

# COMMON CORE CURRICULUM MAPS

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS


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## Revolutionaries from the Past

This eight-week unit invites students to read poems, historical fiction, and poetry from America's past—including, but limited to, the time of the American Revolution.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION



What life lessons can we learn from revolutionaries in fiction and nonfiction?

[Standards Checklist](#)

### OVERVIEW

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While reading about America's past, not only do students highlight key information and supporting details of people and events in order to understand the chronology of events, but they spend time comparing and contrasting first- and third-person narratives. Students will read and discuss poetry, such as "Concord Hymn" by Ralph Waldo Emerson, and read speeches by revolutionaries, such as those given by Patrick Henry and Sojourner Truth. Students read informational text and study the author Jean Fritz, who wrote books about the American Revolution, such as *Can't You Make Them Behave, King George?* After learning about revolutionary people of the past, students write their own speech outlining their opinion on a current event, possibly taking a "revolutionary" position. This unit ends with a class discussion and essay response to the essential question.

### FOCUS STANDARDS

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These Focus Standards have been selected for the unit from the Common Core State Standards.

- **RL.4.6:** Compare and contrast the point of view from which different stories are narrated, including the difference between first- and third-person narrations.
- **RI.4.5:** Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
- **RI.4.6:** Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.
- **W.4.1:** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- **SL.4.3:** Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.
- **L.4.4:** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 4 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

[Common Core State Standards, ELA](#) (1.5 MB)

### SUGGESTED STUDENT OBJECTIVES

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- Read and discuss a variety of fiction and nonfiction texts about revolutionaries from America's past.
- Describe the differences between firsthand and secondhand accounts in informational text.
- Compare and contrast first- and third-person narrations.
- Describe the chronology of events from early American history.
- Discuss and interpret the literal and figurative meaning of idioms.

- Identify the reasons Patrick Henry and Sojourner Truth respectively provide to support their positions in various speeches.
- Write a variety of responses to stories and poems.
- Recite poetry and plays for classmates.
- Write opinion pieces about American revolutionaries, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
- Participate in group discussions about revolutionaries from America's past.

## SUGGESTED WORKS

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(E) indicates a CCSS exemplar text; (EA) indicates a text from a writer with other works identified as exemplars.

### LITERARY TEXTS

#### Stories (Historical Fiction)

- *John Henry: An American Legend* (Ezra Jack Keats)
- *Navajo Long Walk* (The Council for Indian Education) (Nancy Armstrong and Paulette Livers Lambert)
- *Trail of Tears* (Step-Into-Reading, Step 5) (Joseph Bruchac)
- *Sleds on Boston Common: A Story from the American Revolution* (Louise Borden and Robert Andrew Parker)
- *The Secret of Sarah Revere* (Ann Rinaldi)
- *A Ride into Morning: The Story of Tempe Wick* (Ann Rinaldi)
- *Heroes of the Revolution* (David A. Adler and Donald A. Smith)
- *War Comes to Willy Freeman* (Arabus Family Saga) (James and Christopher Collier)
- *Yankee Doodle* (Gary Chalk)
- *O, Say Can You See? America's Symbols, Landmarks, And Important Words* (Sheila Keenan and Ann Boyajian)
- *The Madcap Mystery of the Missing Liberty Bell* (Real Kids, Real Places) (Carole Marsh) (advanced)
- *The Mystery on the Freedom Trail* (Real Kids, Real Places) (Carole Marsh)

#### Stories (Read Aloud/Class Discussion)

- *Poor Richard's Almanac* (Benjamin Franklin)

#### Speeches

- "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death" (March 23, 1775) (Patrick Henry)
- "Ain't I a Woman?" (Women's Convention, Akron Ohio, May 29, 1851) (Sojourner Truth)
- "On a Women's Right to Vote" (1873) (Susan B. Anthony)

#### Poems

- "Concord Hymn" (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- "George Washington" (Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benet)
- "A Tragic Story" (William Makepeace Thackeray)
- "A Nation's Strength" (Ralph Waldo Emerson)
- "The Flag" (author unknown; scroll down on this page to find it)

### INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

#### Informational Text

- *A is for America* (Devin Scillian and Pam Carroll)
- *If You Lived At The Time Of The American Revolution* (Kay Moore and Daniel O'Leary)
- *The Revolutionary War* (Scholastic, True Books: American History) (Brendan January)
- *Crispus Attucks: Black Leader of Colonial Patriots* (Childhood of Famous Americans) (Dharathula H. Millender and Gary Morrow)
- *Molly Pitcher: Young Patriot* (Childhood of Famous Americans) (Augusta Stevenson)
- *And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?* (Jean Fritz and Margot Tomes)
- *Will You Sign Here, John Hancock?* (Jean Fritz and Trina Schart Hyman)
- *Where Was Patrick Henry on the 29th of May?* (Jean Fritz and Margot Tomes)
- *Can't You Make Them Behave, King George?* (Jean Fritz and Margot Tomes)
- *Why Don't You Get a Horse, Sam Adams?* (Jean Fritz and Trina Schart Hyman)
- *The American Revolutionaries: A History in Their Own Words 1750-1800* (Milton Meltzer) (advanced)

#### Biographies

- *Victory or Death!: Stories of the American Revolution* (Doreen Rappaport, Joan Verniero, and Greg Call)

- *Paul Revere (In Their Own Words)* (George Sullivan)
- *The Secret Soldier: The Story Of Deborah Sampson* (Scholastic Biography) (Ann McGovern, Harold Goodwin, and Katherine Thompson)
- *How Ben Franklin Stole the Lightning* (Rosalyn Schanzer)
- *Now & Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin* (Gene Barretta)
- *Susan B. Anthony: Champion of Women's Rights* (Childhood of Famous Americans Series) (Helen Albee Monsell)
- *Abigail Adams: Girl of Colonial Days* (Childhood of Famous Americans Series) (Jean Brown Wagoner)
- *Sojourner Truth: Ain't I a Woman?* (Scholastic Biography) (Patricia C. and Frederick McKissack)
- *In Their Own Words: Sojourner Truth* (Peter and Connie Roop)

## ART, MUSIC, AND MEDIA

### Media

- Rock and Revolution "[Too Late to Apologize](#)" (2010)

## SAMPLE ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

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### Literary Graphic Organizer

As a class, we will keep a chart with the questions and categories listed below of the historical fiction stories and poems we've read. As the chart is filled in, we will use the information to talk about what we learned from literature.

- Title and author
- Text structure(s) used
- Type of narration (first-person, third-person)
- Character(s) (major and minor)
- Does this character remind you of other characters? Who/why?
- What information was changed that shows you this is historical *fiction*?
- What did you learn from the major characters?
- Summary

Write your response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before each section of the class chart is filled in. (RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.5, RL.4.6, RL.4.9)

### Class Discussion

Let's compare and contrast the points of view from which these stories and poems are narrated. Which clues/key words provide information about the point of view? How are the narratives different? Look back for specific lines or paragraphs in order to find explicit details from the stories and poems read. (SL.4.1, RL.4.6)

### Poetry/Literature Response

Choose a poem or story and change the point of view from which it is written. In other words, if the story is in first person, rewrite it in third, or if the story is in third person, rewrite it in first. Alternately, choose a story to write in poetic form, or a poem to rewrite in story form. Discuss with a partner style of writing you prefer and why. (RL.4.6, W.4.4, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e, g, L.4.2a,b,c,d)

### Informational Text Graphic Organizer

As a class, we will keep a chart using the categories and questions below of information learned about historical events from the American Revolution. As we read informational texts that are from firsthand and secondhand accounts of people and events, we will talk about how the differences in point of view affect our understanding. Does the overall structure of the text (chronology, cause/effect, etc.) affect your understanding of events as they are presented? As the chart is filled in, we will use the information to talk about what we learned from nonfiction books.

- Person or event
- Where this took place
- When this took place
- What is the historical significance of this event?
- From whose point of view is this account written?
- What other memorable information do you want to remember about this person or event?
- Notes about text structure (chronology, cause/effect, etc)

Write your response on a Post-It note, on a white board, or in your journal and share it with a partner before each section of the class chart is filled in. (SL.4.3, RI.4.1, RI.4.2, RI.4.5, RI.4.6, RI.4.7, RI.4.9)

### Timeline

Following a class discussion of historical events, create a [timeline](#) (ReadWriteThink interactive) of events that shows the chronology and cause/effect relationship between them. (W.4.2a,b,c,d, W.4.4, W.4.7, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e,g,

L.4.2a,b,c,d)

### Class Discussion/Author Study

Select an author who writes nonfiction in the style of a story, such as Jean Fritz. Conduct research about him/her and why he/she chooses to write about historical topics; take notes in your journal. Share findings as a class.

(SL.4.1a,b,c,d, W.4.7)

### Class Discussion/Create a Classbook

Ben Franklin coined a number of phrases still used today, and they are found in *Poor Richard's Almanac*. Illustrate the literal and figurative meaning of two idioms that enhance understanding of the foundations of our country. What did Ben Franklin hope people would learn from these phrases? Compile these illustrations into a classbook to share (e.g., with younger students), and try to incorporate the phrases you learned into your daily writing and speaking.

