

Sample 8th Grade Social Studies Unit

Unit Title: The American Revolution- was it justified?

Grade Level/Course: Grade 8 US History

Approximate length of unit: 4 weeks (including summative assessment)

Unit Summary: In this unit, students analyze how events and laws in 1770s America were interpreted differently by colonists based on their economic status, geographic location and attitude toward political change.

Stage 1- Desired Results

Guiding Principles:

Standard A: A clear and effective communicator who understands the attributes and techniques that positively impact constructing and conveying meaning for a variety of purposes and through a variety of modes

Graduation Standards:

Standard 1 Applications of social studies processes, knowledge and skills: Collaboratively and independently research, present, and defend discipline-based processes and knowledge from civics/government, economics, geography and history in authentic contexts

Standard 6 History: Apply and demonstrate knowledge of major eras, enduring themes, turning points and historic influences to analyze the forces of continuity and change in the community, the state, the United States and the world

Primary Performance Indicators

(Essential knowledge and skills to be assessed in the summative assessment. It is what you intend to explicitly assess and teach, not what gets mentioned):

G.P. A 2: Uses evidence and logic appropriately in communication

- 3: Adjusts communication based on the audience
- 4: Uses a variety of modes of expression

S. S. Standard 1/E: Develop and present arguments both orally and in writing, in which claims are introduced and distinguished from alternate or opposing claims and main claims are supported with logical reasoning, relevant data, and evidence using credible sources and a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented

S.S. Standard 6 B: Analyze interpretations of historical events that are based on different perspectives and evidence

S.S. Standard 6 D: Analyze the factors that influenced the perspectives of people in history and led them to interpret the same events differently

Supporting Performance Indicators

(To be assessed only in formative ways; not evaluated in the summative assessment):

G.P. B 6: Demonstrates reliability and concern for quality

S.S. Standard 1 C: Evaluate various explanations and authors' differing points of view of the same event or issue, citing specific textual evidence from primary and secondary sources to support analysis

ELA Standard 7 B: Operate effectively in a group to promote a civil exchange of ideas that probes reasoning and evidence.

C: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives

Economics D: Compare different economic systems....explain the relationship between the region's economic system and its government, and the resulting costs and benefits

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| Understandings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will understand that events in history are rarely, if ever, interpreted in the same way by people at the time; similarities and differences in perspectives often depend upon social/economic status, geographic location and connection to authority. • The work of a historian involves analyzing people's motives and perspectives to understand the significance of historical events. | Essential Question(s): Were the colonists justified in overthrowing their government? |
| Students will know... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mercantilism as economic system • Reasons for settlement of English colonies • Definitions of radical, moderate, conservative • Costs/benefits for England having colonies/ costs/benefits for colonists being part of England • Proclamation of 1763 • Quartering Act • Boston Massacre • Stamp Act • Intolerable Act • Terms- Persuasive Essay: Claim, counterargument, Debate- Presentation, Rebuttal | Students will be able to ... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how differing motives, interests, beliefs, hopes and fears influence peoples' perspectives • Highlight & use evidence from informational text to support analysis, reflection and research; • Summarize argument in single sentence • Support argument with logical reasoning & accurate data/evidence that demonstrate understanding of topic • Analyze multiple interpretations of a historical or current event • Differentiate between historical fact and interpretation • Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources |

Stage 2- Evidence of Student Learning
Assessment Design

Assessment Criteria:

- The scoring guide or rubric should be aligned to the performance indicators clarifying the criteria for meeting proficiency.
- Identify the criteria at "meeting proficiency" first. Include student-friendly language.
- Consider developing a rubric identifying what it will look like for a student to exceed, partially meet, and not meet the indicators.
- Consider how you may have students provide input.

