

Early America Teacher's Guide



Grade Level: 3-5

Curriculum Focus: U.S. History

Lesson Duration: 2 class periods

Program Description

Join the Minutemen as they defended Concord, Massachusetts, and attacked British soldiers on their way to Boston. Meet George Washington and his Continental Army. Learn how Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence. Discover the centuries-old art of sugaring; travel aboard a steam engine; and ride with cowboys herding cattle along the trail. Finally, learn about the forced relocation of the Cherokees from their homeland in 1837.

Discussion Questions

Pre-viewing Questions

- What qualities do you think a strong leader should have?
- What leaders can you think of who have these qualities?

Post-viewing Questions

- Have your ideas about what qualities a strong leader should have changed? If so, how?
 - How do you think strong leaders shaped the history of the United States?
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Lesson Plan

Student Objectives

- Identify the qualities of a strong leader.
- Apply these qualities to George Washington, Paul Revere, and Thomas Jefferson.
- Discuss whether they had the qualities of a strong leader.
- Identify modern-day leaders and explore their leadership qualities

Materials

- Computer(s) with Internet access
- Newsprint and markers
- Paper and pencils

Procedures

1. Have the class generate a list of qualities of strong leaders. Write students' ideas on a sheet of newsprint. Look for following:
 - Decisive
 - Confident
 - Strong character
 - Decisive
 - Trustworthy
 - Knowledgeable
 - Flexible
 - Brave
 - Energetic
2. Tell students that you will keep the list posted for the next several days, and they can add other qualities as they think of them. For the lesson, however, students should use this list as the criteria for determining if an individual is a strong leader.
3. Next, tell students to begin by applying the list of criteria to three leaders of the Revolutionary War: George Washington, Paul Revere, and Thomas Jefferson. To familiarize students with the role of each man during the Revolutionary period, have them watch the appropriate segments in the program *Early America*.
4. Give students time in class to do research and determine if they meet the strong-leadership criteria. Students will prepare a short paper explaining their ideas. The following Web sites provide additional information.
 - Thomas Jefferson
<http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/biog/lj03.htm>
<http://www.kidport.com/RefLib/SocialStudies/FamousAmericans/FamousAmericans.htm#Jefferson>
 - Paul Revere
<http://darter.ocps.net/classroom/revolution/revere.htm>
<http://www.kidport.com/RefLib/SocialStudies/FamousAmericans/FamousAmericans.htm#Revere>
 - George Washington
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/gw1.html>
<http://sc94.ameslab.gov/TOUR/gwash.html>



5. During the next class period, ask students to share their ideas about the three leaders. Do students think that each one meets the criteria of a strong leader? Make sure students give evidence to support their ideas.
6. Conclude the lesson by asking students to apply the criteria of a strong leader to an individual of their choice. It could be a political leader, such as George W. Bush or Hilary Clinton; a leader in technology, such as Bill Gates; or a high-profile media figure, such as Christiane Amanpour. If time permits, have students share their ideas about their chosen leader.

Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students were highly engaged in class discussions and produced a clear, complete report, including all of the requested information.
- 2 points: Students participated in class discussions and produced an adequate report, including most of the requested information.
- 1 point: Students participated minimally in class discussions and created an incomplete report with little or none of the requested information.

Vocabulary

Declaration of Independence

Definition: The document adopted on July 4, 1776, by the Second Continental Congress declaring American freedom from Britain

Context: The Declaration of Independence states why the colonists believed that it was time to separate from Britain.

George Washington

Definition: The commander of the Continental Army that defeated the British and the first President of the United States; he lived from 1732 to 1799.

Context: Often called the Father of Our Country, George Washington helped shape the young United States.

leader

Definition: A person who has commanding authority or influence and can manage a large number of people

Context: George Washington was a strong leader because he galvanized the American troops and led them to victory against the British.

Paul Revere

Definition: An American patriot who, among other accomplishments, warned the people of Lexington, Massachusetts, that the British soldiers were coming

Context: The American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow made Paul Revere famous in his poem "Paul Revere's Ride."

Revolutionary War

Definition: The war between the American colonies and the British during which the Americans fought for their independence from Britain; the war lasted from 1775 to 1783.

Context: The Revolutionary War created a country that was based on freedom and democratic ideals.

Thomas Jefferson

Definition: A statesman during the Revolutionary period and author of the Declaration of Independence; he lived from 1743 to 1826.

Context: Thomas Jefferson was elected the third President of the United States in 1801.

Academic Standards

Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- United States History: Era 3 – Understands the causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in shaping the revolutionary movement, and reasons for the American victory
- Language Arts: Viewing – Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media; Writing: Uses the general skills and strategies of the writing process, Gathers and uses information for research purposes

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)

NCSS has developed national guidelines for teaching social studies. To become a member of NCSS, or to view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Time, Continuity, and Change
- Individuals, Groups, and Institutions

Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>



