

AMERICA 250 | CT EDUCATOR RESOURCES

In 2026, the United States will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of the country. It is an opportunity for reflection on the ideals of the nation's founders and a time to consider the path forward in expanding our realization of those ideals today.

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USING THIS PACKET

As the nation prepares to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the founding of the country, this educator's packet encourages K-12 students to reflect on the ideals of the nation's founders and consider how those ideals have evolved over time. Supporting a reawakening of civic engagement, this packet touches on the following America 250 | CT themes, specifically within the context of Connecticut and the American Revolution:

- **Power of Place**
 - Grade 3 – Our Town's Story: "What Makes Our Town Special?"
- **Tell Inclusive Stories**
 - Grade 5 – Hannah Bunce Watson: "Whose Story Gets Told?"
- **Doing History**
 - Grade 8 – Benedict Arnold and Abigail Hinman: "Sources and Stories"
- **For the Common Good**
 - High School – Lemuel Haynes: "Freedom and Liberty in 1776"

All lessons align with the [2022 Connecticut Elementary and Secondary Social Studies Standards](#). While lessons have been designed to speak to certain grade levels and learning goals, any lesson can be modified to suit any grade. Please feel free to adapt these lessons and activities as you see fit for your classroom.



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POWER OF PLACE



This theme highlights the unique identities and contributions of Connecticut's diverse communities. Educators can explore how specific towns, cities, and geographical features in Connecticut played a role in the Revolution, or focus on the impact of place more broadly. Connecticut is made up of 169 towns and cities, five recognized tribes, and countless communities. Every place in our state is home to someone and has its own unique history, traditions, and contributions—together, they make up Connecticut.

Questions to Consider:

- *What makes your community unique?*
- *How have communities changed across Connecticut?*
- *Why are particular historic places preserved and valued?*

GRADE 3 LESSON

Our Town's Story: "What Makes Our Town Special?"

- **Educator Guide**
 - Time Allotment
 - Learning Objectives
 - Standards
 - Materials
 - Step-by-Step Procedure
 - Opportunities for Assessment
- **Printables and Worksheets**
 - Postage Stamp Template

OUR TOWN'S STORY

What Makes Our Town Special?

Educator Guide

Grade Level: 3rd Grade

Time Allotment: 1-2 class periods (adaptable)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will learn to develop compelling and supporting questions about what makes their town or city special.
- Students will gather relevant information about their local history from multiple sources, such as maps, historical images, and potentially resources from local museums, historical societies, or historic sites. They will use evidence from these sources to develop claims in response to their questions about their town's history.

Standards:

- 3.Geo.2.a. Use maps and other visual representations to describe the relationship between the locations of places and regions throughout Connecticut and their environmental characteristics (e.g., access to natural resources, education, labor, population, transportation).
- 3.Geo.6.a. Describe how environmental and cultural characteristics influence where people live and work in Connecticut (e.g., rivers, parks, farmland, location of ethnic communities, transportation, urban development).

Materials:

- A whiteboard or chart paper to keep track of student responses.

OUR TOWN'S STORY

What Makes Our Town Special?

Procedure:

1. Engage (20 minutes):

- Assign students into small groups of 3–4 to “turn and talk” about the following questions:
 - When you think of a town or city, what comes to mind?
 - What kinds of buildings (e.g., post office, library, town hall) can you find in a town or city?
 - What has to be considered when a town or city is created?
 - Who makes decisions about how towns develop, grow, or change?
 - What makes one town or city different from another town or city?
- Allow groups time to talk about questions and then share their responses as a whole group.

2. Focus on a Specific Site (10 minutes):

- Focus on a specific local landmark or site (e.g., a historic building, a local museum, a town green, a place significant to a local cultural community) in your town that is accessible or about which resources are available.
- As a class or in small groups, guide students to develop compelling questions about this place, such as: “What makes [Local Landmark Name] special to our town?” or “How has this place shaped our community over time?” Share these on the whiteboard.
- Then, help students formulate supporting questions that will help answer the compelling question, like “Who used this place in the past?”, “What important events happened here?”, or “How is this place used by people today?”. Discuss where they might find information to answer these questions, considering different perspectives (e.g., library, town hall, historical society/museum, newspapers, books, interviewing a neighbor or town official, etc.).

OUR TOWN'S STORY

What Makes Our Town Special?

3. Opportunities for Assessment:

Students can share what they learned through the following activities:

Landmark Postage Stamp

Students can design a postage stamp featuring an important local landmark (they may select the landmark discussed as a class or identify their own). **A template is included on page 9.** Draw the landmark in the center of a stamp outline, including the name of the town and a pretend stamp value (e.g., "5¢"). Below the stamp, write 2–3 sentences explaining what the landmark is and why it is important to the town.

Town Map

Students can create a simplified map of their town that highlights 3–5 important places from its past or present. Using their imaginations based on experience or providing an existing town map as a guide, have them draw a large map showing key sites (schools, parks, historical sites, etc.). They can label each location with small illustrations or symbols and write short captions or fun facts next to each place to explain its importance.

"History in a Bag"

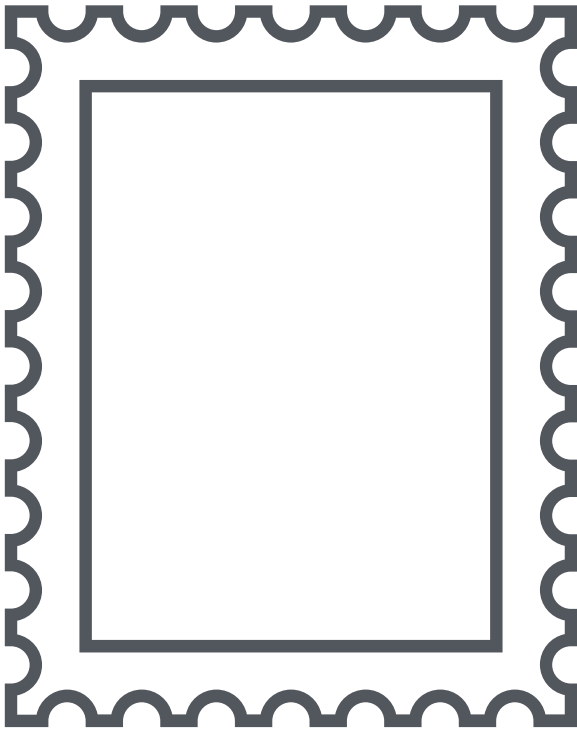
Students can gather 3–5 small objects (or pictures of objects) that represent their town's history or identity (e.g., a pinecone for a local forest preserve, a photo of a train for a historic railway). Place the selected items in a paper bag or small box. One by one, take each item out to show the class and explain its importance.

