

# P.Cert.The American Revolution

Content Area: **Social Studies**  
Course(s):  
Time Period: **June**  
Length: **6-8 Weeks**  
Status: **Published**

## Unit Overview

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Students analyze how the American colonies defeated Great Britain in the American Revolution. In the Preview, students examine how their emotions are related to their personal connection to an event. In an Experiential Exercise, students engage in a tug-of-war that demonstrates factors that helped the American colonies win the American Revolution. Then students take notes on such factors as the challenge Great Britain faced in fighting so far from home and the support the colonies received from European allies. In Reading Further, students identify the roles that women, slaves, and American Indians played in the war. In the Processing activity, students design a historical marker to commemorate the factors they have identified that helped colonists win the war.

Objectives

Social Studies

- Make connections between a tug-of-war game and the events of the American Revolution.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the American and British forces in the American Revolution.
- Identify some of the roles of women in the American Revolution.
- Depict ways in which the American Revolution affected slaves and American Indians.

## Enduring Understandings

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The Revolutionary War changed life forever in the colonies.

The war became necessary when people in the colonies could no longer live under British rule.

## Essential Questions

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What circumstances led up to the Revolutionary War?

How did the war affect life in the colonies?

## **Instructional Strategies & Learning Activities**

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1 Connecting to Prior Knowledge: Have students think about how a personal connection increases their interest in an event.

- Have students suppose that they or a member of their family were to win a big prize, such as a lottery. Ask: How would you feel? In what way would your reactions change if the winner were someone in your class or your town? Would your feelings be different if the winner were someone from another town or another state? Point out that when an event involves you or someone you know, your feelings may be more intense than they are when the event involves a stranger from an unfamiliar place.
- Have students open their Interactive Student Notebooks to the Preview. Introduce the spectrum and the premise. Have students choose their reaction to each situation. Survey the results by having students raise their hands to indicate which number they chose for each case. Discuss why the degree of personal involvement can change the intensity of someone's interest in an event.

2 Building Background Knowledge: Tell students that in this lesson, they will learn about the ways in which a weaker group, the colonial Patriots, was able to use certain advantages to defeat a much stronger opponent, Great Britain. Review the ways in which the Patriots had already tried to influence British actions through protests, boycotts, and diplomacy. Then tell students that they will be learning how, once open war began, the new Continental army and navy could overcome the powerful and experienced British troops and warships.

- Have students read Section 1 in the Student Text.
- In the presentation project: American Revolution: Unequal Tug-of-War. Ask these questions: What do you see here? What are these people doing? What do you think will be the outcome? Tell students that the drawing represents the relationship between the American colonies and Great Britain at the start of the American Revolution. The blue team (colonists) is making a determined effort to defeat the red team (British troops) in a tug-of-war (the American Revolution). Explain that students will use this graphic organizer to learn about factors that allowed the American colonies to win the war.

3 Developing Vocabulary: Introduce key social studies terms—revolution, strategy, volunteer, enlist, mercenary, tactic, turning point, treaty, and home front.

- Discuss each term before beginning the activity, using methods described in Solutions for Effective Instruction.
- Review each term again with students as it appears in the activity reading, and encourage them to use it in their writing.

### **Experiential Exercise**

Suggested time: 45 minutes: Steps 1-10; 45 minutes: Step 11

#### **Phase 1: Making Connections to History Through a Game**

1 Tell students that they will make connections between a game of tug-of-war and the events of the American Revolution. Explain that they will participate as team members in the game.

2 Choose a suitable place for the tug-of-war, and then make a safety announcement. Take students to a location in or around the school, such as a playground, field, gymnasium, or an auditorium, where there is ample room to safely play tug-of-war on a nonabrasive surface. Give those students who are not comfortable playing tug-of-war the option of simply observing. Make the safety announcement. Tell students now, and at every rule change, not to wrap the rope around any parts of their bodies. Before the actual tug-of-war begins, check the rope to make sure no students have done so.

3 Arrange students into three teams for the tug-of-war.

- Red team: Place the tallest and strongest students on this team. The Red team should also have two or three

more students than either the White team or the Blue team.

- Blue team: Place the smallest students on this team. The Blue team should have the same number of students as the White team.

- White team: Place students of medium height and build on this team.

