

SOCIAL STUDIES

The War Starts

CHAPTER 9, Pages 77- 87

LEXINGTON AND CONCORD

Concepts and Principles

The students will consider and discuss the following:

Bravery does not mean lack of fear, but rather it means overcoming fear and persevering despite it.

Steadfastness, the grit to not give up when success is long in coming and setbacks are numerous and profound, is a strength and a virtue.

Loyalty to noble causes and to loved ones, friends, and nation is a trait essential in a great person.

Life presents us with hard choices; the right choice based on the highest principles one believes in is often not the easy or convenient choice. In such a situation it is the great person who still makes the right choice.

Subject Matter Objectives

The students will know the following:

The battle of Lexington and Concord was the opening act of the Revolutionary War, proving to us that we could win against the greater British forces.

Committees of Correspondence and alarm riders created a communications network invaluable to the Patriots as they allowed all the colonists to unite.

The American Revolutionary war was local and was personal for all involved, often dividing neighbors and even families.

Even after learning of the fighting at Lexington and Concord, many, even at the Continental Congress, hoped to remain British at that point.

Materials

Map of Boston and Lexington/Concord
Map of Colonies
Portrait of Paul Revere
Portrait of Patrick Henry
Map of Lexington and Concord
Audio of dramatic narrative "Battle Road"
Image of Battle Road

Vocabulary for Discussion

Resolve *firm determination to do something*
Repeal *cancel*
Artillery *cannons and other large guns*

NOTE:

The *Why America Is Free* book is used with the curriculum. The relevant book pages can be found at the end of this lesson plan ~

Discussion and Activities Jed in 1770 *Why America Is Free*, pages 77-79

(This part of Jed's story - Jed is a fictional character that appears intermittently throughout the Why America Is Free book - takes place right after the Townsend Acts were repealed in 1770 and before the British added new insults. Jed is very much aware that the British backed down because the colonists resisted.)

How old is Jed now? Nine in 1750, Jed is 29 in 1770. Does anyone have an uncle or aunt or parent around 29 years old?

What is his wife's name? How many children does he have? What are their names and how old are they? Do any of you have brothers or sisters the age of Patience and Michael?

One servant of his friend, the lawyer, is mentioned. *What is her name?* We cannot tell if she is an indentured servant, a free hired servant, or an enslaved person because all three lived and worked as servants in Williamsburg. Selma is a 14-year-old African American, so she might well have been an enslaved person, but many people were working fulltime by the age of 14.

Another person, Joseph, is sent to get the horse and wagon. He could be another servant, but he could also be the son, nephew, or even a law student who is working and being trained by William Baker.

How does he feel about breaking ties with England? What is the mood of the people who marched and people who watched?

According to what he and his friend said, are they completely happy with the British? Are they hopeful? Do they want to be free from England?

Patrick Henry Why America Is Free book, pages 79-80

At this point the narrative is back in the early spring of 1775. The British would not even consider repealing the Intolerable Acts until the tea is paid for and the American colonists would not consider paying for it until the Intolerable Acts are repealed. Many people on both sides are stubborn and think they have the right to be. *Have you ever been in such a stand-off with someone?* It is not just in Boston but all over the colonies that many people are furious about the Intolerable Acts. People in Boston are hungry because food can only be sneaked into the city. Many of them cannot work. Businesses are failing. They get thrown in jail if they are found out of their houses at night. The laws are so harsh and extreme that they are making many people all over the colonies who used to love England begin to feel very differently.

In Virginia, one man puts into works what many people were beginning to think. His name was Patrick Henry.

_____ • _____

Look at the painting of Patrick Henry that is included in this lesson plan. The painting shows Patrick Henry when he made his famous speech. Look at the faces of the listeners.

Do they look like they are listening and thinking about what he is saying?

Are they happy or are they hanging onto every word, thinking, perhaps upset at what they are hearing?

Do you notice that the room does not look like an American colonial room?