OUR TOWN'S STORY

Worksheet: Landmark Postage Stamp

Design Your Own Postage Stamp!

Choose an important local landmark and draw it below. Include the name of your town and a pretend stamp value (like "5¢").



What is this landmark? Why is it important to your town?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

for Teaching "Power of Place"

Teach It Lessons

- Learn about Abigail Hinman and [New London's Role in American Independence](#) with a Teach It activity for grades 5 and 8.
- Explore William Lanson's New Haven through the activities "[Nearly Forgotten: Re-discovering a New Haven Activist, Engineer, and Entrepreneur](#)" (Grade 4) and "[William Lanson: New Haven Entrepreneur, Abolitionist, and Black Governor](#)" (Grade 8).

teach it

People

- [Frederick Law Olmsted](#), Hartford
- [Igor Sikorsky](#), Stratford
- [Hannah Ocuish](#), New London



Igor Sikorsky

Places

- [Fort Griswold](#), Groton
- [Mashantucket](#)
- [Prudence Crandall House](#),
Canterbury




Prudence Crandall
House

Events

- [British burn Danbury](#) - April 26, 1777
- [British burn Fairfield](#) - July 7, 1779
- [Washington & Rochambeau meet in Wethersfield](#) - May 21-22, 1781

TELL INCLUSIVE STORIES



This section encourages educators and students to delve into stories that represent all the people of Connecticut during the Revolutionary era, both past and present. By exploring previously untold stories of Connecticut residents during this time, we can enable everyone to find a place in our nation's narrative.

Questions to Consider:

- *Whose voices from Connecticut during the Revolution have been traditionally heard, and whose have been marginalized?*
- *How can we uncover and share a more complete picture of this period?*
- *What stories remain untold in your community? Whose voice has been heard in the past? How is this celebration an opportunity to lift other voices?*

GRADE 5 LESSON

Hannah Bunce Watson: “Whose Story Gets Told?”

- **Educator Guide**
 - Time Allotment
 - Learning Objectives
 - Standards
 - Materials
 - Step-by-Step Procedure
 - Opportunities for Assessment
 - Images and Additional Resources
- **Printables and Worksheets**
 - Hannah's Story, Vocabulary
 - Fill in the Blank, Multiple Choice
 - Short-Answer Questions
 - Hannah's Story (for Advanced Readers)

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Whose Story Gets Told?

Educator Guide

Grade Level: 5th Grade

Time Allotment: 1-2 class periods (adaptable)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to identify key facts about Hannah Bunce Watson and her role as publisher of the *Connecticut Courant* during the American Revolution.
- Students will understand that telling "inclusive stories" means sharing the experiences and contributions of all people, including those who may have been previously excluded from the main historical narrative.
- Students will be able to construct a brief narrative or "Hall of Fame" entry for Hannah Bunce Watson that includes her significant contributions as a publisher, demonstrating an understanding of telling a more inclusive story.

Standards:

- 5.His.6.a. Describe how people's perspectives of the American Revolution are documented in historical records while noting representation of marginalized voices (e.g., journals, letters, newspaper articles, pamphlets).
- 5.His.16.c. Develop a claim about significant people, places or events in Connecticut during the American Revolution (e.g., Jonathan Occum, Israel Putnam, Hannah Bunce Watson, Benedict Arnold, Jordan Freeman).

Materials:

- Student-friendly summary of Hannah Bunce Watson's story. There is a version on page 19 for more advanced readers.
- Students will need paper and a writing utensil or a computer to complete the Opportunities for Assessment.

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Whose Story Gets Told?

Procedure:

1. Engage (20 minutes):

- Introduce Hannah Bunce Watson as a remarkable woman from the time of the American Revolution in Connecticut. Explain that she ran a newspaper called the *Connecticut Courant*, which was important for sharing news about the war, and an uncommon role for women at the time.
- Read Hannah's story (page 16) aloud or have students read independently. (There is a version on page 19 for more advanced readers.)
- Ask students about the challenges she faced. Emphasize that despite this, she kept the newspaper going and used it to support the idea of American liberty.

2. Comparing Narratives (10 minutes):

- Share with the students how Hannah was remembered right after she died. Read her obituary: "Died in this city, on Sunday last, Mrs. Hannah Hudson, wife of Mr. Barzillai Hudson, senior editor of this paper, aged 58 years."
 - Ask students: "Does this short description tell the whole story of Hannah? What's missing?"
 - Note that it calls her "Mrs. Hannah Hudson, wife of Mr. Barzillai Hudson" and doesn't mention her work running the newspaper or helping the Revolution.
- Explain that sometimes, important parts of people's lives, especially for groups like women, were left out of the historical record or not seen as important at the time. Then, share that much later, organizations like the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame did recognize her as one of America's first female publishers.
 - Ask students: "Why do you think these groups decided to tell her story differently?" Connect this to the idea of telling inclusive stories – stories that make sure everyone's contributions, even those previously overlooked, are known.

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Opportunities for Assessment

3. Opportunities for Assessment (30–40 minutes):

Students can share what they learned through the following activities:

"Hall of Fame" Entry

Have the students imagine they are creating a "Young Historians Hall of Fame" for people from the American Revolution. Their task is to write a short entry for Hannah Bunce Watson that makes sure her important work as a publisher and her challenges are included, reflecting the idea of telling a more complete or "inclusive" story. How would their entry be different from her original obituary? What details would they highlight to show her unique contribution?

Research

Students can explore the stories of different women (Mary Ludwig Hays, Phillis Wheatley, Deborah Samson, or others) or members of underrepresented groups during the American Revolution. What other stories should be told?

*Students looking for more of a challenge can learn more about Hannah through **Hannah's Story for Advanced Readers** (page 19) to complete either of the following activities.*

Newspaper

Students can design the front page of a *Connecticut Courant* issue that Hannah Bunce Watson might have printed during the Revolution. What sort of articles would it feature?

Timeline

Students can design a timeline of Hannah Bunce Watson's life and accomplishments, highlighting key events such as when she took over the newspaper, major challenges, and her contributions. This could be presented as a physical or digital display.

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Images, Additional Resources



The Connecticut Courant and Hartford Weekly Intelligencer header under Hannah Bunce Watson, January 20, 1778.