(RL.4.1, SL.4.1a,b,c,d, L.4.5b)

### Speech Appreciation

Listen to your teacher read Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman?" and discuss the message. Then, look online to find Frances D. Gage's memories of listening to Sojourner Truth's speech. Compare the text of the speech with what Gage's remembers. What are the similarities and differences? Do the points of views differ? How do Gage's memories enhance your understanding of the speech? Share your answers to these questions with a partner before participating in class discussion. (RI.4.6, SL.4.3)

### Class Discussion/Letter Writing

With a partner, discuss the message of Patrick Henry's speech "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death." Then, discuss the message of his speech as a class within the context of learning about the American Revolution. Does knowing historical information change your understanding of the message? Why or why not? Then, individually, write a letter to Patrick Henry, explaining your reactions to the message of his speech. (W.4.1a,b,c,d, SL.4.1a,b,c,d, SL.4.3, SL.4.4, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e, g, L.4.2a,b,c,d)

### Speech Writing

Applying what you have learned from the speeches discussed in this unit, write your own speech expressing an opinion from the point of view of a revolutionary character. Think about the audience as well as the message when writing your speech. Be sure your opinion is supported by evidence and work with a partner to edit and strengthen your speech before presenting it to the class. (W.4.1a,b,c,d, W.4.7, SL.4.3, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e, g, L.4.2a,b,c,d)

### Dramatization

After reviewing the structural elements (e.g., casts of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions, etc.) that are unique to drama (i.e., compared to prose), add these elements to a Reader's Theater script of a historical story, such as the one found [here](#). With at least two other classmates, add at least two scenes—one before the script begins and one after the script ends—to make it a one act/three-scene play; present it as a class. (RL.4.5, W.4.4)

### Poetry Appreciation (Part 1)

Read and discuss the meaning of "The Flag" by an unknown author. How does the first-person point of view influence your appreciation of the poem? Perform the poem with a classmate. (RL.4.6, SL.4.5)

### Poetry Appreciation (Part 2)

Design and create a flag that simultaneously represents your family, your classroom, or your school. Explain the symbolism of the flag in your journal in a first-person narrative, similar to the presentation of "The Flag" (above) and share it with a classmate. Include words and phrases from the original poem, if possible. (RL.4.4, SL.4.4, W.4.1a,c,d, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e,g, L.4.2a,b,c,d)

### Opinion/Speech Writing

Revolutionaries aren't always popular during the time that they lived, but they believe in something so passionately that they are willing to "go out on a limb" to express their beliefs. Think about a current event that you believe everyone should understand. Write a speech about your thoughts and ideas, and present it to the class. You will have the opportunity to work with a partner to revise, edit, and strengthen your speech so that it can be published. Once the speech is written, you will be asked to add an audio recording of yourself reading the speech. Upload your podcast to the class webpage. (W.4.1a,b,c,d, W.4.4, W.4.5, W.4.6, W.4.7, W.4.8, SL.4.5, L.4.5a,b,c, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e,g, L.4.2a,b,c,d)

### Media Appreciation

Independently or as a class, view the video "[Too Late to Apologize](#)" (see Art, Music, and Media). The first time, we will talk about the meaning and historical significance of the words. We will view the video a second time, stopping to discuss the images used in the video and how they represent America's past in a current-day manner. Optional extension: Create or re-mix your own music video to accompany your speech (from above). (RL.4.7, RL.4.9, RI.4.7, RI.4.9, SL.4.1a,b,c,d)

### Word Study

As an individual and as a class, keep an index card file of new words learned in this unit (i.e., revolution, revolutionary, revolt, etc.) Keeping the words on index cards will allow you to use and sort the words by spelling features, root words, prefixes, and suffixes. Find root words, and discuss how the prefixes and suffixes add clues to

the meaning of the words. Consult reference materials to confirm pronunciations and clarify the meaning of the words and phrases. (Note: This will be an ongoing activity all year long.) (L.4.4a,b,c)