What does it look like to you?

The fact that the painter made up the background—the room—to make a point. He painted the room to look like the places that citizens made their own laws in ancient Rome and Greece.

Why do you think the artist did that?

He did it to make the point that like the respected Greeks and Romans, Americans had made their own laws for years and have the right to do that.

Have any of you ever heard someone who spoke so well that you were fascinated and found that what he or she said made you feel and think? Who? How did they do that?

Read and discuss Patrick Henry's speech, quoted below.

This is a man whose spoken words carried such power that those who heard him on this day never forgot the experience. His words are well worth memorizing and performing. The importance of what he said is greatest because his words summed up the thinking and feeling of many people in all the Colonies, though he made this speech to Virginia delegates only. In his speech, he fervently expressed his belief that Virginia should send armed men to the aid of Massachusetts. He led the cry of freedom.

At that time of his speech, most people still did not see themselves as declaring independence. They were fighting to regain the God-given rights of British citizens, not subjects.

Activity: Oration

(Once you are sure the children understand the setting, the meaning of the words, and the importance of this speech, talk to them briefly about the power of being able to express yourself aloud. Read the words of the speech to the students with as much expression and conviction as you imagine Patrick Henry, a gifted orator, did. Ask for volunteers to do the same.)

Activity: Memorization

(Either assign or encourage students for extra credit to memorize this part of his speech and present it as powerfully as possible.)



Gentlemen may cry peace, peace. But there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?

Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take...but for me, give me liberty or give me death!

Lexington and Concord!

Today we are going to step back in time and experience first-hand the Battle of Lexington and Concord. We are going to listen to a powerful audio that tells this amazing and important story, the story about the battle that started the American Revolution.

Remember what had been happening up until now—the Intolerable Acts were in place and Boston is suffering.... *lower the lights in the room and click on musket ball to hear an excerpt from the Battle Road audio.*



NOTE: The Why America Is Free Curriculum includes the complete audio, produced for upper elementary students, and timed to fit within one class period.

Points to discuss afterwards:

Beyond the great lessons of character – resolve, bravery, loyalty, and honesty shown by the major players on the American side, the importance was:

- Shots were fired by British soldiers at citizens in Lexington. This caused outrage all over all the colonies.
- The swift gathering of the militiamen was proof of the value of the alarm riders, minutemen, and militias, along with the amazing network that Revere, Warren and Sam Adams had developed and tightened up in the years prior to this.
- The resulting rout of the British by the American militias showed the Americans could beat the soldiers of the greatest army in the world! *This was myth-breaking!*

The two sides had moved beyond mere talk.

Fort Ticonderoga Seized Why America Is Free book, page 87

This was another early victory that gave Americans some confidence. The seizure of this outpost also provided us with artillery and a line of defense against attack from the north.

Map Skills

Where is Fort Ticonderoga and why was it important?

Using a map of the colonies, locate the Hudson River and Lake Champlain in New York.

Can you see that Lake Champlain is at the north end of the Hudson River? Do you see how long and narrow it is? Fort Ticonderoga is on the edge of the lake about halfway down its length, well north of where it flows in the Hudson River. The Hudson River for most of its length is a huge river.

Where does the Hudson River empty into the ocean? New York City

The river is like a water highway that goes almost all the way to Canada and cuts off the New England colonies.

Now look just north of Lake Champlain. Locate Montreal and the Saint Lawrence Seaway at the Canadian border. Follow the Saint Lawrence Seaway to the ocean. This was another water “highway” upon which ships could travel. Many British soldiers were in Canada.

Can you see that if the Americans did not guard the entrance to the Hudson River at Lake Champlain that the British soldiers could travel down from Canada by land and then down the Hudson by boat?

Fort Ticonderoga was located at a perfect place to guard the Hudson River.

Map Skills Extension

Using the scale of miles, estimate the length of the river from Lake Champlain to New York city. Estimate the overland distance from the Saint Lawrence Seaway straight south to Lake Champlain.