When her husband Ebenezer died, Hannah Bunce Watson took over the Courant, becoming one of the first women publishers in the country – *Hartford Courant* file photo

Additional Resources:

[Hannah Bunce Watson: One of America's First Female Publishers](#)

[Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame](#)

[The First Lady of Connecticut Newspapers](#)

[Litchfield Historical Society: Hannah Bunce Hudson](#)

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Hannah's Story, Vocabulary

Hannah's Story:

Hannah Bunce Watson was the **publisher** of the *Connecticut Courant* (now called the *Hartford Courant*) between 1777 and 1779. As a widow, Watson inherited the *Connecticut Courant* from her late husband, Ebenezer, becoming one of the first women publishers in the country, and operated it until she married Barzillai Hudson in 1779. She used the paper to spread news on the American Revolution across the 13 colonies, while possessing little business experience, being a mother of five, and overcoming a devastating fire at the company's **paper mill** that threatened to close down her entire operation. Hannah Watson's articles called for support of the **patriot** cause and **defiantly** aided her country's search for **liberty**, earning her a place in the Connecticut Journalism Hall of Fame and the Connecticut Women's Hall of Fame.

Vocabulary:

publisher (noun): a person or company that prepares, prints, and issues books, newspapers, or other materials for sale.

Example: The publisher helped the author get her book ready to sell.

paper mill (noun): a factory that makes paper from wood or recycled materials.

Example: The paper mill is a noisy place because of all the machines.

patriot (noun) someone who loves and strongly supports their country.

Example: The patriot waved the flag proudly during the parade.

defiantly (adverb): in a way that shows you are refusing to obey.

Example: The child defiantly refused to eat their vegetables.

liberty (noun): the freedom to do what you want without being controlled by someone else.

Example: The bird flew out of its cage and enjoyed its liberty.

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Worksheet: Fill in the Blank, Multiple Choice

Fill in the blank with the correct words.

Word Bank: publisher, paper mill, patriot, defiantly, liberty

1. Hannah Bunce Watson took over the Connecticut Courant as the _____ after her husband died.
2. Hannah is recognized as a _____ today.
3. One big challenge Hannah faced was when the _____ burned down.
4. Hannah showed her bravery by _____ writing articles during the American Revolution.
5. Hannah supported the patriot soldiers' fight for freedom and _____.

Choose the correct answer from the choices for each question.

1. What is the *Connecticut Courant* now known as?
 - a. The *Hartford Courant*
 - b. The *Connecticut Times*
 - c. The *Boston Globe*
 - d. It is still known as the *Connecticut Courant*
2. Who did the newspaper mainly support during Hannah's leadership?
 - a. The loyalists
 - b. The British king
 - c. The patriots
 - d. The French army
3. What happened to the newspaper's paper mill?
 - a. It moved to a new city
 - b. It was sold
 - c. It burned down
 - d. It was never used
4. Why is Hannah Bunce Watson remembered today?
 - a. She wrote famous books
 - b. She started a school
 - c. She kept the newspaper running and supported the patriots
 - d. She was a famous artist

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Worksheet: Short Answer Questions

1. Hannah Watson faced many challenges but kept working hard. What is a time you faced a challenge, and how did you keep going?
2. Hannah Watson used her newspaper to share important news and ideas. How do you share your ideas with others?
3. Hannah's newspaper, *The Connecticut Courant*, still exists today as *The Hartford Courant*. What kinds of stories should they make sure to write about in their newspaper so that everyone's story is better known?

HANNAH BUNCE WATSON

Hannah's Story for Advanced Readers

Hannah Watson was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, in 1749. After her first husband's death, she married Ebenezer Watson in 1771. Ebenezer ran the *Connecticut Courant*, a newspaper in Hartford that became a vital source of information and encouragement for American supporters during the Revolutionary War, sharing news of victories and British losses.

Following Ebenezer's death in 1777, Hannah, at just 27 years old, stepped up to manage the newspaper despite having limited experience and five young children to care for. She partnered with George Goodwin, the printer, and took charge of the *Courant*, selecting stories and even writing some herself. Hannah expanded the paper's content to include important social and religious ideas, as well as scientific discoveries from around the world.

A significant challenge arose when the paper mill Hannah co-owned burned down, causing substantial damage. Suspecting sabotage by those against the revolution, Hannah persevered. While rebuilding the mill, the *Courant* continued to publish, even using smaller, one-page newspapers printed on wrapping paper when necessary. Throughout this time, Hannah remained committed to printing stories about the war, battles, and support for the Revolution.

In 1779, Hannah married Barzillai Hudson, who took over her role in the printing business. The newspaper shifted to a more traditional format, with less emphasis on social issues and the strong pro-Revolution stance that Hannah and Ebenezer had established. Hannah passed away in 1807, and her obituary made no mention of her significant contributions to the *Connecticut Courant* and the American Revolution, highlighting only her role as the wife of the paper's senior editor.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

for Teaching "Tell Inclusive Stories"

Teach It Lessons

- See page 36 for an activity for high school students about Lemuel Haynes, widely considered to be the first Black man in America to be ordained by a Protestant church.
- Learn about the role the Amistad incident played in the abolitionist movement in the United States.

teach it

People

- Mary Townsend Seymour, activist
- Toney, Black Loyalist refugee
- Yung Wing, educational pioneer

Places

- Mary & Eliza Freeman Center, Bridgeport
- Foreign Mission School, Cornwall
- Old New-Gate Prison and Viets Tavern



New-Gate Prison Yard



American School
for the Deaf

Events

- Amistad Trial - 1839
- Opening of the American School for the Deaf - April 15, 1917
- Passing of the Gay-Rights Bill - May 1, 1991

DOING HISTORY



"Doing History" means actively participating in understanding the past. It's more than just memorizing facts; it's about becoming comfortable with the idea that history can be ambiguous, contested, and always-evolving. It involves asking questions, carefully looking at different sources of information like documents, images, and even family stories.

Questions to Consider:

- *How do primary and secondary sources allow us to make sense of the past?*
- *Where do we find sources for previously untold stories?*
- *Who holds knowledge in different communities? How is it shared?*

GRADE 8 LESSON

Benedict Arnold and Abigail Hinman: "Sources and Stories"

- Educator Guide
 - Time Allotment
 - Learning Objectives
 - Standards
 - Materials
 - Step-by-Step Procedure
 - Opportunities for Assessment
 - Additional Resources
- Printables and Worksheets
 - Student-friendly summary of Benedict Arnold and Abigail Hinman
 - Daniel Huntington's painting, *Abigail Dolbeare Hinman, 1853-1856*
 - Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance from May 30, 1778
 - Primary vs. Secondary Sources Worksheet
 - Source Analysis Worksheet
 - Connect to Today: Burning of Benedict Arnold's Effigy Article

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Sources and Stories

Educator Guide

Grade Level: 8th Grade

Time Allotment: 2–3 class periods (adaptable)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will explain the concept of "Doing History," understanding that historical narratives can be ambiguous, contested, and require the evaluation of sources.
- Students will compare the nature of the historical evidence available for different parts of Arnold's and Hinman's stories.
- Students will analyze how different representations (like a painting) can shape our understanding of historical figures and events.
- Students will consider the importance of examining multiple perspectives and types of sources.