Students should have opportunities to view exemplars (i.e. What does "meets" look like using prior student work samples?)

| Scoring Criteria (Rubric) | | | | |
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| Indicator | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| G.P. A2: Uses evidence and logic appropriately in communication | I can state or list relevant ideas or facts. | I can express my ideas and present some evidence to support them. | I can explain ideas logically and use evidence to support them. | I can cite specific evidence and synthesize ideas logically. |
| G.P. A3: Adjusts communication based on the audience | I can identify the audience for my work. | I can recognize different audiences and think about their needs. | I can differentiate my tone, level of complexity, and voice based on audience. | I can assess the audience for my work and adapt my communication style to match their needs. |
| G.P. A4: Uses a | I can state my ideas. | I can show what I | I can express myself | I can express myself |

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| variety of modes of expression | | mean in more than one way | in a variety of ways | in a variety of sophisticated or subtle ways |
| S. S. Standard 1/E: Develop and present arguments both orally and in writing, in which claims are introduced and distinguished from alternate or opposing claims and main claims are supported with logical reasoning, relevant data, and evidence using credible sources and a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented | I can tell the difference between a fact and an argument and find evidence that supports an argument. | I can construct an argument with supporting details and identify possible counter-arguments. | I can develop and present arguments orally and in writing, support them with specific evidence, draw logical conclusions from the evidence, and refute opposing claims to my argument. | I can argue a position orally and in writing by select the most convincing, credible evidence to support it, while discrediting opposing viewpoints. |
| S.S.Standard 6 B: Use evidence to analyze interpretations of historical events based on different perspectives | I understand that an historical event might be interpreted differently based on a person's point of view at the time. | I can contrast different points of view of an historical event, citing general evidence to support my point. | I can compare and contrast interpretations of historical events from different points of view, using specific evidence to support my point. | I can critique different points of view regarding an historical event, using specific, convincing evidence to support my point. |
| Standard 6 D: Analyze the factors that influenced the perspectives of people in history & led them to interpret the same events differently | I can identify factors that influenced people's points of view about historical events. | I can compare and contrast different factors that influenced people's points of view about historical events. | I can analyze how people's experiences, background, and perspectives lead them to interpret events differently. | I can determine the relative importance of various factors in influencing people's points of view about historical events. |

| Indicator | I Can... | Need to Know... |
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| G.P. A2: Uses evidence and logic appropriately in communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can use evidence (examples, details, data, etc.) to support my ideas I can present my ideas logically | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools of writing organization (main ideas, supporting details, conclusions, etc.) Strategies to see if info is credible/reliable Research skills (finding, verifying and citing sources; skimming, etc.) |
| G.P. A3: Adjusts communication based on the audience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can identify who my audience is I can adjust my tone, level of | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocabulary: tone, voice, audience Oral presentation skills |

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| | complexity, and voice to match the needs of my audience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools of writing organization |
| G.P. A4: Uses a variety of modes of expression | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can express myself in a variety of ways | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graphic organizers or non-lingual representations of ideas Proficiency with charts, graphs, and other means of data presentation Re-phrasing Synonyms, figurative expressions |
| S. S. Standard 1/E: Develop and present arguments both orally and in writing, in which claims are introduced and distinguished from alternate or opposing claims and main claims are supported with logical reasoning, relevant data, and evidence using credible sources and a concluding statement that follows from and supports the argument presented | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can develop and present oral and written arguments I can introduce claims or points of argument and support them with data, logical reasoning, and evidence I can identify opposing claims to my argument and counter them I can prepare concluding statements to support a more detailed argument | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tools of writing organization Persuasive techniques Public speaking skills and strategies Research skills including ways of determining if information sources are credible Data analysis |
| S.S.Standard 6 B: Analyze interpretations of historical events that are based on different perspectives and evidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can analyze how various perspectives on historical events lead to different interpretations of those events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary vs. secondary source materials Fact vs. opinion Compare and contrast Tools to determine credibility of sources |
| Standard 6 D: Analyze the factors that influenced the perspectives of people in history and led them to interpret the same events differently | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I can understand how people's experiences, background, and perspectives lead them to interpret events differently | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary vs. secondary source materials Fact vs. opinion Compare and contrast |

Summative assessment

- Evaluates student progress in achieving the primary performance indicators;
- Addresses the essential question(s) in a thoughtful manner;
- Integrates the identified Guiding Principle(s) in the demonstration of the content performance indicators;
- Aligns to the expected depth of knowledge identified in the primary performance indicators;
- Provide differentiated entry points for students to demonstrate the performance indicators.

