

**Defying British Rule:
Women's Contributions to The American Revolution**

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Description:

Women played crucial roles in the American Revolution, as well as other major historical events. However, women are often not included in the narratives of America's past. This lesson is designed to enrich students' understanding of the American Revolution, build on prior knowledge, allow for practice using historical thinking skills, promote creativity, improve writing skills, and incorporate technology. Students will investigate women's roles in the American Revolution while practicing historical thinking skills and will lead students to understand the lengths women would go to fighting for what they believed in.

Short Description: Women played crucial roles in the American Revolution. Students will investigate these roles while practicing historical thinking skills and citing evidence to support their argument.

Grade level: 4th-5th

Time: 2-3 class periods

Objective:

Students will use primary and secondary sources to recognize how women served an important role during the American Revolution. They will use text evidence to identify and understand how women made a significant impact during this important era.

Prerequisites:

It is expected that students have an awareness of women in the 18th century and that women were subject to different socio-economic and cultural expectations than men in the 18th century. Students should also know the definition of *spy*.

Materials:

Penelope Barker biography: <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/penelope-barker>

Revolutionary Spies—Women Spies of the American Revolution:
<https://www.womenshistory.org/articles/revolutionary-spies>

Procedures:

1. Share the picture of *Mrs. Penelope Barker, President of the Edenton Tea-Party of 1774* (<https://www.womenshistory.org/media/119>) on the board/screen, for two-three seconds and then take it away. Ask the students to discuss with their partner what they saw. Share the

picture again, but this time have the students create an independent list of five things they observed. Repeat once more and have the students list five more things they observed. This method is leading the students to closely observe the picture. Guide the students in a class discussion on when, where, and why this picture may have been created. Any answers should be accepted, as long as the students support their answer with visual evidence.

2. Read aloud the passage and guide the students' comprehension from the same webpage (<https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/penelope-barker>). Model close reading (focusing on the information given in the text by reading the text more than once) by returning to the text to model creating a wanted poster. Also, share and discuss the assessment rubric with the students and make sure they are aware of what is required on the Wanted Poster:
 - name of woman, with correct spelling;
 - the woman's role in the American Revolution;
 - picture of the woman (they may use the one from the website, or draw one);
 - students should determine the amount of the reward.
3. Once you have modeled the process, give the students a print out from the NWHM website or give them the link so they can read it independently or with a partner:
<https://www.womenshistory.org/articles/revolutionary-spies>. After they read the page once, assign each pair one of the women discussed in the article: Ann Bates, Lydia Barrington Darragh, or Anna Smith Strong. They will practice close reading by rereading the page to complete a wanted poster or portrait with 3-4 sentence caption, using the given assessment rubric.
**For Anna Smith Strong, the students can create a drawing that they think would look like her, based on the era.
4. Once the students have completed their posters and portraits, hang them so the students can do a gallery walk.
5. After the gallery walk, the students will use the historical thinking skill corroborating. Ask the students to share with a partner anything that that they believe is contradictory. Then they will share what they see or read that is the same between the three women. Discuss that this process is corroborating.

Homework

Have students explain and discuss women's contributions to the American Revolution to their parents using their wanted poster or portrait. Also, have them come back to class with one unanswered question about women of this era.

Assessment

As a formative assessment, students will have a choice of creating a wanted poster or a portrait, using specific text evidence and visual evidence from the lesson. Their Wanted Poster must feature and discuss a woman who was not discussed in the class activity.

Wanted poster must include:

- Woman's face (actual primary source, drawing, or painting—drawing or painting must show effort and include visual evidence from primary source)
- Woman's complete name, spelled properly
- Woman's role in the American Revolution, including text evidence, with specific details (include this in why she is "wanted")
- Amount of the reward

Portrait must include:

- Woman's face (actual primary source, drawing, or painting—drawing or painting must show effort and include visual evidence from primary source)
- A 3-4 sentence caption including: woman's complete name, spelled properly, and the woman's role in the American Revolution, including text evidence, with specific details

Future Research/Additional Resources:

- <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/barker-penelope>
- <http://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/edenton-tea-party/>
- <http://www.womenhistoryblog.com/2011/07/ann-bates.html>
- <https://www.womenshistory.org/education-resources/biographies/lydia-darragh>
- *Women of the American Revolution, Lost Voices of America's First Generation*, by Dr. Roger Smith (Link to purchase: <http://www.colonialra.com/>)

Standards: (Florida SS standards and Common Core)

- SS.4.A.1.1 Analyze primary and secondary resources to identify significant individuals and events throughout Florida history.
- SS.4.A.6.3 Describe the contributions of significant individuals to Florida.
- SS.5.A.1.1 Use primary and secondary sources to understand history.
- SS.5.C.2.5 Identify ways good citizens go beyond basic civic and political responsibilities to improve government and society
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.3](#)
Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.7](#)
Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.9](#)
Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.1](#)
Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.2](#)
Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.
- [CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.3](#)
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.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.7](#)
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.ELA-Literacy.RI.5.9](#)
Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.