Standards:

- 8.Inq.3.a. Gather information from multiple sources and evaluate their relevance and intended use (e.g., origin, authority, structure, context, corroborative value, credibility).
- 8.Inq.3.c. Develop claims and counterclaims while pointing out the strengths and limitations of different sources.
- 8.His.10.a. Describe how individual and group perspectives of the American Revolution are documented in historical records while identifying representation of marginalized voices (e.g., journals, letters, pamphlets, newspaper articles from sources such as the *Hartford Daily Courant*).

Materials:

- Student-friendly summary of Benedict Arnold and Abigail Hinman
- Projector or copies of Daniel Huntington's painting and Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance
- Whiteboard, chart paper, or digital tool for recording student ideas
- Source Analysis Worksheet

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Sources and Stories

Procedure:

1. Engage (15–20 minutes):

- Begin by asking students a compelling question related to "Doing History": "How do historians figure out what really happened in the past, especially when different accounts exist?" or "Why is history sometimes described as 'contested'?"
- Introduce Abigail Hinman by showing the class the painting by Daniel Huntington. Ask students what they observe in the painting (her clothing, expression, the musket, the background). Prompt them to think about the story the artist might be trying to tell about this woman during the American Revolution.

2. Explore (30–40 minutes):

- Provide students with the summary of Benedict Arnold and Abigail Hinman or guide them through key information from the sources.
- Explain that while Arnold's story is well-documented with many historical sources, there is little written about Abigail Hinman, although there is more information about her husband, Elisha (who wasn't there for this event), and Benedict Arnold (seen in the background of the painting). Explain that "Doing History" means we don't just read stories; we investigate where they come from and how they are supported by evidence.
- Revisit the Huntington painting. Discuss:
 - Is this painting a historical source that proves the musket event happened, or is it an artist's representation based on the story? The painting was made decades after the event (mid-1850s).
 - Why might a story like Abigail's musket incident become a popular legend, even if it's not fully confirmed by historical evidence? (What qualities does it show? Courage? Patriotism?)
 - How does the Huntington painting help keep Abigail Hinman's story alive? Does the painting make the story seem more like fact or legend?

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Sources and Stories

3. Introduce a Different Kind of Source (30–40 minutes):

- Present students with the text of Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance from May 30, 1778. Explain that this is a document from the War Department Collection of Revolutionary War Records. Have students read the Oath carefully. Discuss what Benedict Arnold is swearing to do in this document:
 - He acknowledges the United States of America as Free, Independent and Sovereign States.
 - He renounces allegiance or obedience to King George.
 - He swears to support, maintain and defend the United States against the King and his supporters.
 - He swears to serve in his office of Major General with fidelity.
- Explain that despite swearing this oath in 1778, Arnold later conspired to surrender West Point to the British in 1780, betraying his oath. He then joined the British side and, in September 1781, commanded the British troops that raided and burned New London, Connecticut.

4. Unpack "Doing History" (25 minutes):

- How do historians figure out what really happened?
 - Historians gather information from multiple sources. The Oath of Allegiance is a **primary source**, or an original document or object created at the time of an event, offering firsthand testimony or direct evidence about that event, topic, or period, while the Abigail Hinman painting is considered a **secondary source**: a document, text, image, or object created by someone who was not directly involved in the event or conditions being researched.
 - What are other kinds of sources that might help us understand the stories of Benedict Arnold and Abigail Hinman?
 - Have students complete the **Primary vs. Secondary Sources Worksheet** individually or in pairs (page 29).

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Sources and Stories

5. Opportunity for Assessment (30–40 minutes):

- Historians also must evaluate the structure, origin, purpose, point of view, corroboration, and credibility of sources. Introduce these ideas to students (page 30). Assign half of the group the Oath of Allegiance and the other half Huntington's painting (or allow them to choose). Have them complete the provided **Source Analysis Worksheet** (page 31) individually or in pairs.

6. Contrast the Sources and Accounts (15 minutes):

- Have students share some of their analyses. Lead a discussion comparing the documented reality of Benedict Arnold's betrayal (evidenced, in part, by his broken oath) with the legendary account of Abigail Hinman's confrontation depicted in the painting:
 - The Oath provides verifiable evidence of Arnold's sworn loyalty at a specific point in time, making his later actions a clear violation. Arnold's command of the New London raid is also a documented historical event.
 - The Abigail Hinman story, particularly the detail of her firing a musket, is described as a legend with little evidence to corroborate it beyond family stories and the later painting. The painting is evidence that the story *existed* and was passed down, not necessarily proof that the specific event happened.

7. Connect to Today (20 minutes):

- Have students read about the burning of Benedict Arnold's effigy (page 32) and the revived tradition in New London. Discuss:
 - What kinds of historical sources would help us understand why people started burning Arnold's effigy?
 - Why was this tradition revived in recent years after it had stopped? What does that tell us about how communities remember history today?

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

The Story

In late summer of 1781, Benedict Arnold laid siege to New London (where the American colonists stored a large supply of arms). He and his soldiers raided the city, forcing the patriots to retreat. The British then prepared to burn the town as battles raged and massacres ensued at Groton Heights and Fort Griswold. Abigail Hinman, one of the few colonists who had not fled the city when the Redcoats landed, watched the catastrophic events from her home with her children beside her.

Hinman and her family had been friendly with Arnold years earlier when he lived in the nearby town of Norwich. But when he came to her home that day in September of 1781 with the intention of burning it, along with the rest of the city, Hinman allegedly confronted her former acquaintance, now an infamous traitor. Because of their prior relationship, Arnold agreed not to torch Hinman's house or those of her neighbors.

As the story of Hinman's legend unfolds, Arnold reportedly walked away from her home, at which point Hinman seized her husband's musket, aimed it at the traitor, and pulled the trigger. Though the shot had no effect (due to either poor aim, a misfire, or perhaps even because the musket was not loaded), Arnold heard the noise and questioned her about it. Thinking quickly, Hinman is said to have hid the gun and attributed the noise to a chair breaking in the house. Arnold then left, unaware of what might have been, and ultimately spared several houses, including Hinman's.

