.His.14.e)
- Use evidence to develop a claim about the role of Connecticut in the American Revolution (e.g., Provision State, privateers, Tory and Patriot sentiments). (5.His.16.b)
- Develop a claim about significant people, places or events in Connecticut during the American Revolution (e.g., Jonathan Occum, Israel Putnam, Hannah Bunce Watson, Benedict Arnold, Jordan Freeman). (5.His. 16.c)
- Explain economic interdependence between the New England, Middle, and Southern colonies during the American Revolution (e.g., trade, efforts to support the continental cause). (5.Eco.15.a)
- Explain the causes and effects of the Treaty of Paris (e.g., economic, political, social). (5.His.14.f)

Madison Public Schools Profile of a Graduate

- Design: Engaging in a process to refine a product for an intended audience and purpose. (POG.2.2)