Computer Skills Extension

*To see what Fort Ticonderoga looked like in the 18th Century,
click inside the box below-*

FORT TICONDEROGA

GLOSSARY FOR CHAPTER 9

The War Starts

Note: The Glossary contains words found in the Why America Is Free book pages that are covered in Try Our Lessons

Page 77:

*rural – out in the country

*Minutemen – members of colonial militias trained and charged with the duty to be ready in a minute if needed

Citizen-soldiers – men and women who most of the time lived and worked as nonmilitary citizens but would serve in the military as needed

*repealed – cancelled

promoted – given a higher rank and entrusted with greater duties

halberd – a long pole with an axe blade mounted on the end opposite the handle that show rank and is easily seen

Page 78:

fife – small flutelike musical instrument

*capitol – building in which the government meets and laws are made

“at ease” – a military command meaning “stop standing at attention and saluting”

scanned – looked over

*artillery – cannons, and the soldiers trained to use them

bronze – a shiny dark orange-brown metal that can withstand heat and was used in cannon barrels

*volley – 1 shot fired at the same time by all the gun or cannon in a group

dismissed – told they can go

*denotes vocabulary word used in Language Arts

prestigious – most admired, ex: a street where the finest houses or businesses are located

serving girl – servant who works with a household rather than in fields or in a business

sweet biscuits – cookies

prospering – doing well

Page 79:

mother country – Great Britain

arrogant – believing one is superior to others and often therefore treating those disrespectfully

“have the team brought up” – have the team of horses or oxen and the wagon they pull brought up

delegate – representative

Second Continental Congress – meeting of representatives from all American colonies; the second one of these

Page 80:

*opposed – disagreed with, fought against

*resolutions – mutually agreed upon decisions that will require lasting determination to carry out

gale – strong, sustained strong winds, generally accompanied with rain, sleet, or snow

resounding – loud, powerful

*condemned – sentenced to a bad fate or punishment

galley slave – from ancient time; a slave who had to row the Roman ships—a horrible fate

magnificent – majestic and awesome

*dagger – short narrow double-edged knife

*incarnation – living symbol

*denotes vocabulary word used in Language Arts

Page 81:

*skirmishes – little battles

inevitable – unavoidable

*stockpile – collect in one area

dined – ate dinner

*blockade – blocking off so that no one can get in or out of an area

dispute the matter with the sword – fight: go to war

foresaw – expected

*ammunition – bullets, gunpowder, cannon balls

Page 82:

blended in – looked or behaved enough like others that he seemed like he was one of them

*drilling – practicing militia moves

village green – open fields owned by and often located in the centers of small towns for gatherings and so livestock could graze

weapons depot – place weapons are stockpiled

march on – march to

British Regulars – trained, professional, full-time British soldiers

*silversmith – someone who can make items from silver and gold

menfolk – men and older boys

powder horn – container for gunpowder made of a cow horn with a stopper

Page 83:

*resist – fight against

*disperse – scatter

*denotes vocabulary word used in Language Arts

light infantry – a group of foot soldiers who can march faster and farther than much of the army

smoke cleared – thick clouds of smoke caused by firing muskets blown away

Page 84:

column formation – in long lines of soldiers walking behind one another

significance – importance

military significance – importance to army or navy fighting or defending

*withdraw – pull back, retreat

*mission – job, a particular assignment

firing ball – shooting musket balls rather than simply firing a gun loaded only with powder

*fire – a command to shoot

Page 85:

*ambush – hide in waiting and then attack from hiding

running battle – a battle fought while one group flees from the other

*exchange – shooting at each other

*engagements – sessions of fighting

hobbled – limped, walked slowly as if injured

Page 86:

declared...independence – told England and the world that they will not obey and are not citizens of any country but their own

gangway – ramp leading up to the front door

*garrison – outpost, fort

*denotes vocabulary word used in Language Arts