4 Have students take their starting positions. Have the Red and the Blue teams line up along the rope on their respective sides. Have the White team sit nearby. Tell students that they are now ready to begin. Expect the Red team to be excited and the Blue team to be discouraged. Ask members of the White team: Who do you think will win? Why?

5 Make the first rule change. Just as the Red and the Blue teams get ready to pull on the rope, pause dramatically and say, “I just remembered one slight rule change.”

- Announce that the Blue team will receive a special prize, such as extra free time or a pass to skip a homework

assignment, if they win. (Note: This is intended to model the colonists’ greater motivation to win the American

Revolution against the British. This analogy and the analogies outlined in following Notes should not be revealed to students until the end of Step 10.) Expect that the Red team will think that this is unfair but will still

be confident about winning.

- Choose one member of the Blue team and announce that he or she will not receive a prize if his or her team wins. (Note: This is intended to model how some American colonists, such as Loyalists and slaves, did not benefit from an American victory.) Expect this student, and some others, to complain about this unfair treatment. In a matter-of-fact tone, tell the class that you have made your decision and it is final.

- Tell the White team that they must stand and cheer for the Blue team. (Note: This is intended to model the support that American colonies received from their European allies.) Ask the White team: Who do you think will

win? Why?

6 Make the second rule change. When the teams are again ready to pull, pause dramatically and say, “I just remembered another slight rule change.” Then announce that half of the Red team must stand several yards away from the rest of its team. Explain that these members will run to the rope once the game begins. (Note: This is intended to model the challenge that Great Britain faced in supplying its troops from across the Atlantic

Ocean.) Expect Red team members to be upset, and Blue team members to be more hopeful about their chances.

Ask the White team: Who do you think will win? Why?

7 Make the third rule change. When the teams are ready again, pause dramatically and say, “Wait! There’s another rule change.” Then tie the strip of cloth to the middle of the rope. Announce that the Red team must pull

this flag at least 20 feet into its territory to win the tug-of-war. Explain that the Blue team will win if it prevents

the Red team from doing so within 30 seconds. (Note: This is intended to model Great Britain’s offensive war strategy to retake control of its colonies in America, as opposed to the American colonies’ defensive strategy to

hold off the British.) Expect Red team members to get increasingly upset, and Blue team members to show more confidence. Ask the White team: Who do you think will win? Why?

8 Make the fourth rule change. When the teams are again ready to pull, pause dramatically and say, “There is one final rule change.” Then announce that the White team will be allowed to help the Blue team at some point

in the game. Tell students that you will tell the White team when to join the Blue team. (Note: This is intended to model France’s entry into the American Revolution, which provided the American colonists with more military power on land and sea.) Expect the Red team to be upset, and the Blue team to become more confident.

Ask the white team: Who do you think will win? Why?

9 Monitor the tug-of-war. Finally, allow the Blue and Red teams to engage in the tug-of-war. The Blue team may have an initial surge, but when all the Red team members arrive at the rope, the Red team should surge.

As soon as the Red team starts to pull the flag toward its side, tell the White team to join the Blue team. The Blue and White teams should take control and prevent the Red team from pulling the flag the required distance. (Note: Remind students to drop the rope if the opposition overwhelms their team so they do not suffer rope burns.)

10 Debrief the game with students. After the Red team has lost the tug-of-war, return with students to the classroom. Then discuss the following questions:

- Red team: How did you feel at the beginning of the game?
- Blue team: How did you feel at the beginning of the game?
- White team: Who did you think would win the game at first? Why?
- Red team: How did you feel as the rules changed? Why?
- Blue team: How did you feel as the rules changed? Why?
- White team: As the rules changed, who did you think would win? Why?
- All teams: What factors allowed the Blue team to win?
- All teams: In what ways might this tug-of-war represent what happened when the American colonies fought the British in the American Revolution?

Phase 2: Identifying the Strengths and Weaknesses of the American and the British Forces in the American Revolution

11 Have students turn to the Reading Notes in their Interactive Student Notebooks. Tell them to read and take notes on Sections 2 through 8 in the Student Text. (Note: You may want to have students work in pairs to complete their Reading Notes.) Use Guide to Reading Notes to evaluate their responses.