In the mid-1850s, 19th-century American painter Daniel Huntington, the husband of Hinman's grandniece, immortalized the legend of Abigail Hinman.

DANIEL HUNTINGTON PAINTING

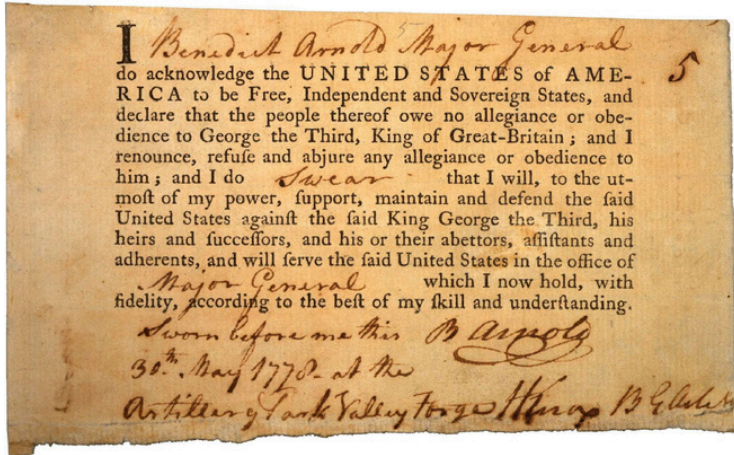
Abigail Dolbeare Hinman, 1854-1856



Daniel Huntington, Abigail Dolbeare Hinman, 1854-1856. Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, Connecticut.

BENEDICT ARNOLD'S OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

May 30, 1778



Transcription:

I Benedict Arnold Major General do acknowledge the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA to be Free, Independent and Sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great-Britain ; and I renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him ; and I do [handwritten] Swear [end handwritten] that I will, to the utmost of my power, support, maintain and defend the said United States against the said King George the Third, his heirs and successors, and his or their abettors, assistants and adherents, and will serve the said United States in the office of Major General which I now hold, with fidelity, according to the best of my skill and understanding.

Sworn before me this B Arnold
30 th Day of May 1778 – at the
Artillery Park Valley Forge H Knox B G Artillery

Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance; 5/30/1778; War Department Collection of Revolutionary War Records, Record Group 93. Used Through Public Domain.

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Worksheet: Primary vs. Secondary Sources

Circle whether each source listed below is a primary source (P) or a secondary source (S).

1. A diary entry written by a soldier in World War II (P/S)	6. An interview with an activist during the Civil Rights Movement (P/S)
2. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech (P/S)	7. A documentary about the fall of the Roman Empire (P/S)
3. A historical fiction novel set during the Roaring '20s (P/S)	8. A biography of Eleanor Roosevelt written by a modern historian (P/S)
4. A TikTok recorded by someone at a recent protest (P/S)	9. A review of the latest Marvel movie (P/S)
5. A painting by Pablo Picasso (P/S)	10. Census data from the 1970s (P/S)

Write one example of a primary source and one secondary source, explaining what makes them primary or secondary.

Primary:

Secondary:

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Source Analysis

Structure: What kind of source is it – primary or secondary? Is it a formal government paper, a personal diary entry, a newspaper article, a map, a photograph, or a painting? The type of source affects what kind of information it gives you and how you should use it.

Origin: Where did this source come from? Who made it? When and where was it made? Was it created during the time period you're studying or much, much later? Knowing the origin is the first step to trusting a source. What was happening in the world when the source was made?

Purpose: What was the creator's purpose? Was Arnold required to take the oath? Was the painter trying to celebrate a local hero? Understanding the situation and the creator's goals helps you understand the source.

Point of View: Was the person or group who made this source in a position to really know what happened? Were they there? Were they involved, or just observing? Were they an official record-keeper? What sort of bias might the creator have? Who is the author's intended audience, and how might they affect the reliability of the source?

Corroboration: Does this source agree with or back up what other reliable sources say? Historians look for multiple sources that tell the same story. If you find the same detail in several different, trustworthy places, it corroborates that detail. If a dramatic detail only appears in one later source, it has less corroborative value.

Credibility: Finally, after considering all the above: How believable or trustworthy is this source overall? Some sources are highly credible for certain facts, while others might be less credible or only useful for understanding beliefs or legends from the time.

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Worksheet: Source Analysis

Source: _____

Structure	
Origin	
Purpose	
Point of View	
Corroboration	
Credibility	

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Connect to Today

A REPRESENTATION of the FIGURES exhibited and paraded through the Streets of PHILADELPHIA, on Saturday, the 30th of September, 1780.



Detail from a 1780 broadside depicting one of the first burnings of Benedict Arnold's effigy in Philadelphia - Library of Congress

In response to Benedict Arnold's betrayal, cities like Philadelphia, Boston, and Newport held symbolic parades where they burned effigies of Arnold. Philadelphia's parade featured a two-faced dummy of Arnold, with the Devil offering him money, highlighting his perceived corruption.

New London, Connecticut, which Arnold had attacked, revived this tradition after the American Revolution and again in 2013. Flock Theatre, in collaboration with the New London County Historical Society, reenacts the burning every year, calling it "The March of the Traitor." The parade culminates in burning an Arnold effigy, with a symbolic gesture of cutting off the dummy's leg and sending it to Norwich, honoring Arnold's earlier injury while fighting for the Continental Army.



*New London's March of the Traitor –
Vincent A. Scarano, Flock Theatre*

BENEDICT ARNOLD AND ABIGAIL HINMAN

Images, Additional Resources

Benedict Arnold, 1741–1801, by John Trumbull, Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division. Used through Public Domain.



A sketch of New London & Groton with the attacks made on Forts Trumbull & Griswold, Sept. 6th, 1781. Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division. Used through Public Domain.

Additional Resources:

[Benedict Arnold: 1741–1801](#)

[Benedict Arnold Turns and Burns New London](#)

["To Thomas Jefferson from Elisha Hinman, 16 November 1801"](#)

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

for Teaching "Doing History"

Teach It Lessons

- Share Abigail Hinman's story with younger students with a Teach It activity for Grade 5: ["New London's Role in American Independence."](#)
- Continue to explore how historians reconstruct the stories of people from the past with the Grade 8/High School activity ["Telling Their Stories: African Americans in the American Revolution."](#)

teach it

People

- [James Mars](#), activist
- [Gladys Tantaquidgeon](#), Mohegan Medicine Woman
- [Joshua Hempsted](#), diarist



James Mars

Places

- [Connecticut Museum of Culture & History](#), Hartford
- [Hempsted Houses](#), New London
- [Hartford History Center](#)

Events

- [COVID-19 Pandemic](#), 2020
- [Connecticut State Historical Records Advisory Board](#), est. 1976
- [Lafayette's Farewell Tour](#), 1824-25



Joshua Hempsted Diary

FOR THE COMMON GOOD



This theme invites a reconsideration of the origins of American government, democratic institutions, and civic life as they relate to the Revolutionary period in Connecticut. Discussions can center on the democratic ideals outlined in the founding documents and how Connecticut citizens engaged with or were impacted by these ideals during the Revolution.