Students will assume the roles of historical figures and participate in a 1776 colonial town meeting at which they will debate whether to declare independence from Great Britain. Loyalists and Patriots will try to persuade Neutralists to join their side; Neutralists will question the Loyalists and Patriots on their arguments and use/interpretation of evidence and then vote each "round" on which side has the most compelling arguments and rebuttals. All students will use strategic thinking to cite evidence, develop logical arguments and justify their own conclusions or critique conclusions others have drawn. Students who are proficient are able to think

strategically and make logical inferences about the perspective the historical person they are role-playing would have had on the events and key laws of 1770s America.

Students will prepare the following materials to use in their town meeting:

- Written speech from perspective of historical person who the student is role-playing (SS 1/E; SS 6 E, GP A.2, A.3)
- Create a visual (poster, google site, twitter feed, etc.) that demonstrates the point of view of character (SS 6/B; GP A.4)
- Nameplate for historical character with “quote” summarizing character’s perspective on independence from Great Britain (GP A.4; SS 6.B)

During the town meeting, students will:

- Present the speech they have prepared and participate in the development of a rebuttal or counterargument (G P A.2; A.3; A.4)

Entry-level Assessments *(A pre-assessment that is focused on what students need to know upon successfully learning the knowledge and skills identified in the performance indicators):*

Students are pre-assessed to determine their strengths, weaknesses, understandings, and misconceptions in order to inform instruction. It will be important to:

- Include questions related to each of the primary performance indicators
- Chunk the questions or activities in groupings that relate to each performance indicator so that data will clearly indicate knowledge or gaps in knowledge per indicator
- Include simple to complex; and concrete to abstract
- Recall facts and ask open-ended questions to elicit more information

1. PRO/CON: Should Snowden get a freedom medal or jail time?

(Using <https://newsela.com/articles/snowden-procon/id/2410/> assess strategic reading of informational texts; using evidence; writing arguments and recognizing counterarguments; elements of oral debate)

- Start with a mini-lecture and class discussion to give context about Edward Snowden and his decision to leak information
- Students read Newsela pro/con article
- Students complete a graphic organizer of their argument, including main idea, evidence, counter-arguments, and conclusion
- Introduce the format of debate
- Class debate on the issue
- Debrief/ written reflection: What arguments made by classmates in the spectrum activity did you think were effective? What kinds of persuasive techniques were used by your peers in the activity?

2. List, Group, Label (pre-assess content knowledge)

This is a brainstorming and categorizing activity that requires students to use their background knowledge. The teacher asks students to brainstorm words associated with the American Revolution- these can be events, laws, people, or descriptive words.

1. Each student individually brainstorms words or ideas they associate with the American Revolution. Students are asked to brainstorm at least seven words/ideas.
2. Students then work in small groups, sharing their lists. As students begin to work on combining the lists in their small group, they are asked to sort the words by perspective—those that view the Revolution positively, negatively, or neutrally.
3. Students generate questions or prediction statements related to what they think they will learn in the unit.
4. Debrief questions: 1) To what extent was there a balance of perspectives in your words/ideas? 2) What influences you to agree or disagree with a perspective on history or current events? 3) What can we do to consider multiple perspectives during our investigation of the American Revolution?

Stage 3: Instructional Design

Entry Event or Hook:

- Design an engaging, entry-level event that allows students to become interested in the content. This is the hook to the unit.
- The event should encourage students to access prior knowledge.
- This is an appropriate time to also share student work exemplars demonstrating an outcome of the unit.

An entry-level assessment occurs within this event or immediately after the event.

Show students without comment the first of two political cartoons from 1770s. It depicts a group of colonists pulling down a statue of King George III (supports the patriots' perspective). Teacher tells students that this is a primary source document and that they will be asked questions historians ask in understanding the significance of primary source documents: "What do you see?" "From whose point of view is this cartoon from?" "What's my evidence for my analysis?" The second cartoon shows a group of colonists attacking a tax collector, tar and feathering him, as well as pouring tea down his throat (British perspective)- the teacher asks the same questions. Then show the cartoons side by side- the different points of view between the cartoons is clear. Teacher poses questions- why would people have different points of view about the colonists rebelling against Britain? What are some of the reasons a colonist might support the king? Or support rebellion? Class continues with the pre-assessments described above.

