

Content Spotlight: Women's History Month



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Expedition:LEARN!

See how Britannica experts teach the featured lesson!

On April 19, 1775, the first shots of the American Revolution were fired. The fight for independence inspired many men and women alike. Women, constrained by societal norms and legal regulations, found avenues to express the injustices of British rule, both on and off the battlefield.

Phyllis Wheatley, kidnapped and enslaved as a child, stands out as an incredible story of resilience. She used poetry to draw parallels between enslaved people's fight for freedom and colonists' fight for liberty. Black people had been enslaved in the colonies for more than 150 years before the Revolution began. Yet they were essential to the cause of independence, fighting on and off the battlefield. Wheatley's words challenged colonial America to live up to its ideals by recognizing all individuals' humanity and morality.



In today's polarizing political climate, we can draw inspiration from individuals who took risks to unite our people for a cause bigger than oneself. Wheatley's legacy is a reminder of the enduring power of political speech and the importance of holding nations accountable to their founding principles.

Expedition: Learn! is an instructional platform with standards-aligned, interdisciplinary lessons that build content knowledge, enhance reading comprehension, and critical thinking skills. Check out how our experts use the *Women of the American Revolutionary Era* lesson to review content and practice how to analyze high-complexity standardized-style assessment questions.

GRADES 6 - 8



Women of the American Revolutionary Era

Connect

DOK 3 Make Inferences

Read the passage below. Then answer the question.

Phyllis Wheatley often dedicated poems to colonial leaders, directly naming them in the titles. In a poem called *To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth*, she discusses freedom from British rule and how it relates to her experience with oppression as an enslaved child.

Which of the following best describes the significance of Wheatley's poem dedications to colonial leaders?

- They served as a means for Wheatley to explore her interest in European history. *no connection*
- They helped her raise financial support so that she could publish more books. *irrelevant*
- They helped Wheatley gain favor from influential figures in the colonies.
- They encouraged colonists to remain loyal to the British government. *contradiction*

In Practice Test Prep

Use the Expedition: Learn! **Assessment Annotations Key** to model how to analyze standardized-style assessments for students:

- **Highlight** critical details related to the question stem
- **Underline** supporting details
- **Cross out** non supporting details
- **Circle** the directive words

See how our experts break down a question from the lesson.

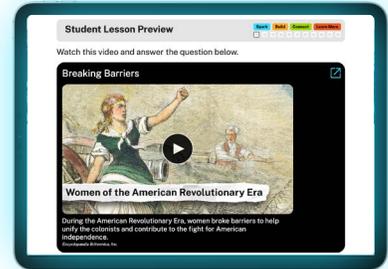
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Spark

- Distribute Teach Britannica's **K-W-L graphic organizer**. Ask students to record what they already know (K) and what they want to learn (W) about women of the American Revolution.
- Then play the **Spark video** and give students time to respond to the question.
- Prompt students to complete Teach Britannica's **Vocabulary One-Pager: Six Words graphic organizer** using the vocabulary terms and definitions provided in the lesson (boycott, cause, encampment, home front, morale, patriot).
- Encourage students to create new definitions in their own words.



Build

- Model the first two **Build** pages for students by annotating the text and demonstrating how to extract important takeaways.
- Guide students through the two assessment questions by thinking aloud as you critically consider the answer choices and illustrating how to eliminate incorrect choices.
- For the remaining three **Build** pages, allow students to work on their own or in small groups. Distribute Teach Britannica's **Note-Taking graphic organizer** for students to track their notes.
- Display the following questions to guide students' thinking as they read:
 - ① How did [person/group] influence the Revolutionary War?
 - ② What challenges did [person/group] face during the Revolutionary period?



Connect

- To complete **Connect** pages 7 through 9, arrange students in pairs or small groups.
- Use the Teach Britannica **Assessment Item Analysis graphic organizer** to explain how to break down questions.
- Review responses as a class by discussing key takeaways and highlighting strong student examples.
- For the final short response **Connect** question, prompt students to work independently to write and submit their response.



Learn More

- Read the article "Eleanor Roosevelt." Facilitate a class discussion comparing and contrasting the roles of Eleanor Roosevelt and Revolutionary Era women in advocating for rights.
- Use the following questions to prompt student discussion:
 - ① How did their efforts shape political and social movements in their respective time periods?
 - ② What limitations did women face in both time periods, and how did they challenge those restrictions?



Keep the exploration going! Discover these resources and more in Expedition: Learn! on Teach Britannica.





Monument to Revolutionary Women

- Invite students to work in small groups to design a memorial or monument honoring a woman they learned about in the lesson. Groups can sketch their monument or create a mini model using classroom materials such as clay, cardboard, or paper.
- After they present their ideas, have students justify why they designed their monument as they did and how it tells the story of their assigned or chosen Revolutionary Era woman.
- As an additional extension, have students research real-life statues or memorials dedicated to Revolutionary Era women and compare them to their own designs. engagement, and increase academic achievement

Revolutionary Women Documentary

- Divide students into small groups. Then assign groups to research and create a short documentary about other women of the American Revolution (e.g., Nancy Hart, Margaret Corbin, Agent 355).
- Each group should present a 5-minute video or slideshow presentation, including background information, primary sources (if available), and images.
- After all the documentaries are presented, have students reflect on how these women's contributions shaped the Revolution and why their stories are often overlooked.

Expanding the Protest

- The Daughters of Liberty famously boycotted British goods by making homespun fabric and brewing herbal tea instead of buying taxed imports. But what other ways could women protest while staying within their expected societal roles?
- Invite students to research additional ways women could have resisted British rule beyond boycotts, considering their positions in society at the time. They might explore letter-writing campaigns, secret meetings, spreading anti-British ideas through art, or even using social pressure to encourage others to resist.
- After their research, have students create a proposal for an alternative form of protest, explaining why it would have been effective and realistic given women's societal limitations in the Revolutionary Era.

Continue the *Expedition* with these related lessons!

GRADES 6 - 8



Growing Resentment: Taxation



GRADES 6 - 8



Crispus Attucks and the Boston Massacre



GRADES 6 - 8



An Overview of the American Revolution



GRADES 6 - 8



Exploring the Declaration: The Road to Independence



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