Questions to Consider:

- *How did the ideas of the American Revolution influence the development of civic life in Connecticut?*
- *How can understanding the origins of our government inform civic engagement today?*
- *What did “freedom” mean at the time of the American Revolution? Does it hold the same meaning today?*

HIGH SCHOOL LESSON

Lemuel Haynes: “Freedom and Liberty in 1776”

- Educator Guide
 - Time Allotment
 - Learning Objectives
 - Standards
 - Materials
 - Step-by-Step Procedure
 - Opportunities for Assessment
 - Images and Additional Resources
- Printables and Worksheets
 - Excerpt from “Liberty Further Extended: Or Free Thoughts on the Illegality of Slave-keeping”
 - Source Analysis Worksheet
 - “Freedom-seeker Advertisement: Jude”
 - “Liberty triumphant” Cartoon
 - “The Horse America throwing his master” Cartoon

LEMUEL HAYNES

Freedom and Liberty in 1776

Educator Guide

Grade Level: High School

Time Allotment: 2–3 class periods (adaptable)

Learning Objectives:

- Students will analyze the foundational ideals of freedom and liberty articulated in 1776 by examining diverse perspectives, such as those presented in the Declaration of Independence and by Lemuel Haynes, in order to understand the complex origins of American democratic ideals and their influence on civic life.
- Students will assess how the competing interpretations of freedom and liberty in 1776 highlight enduring issues in American history related to justice, equality, and representation.

Standards:

- US.Inq.1.a. Explain how compelling and supporting questions reflect an enduring issue in United States History.
- US.Inq.1.b. Explain how supporting questions contribute to an inquiry and how new compelling and supporting questions emerge when engaging sources that represent varied perspectives.
- CG.Civ.5.a. Evaluate the relationship between law-making, enforcement, and interpretation in balancing the rights of the individual with the well being of society (e.g., Bill of Rights, Supreme Court cases).

Materials:

- Printed or digital copies of The Declaration of Independence and “Liberty Further Extended: Or Free Thoughts on the Illegality of Slave-keeping” to distribute to students
- Whiteboard, chart paper, or digital tool for recording student ideas
- Source Analysis Worksheet
- Students will need paper and a writing utensil or a computer to complete the Opportunities for Assessment.

LEMUEL HAYNES

Freedom and Liberty in 1776

Procedure:

1. Teacher Preparation (5 minutes):

- Lemuel Haynes is widely considered to be the first Black man in America to be ordained by a Protestant church. Born in West Hartford in 1753 to a Black father and a white mother, he went to live with Deacon David Rose and his family in Granville, Massachusetts where he was an indentured servant until 1774. In 1776, at the age of 23, he wrote an unfinished, unpublished essay entitled, "Liberty Further Extended: Or Free Thoughts on the Illegality of Slave-keeping," in which he explored the ideals of freedom and liberty, as referenced in the Declaration of Independence, and related them to enslaved people. Haynes' manuscript illustrates that antislavery rhetoric far pre-dates the better-known abolitionist movement of the 1830s. The concept that freedom and liberty are God-given natural rights and that governments can and should be held accountable for protecting those rights was applied by Haynes to enslaved Black people just as it was to American colonists by the writers and signers of the Declaration of Independence. In this activity, students will examine and compare the language and ideas behind these two powerful documents.
- Decide whether you want all of the students to look at both documents or break the class into 2 groups: one to examine the Declaration of Independence and the other to examine the excerpt from "Liberty Further Extended."

2. Annotations (20 minutes):

- Introduce the compelling question: "What did 'freedom' mean at the time of the American Revolution?" Explain that students will be exploring this question through a close reading of two documents written in 1776.
 - Have students read and annotate the documents. What words or phrases stand out as most important in defining freedom? In students' own words, what are the documents saying?

LEMUEL HAYNES

Freedom and Liberty in 1776

3. Focused Analysis (30 minutes):

- Next, move on to the supporting questions and some more focused analysis:
 - What freedoms did the colonists who wrote and signed the Declaration of Independence claim as their rights in the preamble?
 - In what ways did these colonists feel oppressed or not free? What were three grievances or complaints they had regarding freedom and liberty?
 - What did the colonists claim was a reasonable response to having their freedom or liberty curtailed?
 - What do you think Lemuel Haynes meant by his title, "Liberty Further Extended"?
 - What arguments did Lemuel Haynes make on behalf of enslaved people? What grievances or complaints did he articulate?
 - What persuasive language did the colonists and Haynes use?
 - To what extent do you think Haynes was influenced by the Declaration of Independence? Point to evidence in the texts.
 - How did the differing definitions and experiences of "freedom" and "liberty" in 1776 illuminate tensions in the concept of "the common good" for the emerging United States?

4. Final Discussion (10 minutes):

- Revisit the compelling question and discuss the types of actions that were taken by these two groups at the time (discontented colonists and enslaved people) in response to the infringement on their freedom and liberties.
 - These might include joining a militia or enlisting in the Continental army (which could also be a path to freedom for enslaved people), escaping enslavement, working as a spy or passing information, working to purchase one's freedom, petitioning the government, protesting, or speaking or writing about the cause of freedom and liberty.

LEMUEL HAYNES

Freedom and Liberty in 1776

5. Opportunities for Assessment:

- Option 1: Students will select one of the following primary sources and analyze it using the **Source Analysis Worksheet**. (For an additional activity about primary and secondary sources, see page 29). Then they will write a short essay explaining how this new source relates to the Declaration of Independence and/or “Liberty Further Extended.”
 - “Freedom-seeker Advertisement: Jude.” *Connecticut Courant*, August 9, 1774.
 - “Liberty triumphant; or the downfall of oppression.” c. 1774. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.
 - “The Horse America throwing his master.” Published by William White, Westminster, August 1, 1779. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.
- Option 2: Students can respond to one of the following writing prompts:
 - Often enslaved people have not been part of the story of the American Revolution. How do the words and actions of African Americans in the Revolutionary period help define who we are as Americans?
 - Describe a recent event in your school, town, state, or nation in which people raised concerns or took actions related to the “unalienable rights” described in the Declaration of Independence.

