

Lesson 9: Colonial Leaders

Historical Career Assumed

- Teacher

Historical Skills Practiced

- Constructing well organized arguments
- Developing verbal descriptions using evidence and reasoning

Lesson Overview

In this lesson, students will be introduced to the variety of colonial leaders who are known for radicalizing the colonists which led to the start of the American Revolution. In this lesson, students will assume the role of teachers by reading primary and secondary source descriptions of one particular colonial leader then describing that leader in a small group of people who did not read about that particular person. This is a jig-saw activity where students learn and teach from each other, ask each other questions, and develop a cohesive narrative together.

Topical Essential Questions

- Why are people of color and women not often included in ‘traditional’ lists of colonial leaders?
- What impact did colonial leaders have on the colonists?

Overarching Essential Question

- What are the causes of the American Revolution?

Learning Objectives

- Students will teach the background, goals, and policies of various colonial leaders to their fellow peers.
- Students will examine the gaps in representation of people of color and women throughout historical events.
- Students will practice skills of verbally articulating an argument.

Instructional Plan

Do Now:

What are the most important responsibilities of a teacher?

Have students flip to the Historical Jobs section of their syllabus

After students write their Do Now, explain to them that today they will all act as teachers to tell the story of a particular colonial leader leading up to the American Revolution. While students may be familiar with the job of a teacher, explain to them that teachers try to engage students in learning to promote intrinsic motivation. It is important for teachers to understand each of their students, so they can frame their lessons to best suit their individual needs. Explain that while students are teaching and presenting for their activity today, that they should keep these things in mind. Students should not talk word for word from a piece of paper, or speak monotone, they

should be verbally engaging and use words and phrases that make the learning interesting and engaging.

Have students flip to the Historical Skills section of their syllabus

Share that students will practice verbally articulating their arguments using evidence and reasoning. When students complete their final project, they will have to verbally present their work with the class, so this activity will serve to help students practice this in a low stress environment.

Colonial Leaders Activity:

Have students flip their almanacs back to today's lesson. Explain to students that today they will conduct their own research to find primary and secondary sources about one particular colonial leader. As they are reading, they will be in groups of 3 to cross reference and check each other's work. While reading these sources students should think about the following questions:

- Who was this person and what is their background?
- Why was this person influential?
- What were this person's goals as a leader?
- Do you agree with the policies of this leader? Why or why not?

As a group, students should respond to these questions and write down a narrative of the person using evidence from the sources to support their claims.

Jig-Saw Activity:

After students have responded to these questions and have the narrative complete of their particular colonial leader, students will be split up in groups of about 9. Each of the people in the group will have researched a different colonial leader. In this group, each "teacher" will share their narrative by explaining the main ideas of each source and providing a detailed story of the impacts and goals of their particular colonial leader. All the "students" will take notes in their almanacs, so they have a detailed description of each colonial leader.

Whole class discussion:

After the jig-saw activity, have students come together to talk about some of the major themes they noticed among the colonial leaders.

- Did these leaders all have similar backgrounds?
- What did these leaders represent?
- Who supported these leaders?
- What impacts did these leaders have on the colonists?

Exit Slip:

After reading accounts of one colonial leader and hearing accounts of many other historical leaders, who do you think was the most influential and why?

Lesson Extension:

Have students google "Leaders in colonial America." What do they notice about the characteristics of the leaders that come up? This is what I did when I searched to find a list of

leaders leading up to the American Revolution for this activity. When I did this, however, I noticed that every single one of the people who came up was a white, wealthy man with many of them being slaveholders. Ask students to critically think about how privilege and power play out in our everyday lives. It took a lot of searching to find colonial leaders who were PoC and women. Why are these people, who were just as influential as the “traditional” leaders not shown online or taught about in school?

Lesson sources

Colonial Leaders:

James Armistead Lafayette

Phyllis Wheatley

Crispus Attucks

John Adams

Abigail Adams

Paul Revere

Thomas Paine

Patrick Henry

Thomas Jefferson