Provide a skeleton overview of lessons in the unit

Based on your entry-level assessment data, a teacher may adjust the sequence, pacing, and student grouping.

| Daily Learning Target | Formative Assessment | Learning Experience(s) |
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| I can explain the reasons for the settlement of various English colonies (2 days) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation checklist: 1) "headline statement" 2) examples to support headline, 3) explanation of important dates/events in colony 4) students define terms, use clear voice, maintain eye contact • Complete Venn diagram with partner comparing two colonies (done beginning of class after presentations) | Day 1: Each small group researches using textbook, and supplied internet resources the settlement of one colony. Prepares short presentation Day 2: Presentations. Students complete matrix graphic organizer |
| I can define mercantilism and describe how it could be viewed as a benefit to colonists and as a cost to colonists (1 day) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role play cards (farmer, shipbuilder, ship owner, merchant, etc.) | In class reading & note-taking using note-taking template |
| I can analyze the causes and | Each day: 1) take one event from | Using textbook and in groups of 3, |

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| consequences of laws and events in the 1770's and infer different viewpoints (3 days) | the chart, and do mini-debate with whole class. 2) Pair groups and have them pick another event to debate by dividing group into 2 patriots, 2 loyalists and 2 neutralists. | students complete action-reaction chart defining events and inferring perspective of loyalist & patriot on each event/law |
| I can compare & contrast the political cartoon of the Boston Massacre with eyewitness accounts of the event (2 days) | Read 2 paragraph explanation of Boston Massacre in textbook- Is this a good summary, why/why not? | Students given cartoon and asked to list all the things they notice, explain what might be meaning of cartoon. Read eyewitness account- what's different? |
| I can correctly apply the terms "radical," "moderate" "conservative" to make a generalization about a person's political viewpoint (1 day) | Spectrum activity- "who would be likely to say...." students respond to statement by moving to spot in room labeled "radical", "moderate" "conservative" | Mini-lecture on terms with examples Spectrum activity (see formative assessment box) Give each student role for debate |
| I can adjust the level of complexity and tone of a text to meet the needs of my audience. (3 days) | Jigsaw activity where groups share their re-written texts to groups that haven't read them yet to see if they can paraphrase the main ideas of the acts. | Working in groups, summarize or re-write the texts of the Quarter Act, Stamp Act, or one of the Intolerable Acts in modern, simple English. |
| I understand the factual information I have about my character and I can infer their answer to the unit's essential question (1 day) | Create nameplate for character with "quote" summarizing his/her point of view about separation from England | Introduce your character to class Students in patriot, loyalist and neutralist groups- what event or issue would each person on your team be most concerned with, create chart |
| I can work with others to share ideas and develop arguments /questions for our team (1 day) | Group task checklist and student identified "what are my next steps" list | Use action-reaction chart from previous class and teacher created "group task checklist" to develop team arguments/questions |
| I can create an argument based on a claim and supporting evidence (2 days) | Conference individually with students on thesis statement/ support for argument (graphic organizer) | Mini-lesson on claim/ evidence using John Adams' speech in Boston Massacre trial. Demonstrate how to use persuasive essay/speech graphic organizer. Work time |
| I can create a political cartoon/poster which supports my argument (1.5 days) | Rough draft of cartoon- shared with teacher/peers for feedback | Mini-lesson on using current political cartoons: exaggeration, caricature, symbolism. Meet with team to share ideas, individual work time |
| I know my role in the debate and can support others on my team. | Self-reflection- what do you see as your strengths in terms of the | Practice speech and get feedback from partner on team. Team |

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| (1 day) | debate, what will be challenging for you? | meets to create schedule of arguments and who will rebut arguments. Brainstorm list of potential argument and evidence from opposing sides. |
| Debate begins- summative assessment | | |

Stage 4 – Resources and Reflection

Links to political cartoons and eyewitness accounts of Boston Massacre:

- [Boston Massacre curriculum with political cartoons](#)
- [Library of Congress resources](#)
- [Library of Congress collection of political cartoons](#)
- [eyewitness accounts of Boston Massacre](#)

Current political cartoon website:

- <http://nieonline.com/aaec/cftc.cfm>

Links to Quartering Act, Stamp Act, Intolerable Acts, etc.:

- <http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/related/intolerable.htm>

Reflection – Student written reflection on the debate, the effectiveness of their presentations and visuals, and their learning throughout the unit