Reading Further: The Revolution's Home Front

Suggested time: 35 minutes

1 In the presentation project: Women and the American Revolution. Ask the following visual discovery questions to help students analyze the images carefully and draw some conclusions about the ways in which women contributed to the war effort:

- Who do you see in each image?
- What do you think the women are doing?
- Why might this be important?
- In what ways are the two scenes different from each other? What does this tell you about the roles of women during the war?

2 Explain that these scenes show two roles that women played to help win the war. Ask: What other jobs may women have taken on during the war? Which of these jobs were most likely already being done by women

of that time? Which were tasks that women had to take on because the men were off fighting the British?

3 Have students read the Reading Further in the Student Text.

4 Discuss the ways in which the war affected African Americans and American Indians. Ask: What opportunities and dangers did the war bring to each of these groups? Do you think that each group was better off or worse off after the war?

5 Have students complete Reading Further in their Interactive Student Notebooks. First, they should complete the word web about women in the war. Then, students should draw and caption a picture that shows what either African Americans or American Indians may have experienced during the American Revolution.

Processing

Suggested time: 25 minutes

1 Have students read the Summary section in the Student Text to review information for this task.

2 Have students create a historical marker to commemorate the colonists' victory in the American Revolution. Have students open their Interactive Student Notebooks to the Processing and complete the page

## **Integration of 21st Century Themes and Career Exploration**

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Students need to problem solve and work collaboratively.

CRP.K-12.CRP2	Apply appropriate academic and technical skills.
CRP.K-12.CRP4	Communicate clearly and effectively and with reason.
CRP.K-12.CRP7	Employ valid and reliable research strategies.
CRP.K-12.CRP1	Act as a responsible and contributing citizen and employee.

## **Technology Integration**

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Students will interact with the lesson using the Smartboard, document camera and Chromebooks.

## **Interdisciplinary Connections**

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Language Arts

- Take part in an orchestrated tug-of-war. (speaking and listening)
- Illustrate and explain experiences of slaves or American Indians. (writing)

TECH.8.1.5	Educational Technology: All students will use digital tools to access, manage, evaluate, and synthesize information in order to solve problems individually and collaborate and to create and communicate knowledge.
TECH.8.1.5.A	Technology Operations and Concepts: Students demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations.
TECH.8.1.5.D.CS2	Demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning
TECH.8.1.5.D.3	Demonstrate an understanding of the need to practice cyber safety, cyber security, and cyber ethics when using technologies and social media.
TECH.8.1.5.D.CS1	Advocate and practice safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.

## **Differentiation**

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- Understand that gifted students, just like all students, come to school to learn and be challenged.
- Pre-assess your students. Find out their areas of strength as well as those areas you may need to address before students move on.
- Consider grouping gifted students together for at least part of the school day.
- Plan for differentiation. Consider pre-assessments, extension activities, and compacting the curriculum.
- Use phrases like "You've shown you don't need more practice" or "You need more practice" instead of words like "qualify" or "eligible" when referring to extension work.
- Encourage high-ability students to take on challenges. Because they're often used to getting good grades, gifted students may be risk averse.

• **Definitions of Differentiation Components:**

- Content – the specific information that is to be taught in the lesson/unit/course of instruction.
- Process – how the student will acquire the content information.
- Product – how the student will demonstrate understanding of the content.
- Learning Environment – the environment where learning is taking place including physical location and/or student grouping

**Differentiation occurring in this unit:**

Selected grouping

Graphic organizers

Enrichment: Give more than required examples

Discussion

**Modifications & Accommodations**

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IEP and 504 accommodations will be utilized.

Selected groups

**Benchmark Assessments**

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Teacher Observation

Teacher made tests

**Formative Assessments**

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Discussion

Worksheets

Presentations

## **Summative Assessments**

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Final Project

Final Chapter test

## **Instructional Materials**

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See materials embedded in the lesson plans above.

## **Standards**

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| SOC.6.1.8.D.3.e | Examine the roles and perspectives of various socioeconomic groups (e.g., rural farmers, urban craftsmen, northern merchants, and southern planters), African Americans, Native Americans, and women during the American Revolution, and determine how these groups were impacted by the war. |
| SOC.6.1.8.D.3.d | Analyze how prominent individuals and other nations contributed to the causes, execution, and outcomes of the American Revolution.  |
| SOC.6.1.8.B.3.d | Explain why New Jersey's location played an integral role in the American Revolution.   |