### Class Discussion/Reflective Essay

As a class, summarize what was learned in this unit as it relates to the essential question ("What life lessons can we learn from revolutionaries in fiction and non-fiction?"). Following the class discussion, individually write a response in your journal. Work with a partner to edit and strengthen your writing before sharing with your teacher. (W.4.9a,b, W.4.4, W.4.5, L.4.1a,b,c,d,e,g, L.4.2a,b,c,d)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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- [Slave Narratives: Constructing U.S. History Through Analyzing Primary Sources](#) (National Endowment for the Humanities) (RI.4.6)  
Note: The realities of slavery and Reconstruction hit home in poignant oral histories from the Library of Congress. In these activities, students research narratives from the Federal Writers' Project and describe the lives of former African slaves in the U.S. -- both before and after emancipation. From varied stories, students sample the breadth of individual experiences, make generalizations about the effects of slavery and Reconstruction on African Americans, and evaluate primary source documents.
- [American Colonial Life in the Late 1700s: Distant Cousins](#) (National Endowment for the Humanities) (RI.4.7)  
Note: Life in the thirteen original British colonies was very different than it is today. In this lesson, students will explore daily life and its influences in the late 1700s for two families in different colonies—Delaware and Massachusetts. Students will become historical detectives and learn to gather information from artifacts and make inferences about the lives and times they represent. They will then use what they have learned to write historical fiction in the form of friendly letters between fictitious cousins in Massachusetts and Delaware.
- [Learning About Research and Writing Using the American Revolution](#) (ReadWriteThink) (W.4.7)  
Note: Internet research can add depth to content area study, as can using the information found in various genres. This lesson combines historical research and acrostic poetry.  
Note: Most Americans think of the Fourth of July as Independence Day—but is it really the day the United States declared its independence? This lesson explores all the dates and stories associated with the Declaration of Independence, focusing on the reason there are so many different dates and signings of the document and why we celebrate the nation's birthday on July 4th rather than one of the other dates
- [Looking for the History in Historical Fiction: An Epidemic for Reading](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RI.4.9)
- Students are introduced to historical fiction and select a historical fiction novel to read from a booklist. They use a set of guiding questions to prompt critical thinking as they read. After they finish the novel, students use nonfiction books and Websites to gather facts. (Note: This idea could be used for any topic.)
- [History Comes Alive: Using Fluency and Comprehension Using Social Studies](#) (ReadWriteThink) (RI.4.5)  
Students research Franklin's life and times, focusing on his contributions to science and technology, and compile a list of differences between life in the 1700s and life today. This list shapes the dialogue as they create an original drama portraying a modern-day encounter with Franklin.
- *Spotlight On America: Extraordinary Women* (Teacher Created Resources) (Robert W. Smith). This resource is designed to introduce students in fifth through eighth grades to key events in American History. The information in this resource could easily be modified for fourth grade.
- *Readers Theatre for American History* (Anthony D. Fredericks). Beginning with copious suggestions and ideas for preparing and presenting the scripts, Fredericks provides directions for staging, using props, delivery, and post presentations. Scripts are presented in five parts and cover the land and early people of North America, the beginnings of a new nation, changes in the nineteenth century, new directions in the twentieth century, and the recent challenges of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
- In Their Own Words series (Scholastic) These biographies explain and show the difference between primary and secondary sources. Note: *In Their Own Words: Sojourner Truth* (Peter and Connie Roop) is included on the Suggested Works list.
- [The American Revolution: Lighting Freedom's Flame](#) (National Parks Service)
- [African Americans in the American Revolution](#) (Buzzle.Com)
- ["Indians in the American Revolution"](#) (Wilcomb E. Washburn, speech) (AmericanRevolution.Org)
- [Featured Author: Jean Fritz](#) (Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site)
- [Meet the Author: Jean Fritz](#) (Houghton Mifflin Reading)

## TERMINOLOGY

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- audience
- autobiography

- biography
- first-person narration
- informational text structure
- major character
- minor character
- point of view
- third-person narration
- writing style
- speech
- (review of) letter writing

## MAKING INTERDISCIPLINARY CONNECTIONS

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### This unit teaches:

- **History/geography:**
  - Causes and provocations of the American Revolution (e.g., the Boston Massacre, Boston Tea Party, Intolerable Acts, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, etc.)
  - Biographies of Revolutionaries (e.g., Crispus Attucks, Molly Pitcher, Paul Revere, Deborah Sampson, King George, John Hancock, John Henry, etc.)
  - Introduction to the Trail of Tears (e.g., involuntary relocation, Cherokee nation, Indian Removal Act, passive resistance, etc.)
  - Women's Rights advocates and legislation through history (e.g., Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth, Fourteenth Amendment, etc.)

### This unit could be extended to teach:

- **History/geography:**
  - The making of a constitutional government (e.g., the ideas behind The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, levels and functions of government, etc.)
  - Biographies (e.g., Elizabeth Freeman, Phyllis Wheatley, etc.)
  - Equal rights advocates through history (e.g., Eleanor Roosevelt, Mary McLeod Bethune, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, Suraya Pakzad, etc.)

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