“LIBERTY FURTHER EXTENDED...”

Transcription

Transcription:

We hold these truths to be Self-Evident, that all men are created Equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Congress.

[...] Liberty, & freedom, is an innate principle, which is unmovably placed in the human species; and to see a man aspire after it, is not enigmatical, seeing he acts no ways incompatible with his own nature; consequently, he that would infringe upon a man's liberty may reasonably expect to meet with opposition, seeing the defendant cannot comply to non-resistance, unless he counteracts the very laws of nature.

Liberty is a jewel which was handed down to man from the cabinet of Heaven, and is coeval with his existence. And as it proceeds from the Supreme Legislature of the universe, so it is He which hath a sole right to take away; therefore, he that would take away a mans Liberty assumes a prerogative that belongs to another, and acts out of his own domain.

One man may boast a superiority above another in point of Natural privilege; yet if he can produce no convincive arguments in vindication of this preeminence his hypothesis is to be suspected. To affirm, that an Englishman has a right to his Liberty, is a truth which has been so clearly evinced, especially of late, that to spend time in illustrating this, would be but superfluous tautology. But I query, whether Liberty is so contracted a principle as to be confined to any nation under Heaven; nay, I think it not hyperbolical to affirm, that even an African, has equally as good a right to his Liberty in common with Englishmen. [...] (*cont'd*)

“LIBERTY FURTHER EXTENDED...”

Transcription

Transcription, cont’d:

‘It hath pleased God to make of one Blood all nations of men, for to dwell upon the face of the Earth.’ Acts 17, 26–23. And as all are of one species, so there are the same laws, and aspiring principles placed in all nations; and the effect that these laws will produce, are similar to each other. Consequently we may suppose, that what is precious to one man, is precious to another, and what is irksome, or intolerable to one man, is so to another, considered in a law of nature. Therefore we may reasonably conclude, that Liberty is equally as precious to a Black man, as it is to a white one, and Bondage equally as intolerable to the one as it is to the other: Seeing it effects the laws of nature equally as much in the one as it does in the other. But, as I observed before, those privileges that are granted to us by the Divine Being, no one has the least right to take them from us without our consent; and there is not the least precept, or practice, in the sacred scriptures, that constitutes a Black man a Slave, any more than a white one.

Shall a mans color be the decisive criterion whereby to judge of his natural right? Or because a man is not of the same color with his neighbour, shall he be deprived of those things that distinguisheth him from the beasts of the field? [...]

LEMUEL HAYNES

Source Analysis

Structure: What kind of source is it – primary or secondary? Is it a formal government paper, a personal diary entry, a newspaper article, a map, a photograph, or a painting? The type of source affects what kind of information it gives you and how you should use it.

Origin: Where did this source come from? Who made it? When and where was it made? Was it created during the time period you're studying or much, much later? Knowing the origin is the first step to trusting a source. What was happening in the world when the source was made?

Purpose: What was the creator's purpose? Understanding the situation and the creator's goals helps you understand the source. What main idea is this source trying to convey and why?

Point of View: Was the person or group who made this source in a position to really know what happened? Were they there? Were they involved, or just observing? Were they an official record-keeper? What sort of bias might the creator have? Who is the author's intended audience, and how might they affect the reliability of the source?

Connection: How might this source connect to ideas found in the Declaration of Independence and/or "Liberty Further Extended"? Do the sources convey similar ideas, or might their creators argue different opinions?

Questions: Finally, after considering all the above, what other questions do you have about the source? Where might you be able to go for further investigation?

LEMUEL HAYNES

Worksheet: Source Analysis

Source: _____

Structure	
Origin	
Purpose	
Point of View	
Connection	
Questions	

“FREEDOM-SEEKER ADVERTISEMENT: JUDE”

Connecticut Courant, August 9, 1774

Run-away from the subscriber
of Hartford West-Division, on the night following
6th instant, a Molatto servant man named JUDE,
about 21 years old, about 5 feet 8 inches high, had
on a claret colour'd coat and waistcoat, and a light
colour'd waistcoat, one pair of check'd linen trow-
sers, two pair tow ditto, a pair good leather bree-
ches, one white shirt, two check'd ditto, and is
supposed to have a forged pass. **TWENTY DOL-
LARS** Reward and all necessary charges will be paid
to any person who shall take up and return said Fel-
low to **STEPHEN SEDGWICK.**
N. B. All Masters of vessels are forbid carrying
off said fellow.

Transcription:

Run-away from the subscriber of Hartford West-Division, on the night following 6th instant, a Molatto servant man named JUDE, about 21 years old, about 5 feet 8 inches high, had on a claret colour'd coat and waistcoat, and a light colour'd waistcoat, one pair of check'd linen trowsers, two pair tow ditto, a pair good leather breeches, one white shirt, two check'd ditto, and is supposed to have a forged pass. **TWENTY DOLLARS** Reward and all necessary charges will be paid to any person who shall take up and return said Fellow to ... **STEPHEN SEDGWICK.**

N.B. All Masters of vessels are forbid carrying off said fellow.

Freedom-seeker Advertisement: Jude. Connecticut Courant, August 9, 1774.

“LIBERTY TRIUMPHANT; OR THE DOWNFALL OF OPPRESSION”

