

Adventure Description:

In this adventure, students will think like a collections managers and analyze primary sources that were created during the American Revolution.

Activity

- Teacher note: this activity is long and can be completed across 2-3 days.

Step 1: Background on Perspectives about American Revolution (5-10 minutes)

- Show [Video: Differing Perspectives on American Revolution](#).
- As a class, discuss how a collections manager works to help preserve and care for important historic documents and artifacts from different historic periods. For example, a collections manager might look at a letter that a soldier wrote during World War II and learn about the conditions the soldier faced during wartime. A letter might describe the food a soldier ate, the people he fought alongside with or a description of where he was.
- Discuss how collections managers have a lot of different responsibilities. Show [Handout: Responsibilities of Collection Managers](#).
- Next, discuss how documents and artifacts can be primary or secondary sources. Ask students the following questions:
 - How do primary sources help people to understand important historical events? (e.g., looking at artifacts or documents from historic periods, people learn what people were thinking and doing)
 - What would be a limitation to using primary sources when studying history? (e.g., source might provide only one point of view, sources can be incomplete, the identity of the creator is often unknown)
 - What is the role of secondary resources in studying history? (secondary sources provide information about an entire event or period, can show more than one point of view, can place an event within a larger picture of history to show why it is important)
- Explain to students that one way that a collections manager keeps track of all the items in a collection is by using a database. A database is a collection of data that is organized. Show [Handout: Using Databases](#).
- Ask students why a collections manager would want to use a database system to organize artifacts (e.g., items can be searched on a computer, you can look up where an item is located, information can be access by people worldwide. This means that someone looking for information on ancient Egyptian artifacts that are held in Egyptian museums would not need to travel all the way to Egypt. Instead, they can look up the information they need in the online database).
- If time permits, discuss drawbacks to using a database (e.g., not all databases are created the same, some are more difficult to use than others, databases may not be secure and can be tampered with, some database may require additional software)

Step 2: Activity Set Up (5 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will imagine they are collections managers and analyze primary sources from the American Revolution. Then, they will create a database entry to upload to a database about American history.

Please contact Allison Bischoff, Director of Customer Service, at allison@rozzylearningcompany.com or 314-272-2560 with questions.

- Teacher note: It is important for students to understand that they will first create a primary source from the point of view of someone who lived during the American Revolution. After students create primary sources, they will switch sources with other students in the class. Then, they will analyze the sources and create a database entry.

Step 3: Creating a Primary Source (40+ minutes)

- Explain to students that they will create their primary source in this step. Provide students with [Handout: Creating a Primary Source](#) and [Handout: Sources on American Revolution](#).
- Provide students with the following materials:
 - A piece of printer paper
 - Permanent ink pen or marker
- Have students complete steps 1-4 on the handout. While students are working, ask them the following questions:
 - What insight does your primary source give to the reader about daily life during the American Revolution?
 - How does your primary source show a clear perspective on the American Revolution?
 - What sources did you use as background when writing your document?

Step 4: Aging an Artifact (10 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now age the artifacts they have created to make them look like they were created during the American Revolution. Have students complete step 5 on the handout.
- Provide students with the following materials:
 - Tray or pan large enough to fit a piece of paper
 - Dixie cup (or other small paper cup)
 - Warm coffee
 - Sponge brush
 - Instant coffee grounds
 - Paper towels
- Instruct students to complete step 5 on the handout. Allow completed artifacts to dry.

Step 5: Analyzing A Primary Source (20 minutes)

- Explain to students that they will now analyze database entries that other students created.
- Divide students into groups of 4. Provide students with [Handout: Steps to Create a Database Entry](#) and read through the steps together as a class.
- Have students collect the primary source they created from the location where they were stored.
- Have students switch documents with another student or group.
- Have students complete the steps on the handout. While students are working, ask them the following questions:
 - How do primary sources help people to better understand a specific historic period? (e.g. By reading documents, letters, diaries or other types of documents, people can understand better what people of that period were thinking.)
 - How do primary sources help to understand different points of view? (e.g. By reading what people were thinking and what they were seeing helps to better understand how different points of view were formed.)
 - How can primary sources change a person's mind about a topic? (e.g. By reading documents written by people during a specific historic period, a person can learn about different points of view, or learn new information that might help them in making more accurate observations.)

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Step 6: Discussion (5 minutes)

- Have a concluding discussion about the importance of using both primary and secondary resources to understand historical events. Discuss the following:
 - What can be learned about the American Revolution from studying primary sources? (e.g. people had different points of view, not everyone was against England or favored independence)
 - What would history be like to study with only secondary sources? (e.g. people might have a more complete picture of an event, but it would be missing eyewitness accounts or descriptions that help history come alive)
 - Why is it important to study different types of primary sources? (e.g. there is usually more than one point of view around an event)
 - What other types of primary sources could be used to study different perspectives on the American Revolution? (e.g. political cartoons, pamphlets, songs, paintings)
 - What if primary and secondary sources on different viewpoints were not available? (e.g. it would be very difficult to understand events in history because there would be no information on what people thought)

Materials List

Provided online:

- Video: Differing Perspectives on American Revolution.
- Handout: Responsibilities of Collection Managers.
- Handout: Using Databases
- Handout: Steps to Create a Database Entry
- Handout: Creating a Primary Source
- Handout: Sources on American Revolution

Not Provided Online:

- Tray or pan large enough to fit a piece of paper
- Dixie cup (or other small paper cup)
- Copy paper
- Permanent Pen
- Warm coffee
- Sponge brush
- Instant coffee grounds
- Paper towels
- Lighter (optional; must be used by teacher or adult)

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