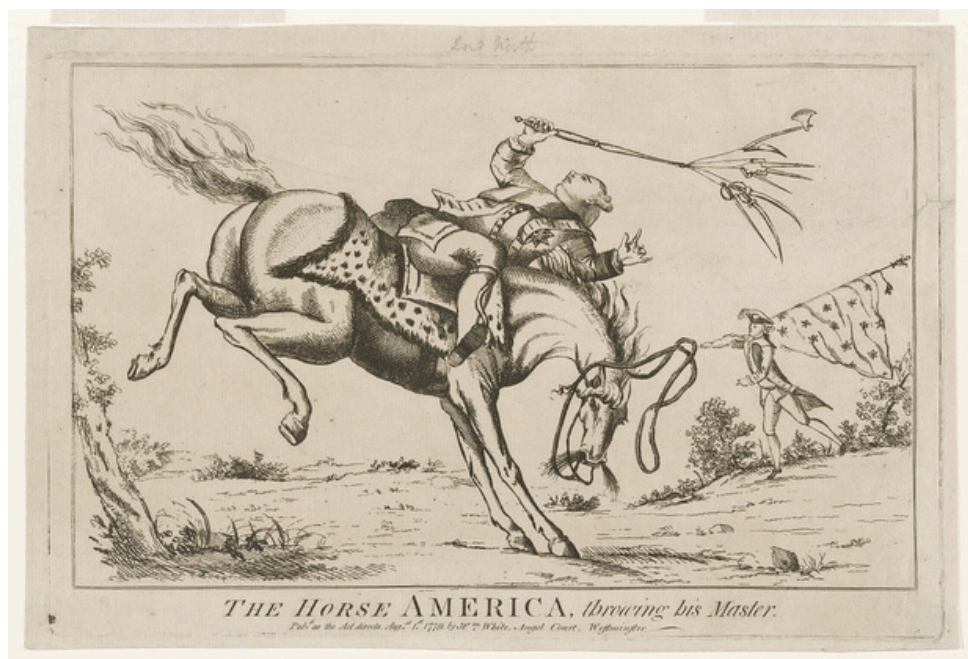
Henry Dawkins, Engraver



“Liberty triumphant; or the downfall of oppression.” c. 1774. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

"THE HORSE AMERICA, THROWING HIS MASTER"

Published by Wm. White



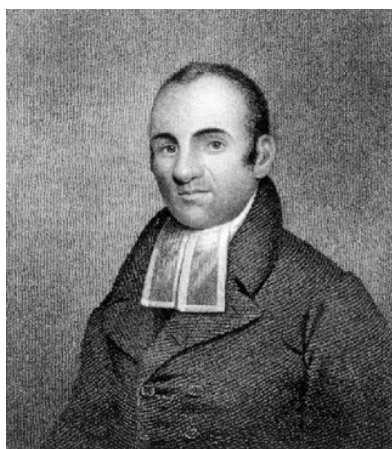
"The Horse America throwing his master." Published by William White, Westminster, August 1, 1779. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

LEMUEL HAYNES

Images, Additional Resources



*Tray Depicting Reverend
Lemuel Haynes, ca. 1835–1840.
Courtesy of the RISD Museum,
Providence, RI. Used through
Public Domain.*



Lemuel Haynes from *Sketches of
the Life and Character of the Rev.
Lemuel Haynes, A.M.* by Timothy
Mather Cooley, 1837,
Wikimedia Commons. Used
through Public Domain.

Additional Resources:

[Lemuel Haynes: America's First Black Ordained Minister](#)

[Teaching American History: Liberty Further Extended](#)

[The Founding Project: Lemuel Haynes' Liberty Further Extended](#)

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

for Teaching "For the Common Good"

Teach It Lessons

- Teach students about government in the Connecticut Colony with a Teach It activity for Grade 5: "The Fundamental Orders: Rules and Laws for Early Colonial Connecticut."
- Help students understand the history of housing segregation in Connecticut with a High School lesson about Sheff v. O'Neill.

teach it

People

- Thomas J. Dodd, state senator
- Constance Baker Motley, federal judge
- Maria Colón Sánchez, activist



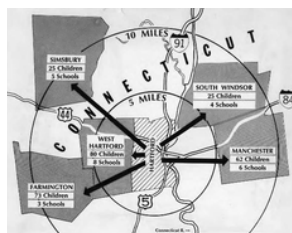
Litchfield Law School

Places

- Mashantucket Pequot Museum & Research Center, Mashantucket
- Old State House, Hartford
- Litchfield Law School, Litchfield

Events

- CT General Assembly Approves the Declaration of Independence - October 10, 1776
- Mohegan Tribe granted federal recognition - May 15, 1994



Map of school bussing (Sheff v. O'Neill)

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Teach It provides inquiry-based activities that reinforce the principles found in the state social studies standards to help Connecticut's teachers bring Connecticut history into the classroom.

ConnecticutHistory.org is a state public history resource that provides engaging, well-researched stories about Connecticut history that link to reliable primary and interpretive resources.

The **Connecticut Council for the Social Studies** will be hosting conferences for students and teachers focused on the themes of the 250th.

Teachers and students are encouraged to participate in **Connecticut History Day** and develop projects related to the 250th and the themes for this commemoration.

Connecticut's **Kid Governor** immerses 5th graders in a real election for the CT Kid Governor, a fellow 5th grader who will represent them during a one-year term of active leadership. The program teaches about state government, voting, elections, and civic participation.

The Museum of the American Revolution has put together a **Summer Reading List** for young readers, covering books appropriate for ages 7-14.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Connecticut Archives Online (CAO)

brings together information about primary source collections from over 50 institutions in CT into one site. CAO can connect you with unique archival material and where you can go to find it.

Connecticut Collections (CTCo) makes resources from over 50 museums and archives throughout the state accessible in one place. CTCo is a resource for teachers, students and researchers to learn discover collections, find local history, and learn about art.

The **Connecticut Digital Archive (CTDA)** is a digital repository of over 3+ million digital objects. CTDA facilitates access to a wide range of resources from over 100 Connecticut organizations.

Connecticut Explored is the nonprofit magazine of Connecticut history. Anyone with an interest in the untold stories of Connecticut's past can satisfy their curiosity with each issue of *Connecticut Explored*. The magazine offers a variety and range of stories that connect our past to our present and future.




administered by **CT**humanities

CT Humanities (CTH) is the non-profit organization recognized by the State of Connecticut to coordinate and lead the plans for commemorative, educational, and civics-based initiatives leading up to and during 2026. CTH will serve as the administrative agent and act as the nonprofit fiduciary on behalf of any activities undertaken by the America 250 | CT Commission.

As the principal grantmaking organization for history, cultural, and civics organizations in Connecticut, CTH will bring together communities and cultural resources throughout our state and lead the sector in developing a meaningful commemoration.

ABOUT THE COMMISSION



In order to recognize this moment in our history, Governor Ned Lamont established the America 250 | CT Commission with Executive Order 22-2.

Mission:

To plan and coordinate activities commemorating the 250th anniversary of the nation's founding; and enhance tourism, economic development, historic education and preservation, and outdoor recreation within the state; and coordinate, engage, and liaise with the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission, and other local, county, and state commissions, as well as private and public organizations and partners. The Commission will develop, encourage, and execute an inclusive celebration, commemoration, and observance of the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence through civic, cultural, and historical education events and programming; and will promote the documentation, identification, and preservation of cultural and historic resources, including archives, buildings, landscapes, objects, and sites related to the semiquincentennial period.

To learn more about the America 250 | CT Commission, including existing resources, upcoming meetings, and ways to get involved, visit CT250.org.

STAY CONNECTED

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