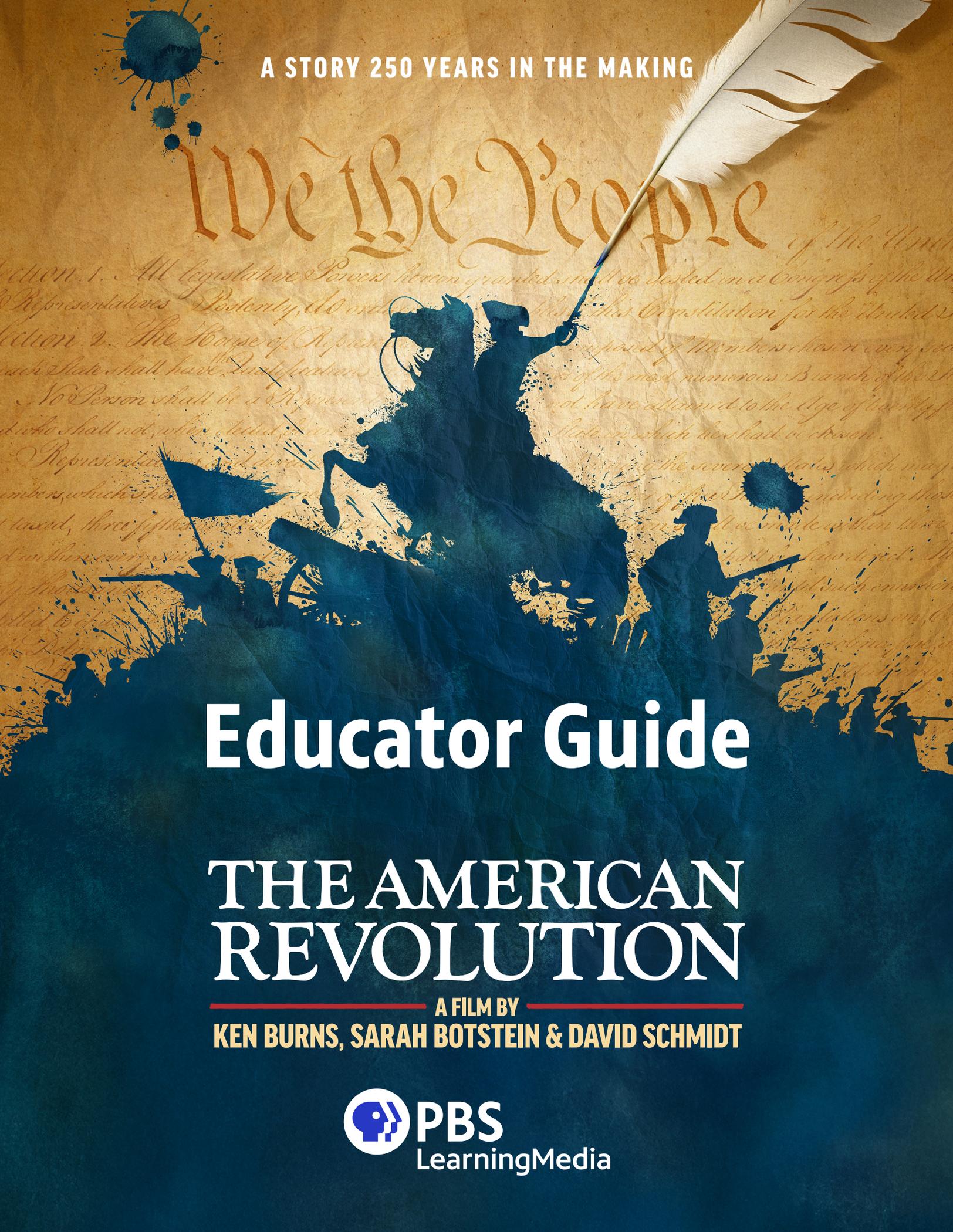


A STORY 250 YEARS IN THE MAKING

We the People

The background features a parchment-like texture with faint, handwritten text from the US Constitution. Overlaid on this is a dark blue silhouette of a battle scene. In the center, a figure on a rearing horse holds a quill pen aloft. To the left, another figure holds a flag. To the right, a third figure holds a rifle. The scene is set against a backdrop of other soldiers and a cannon. The overall color palette is dominated by the parchment's tan and the deep blue of the silhouettes.

Educator Guide

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

A FILM BY

KEN BURNS, SARAH BOTSTEIN & DAVID SCHMIDT



PBS

LearningMedia

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Dear Teachers,

Thank you for the extraordinary work you do every day to inspire, educate, and empower your students to be engaged and active participants in our shared democracy.

It's an honor and a privilege to share *The American Revolution* with you — a film project nearly 10 years in the making. The film explores the complexity, courage, and contradictions of our nation's founding and how the legacy of that founding continues to shape the world today. This story is, in every way, our shared story.

We invite you to explore the companion collection of classroom resources on PBS LearningMedia, designed to support your teaching and deepen your students' understanding of this pivotal era. We hope these resources, through visual storytelling and close engagement with primary sources, spark meaningful dialogue and civic curiosity in your classrooms.

We are grateful for your commitment to helping young people grasp the enduring significance of the American Revolution.

With gratitude,
Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt
Filmmakers, *The American Revolution*

An Introduction to *The American Revolution* Classroom Collection

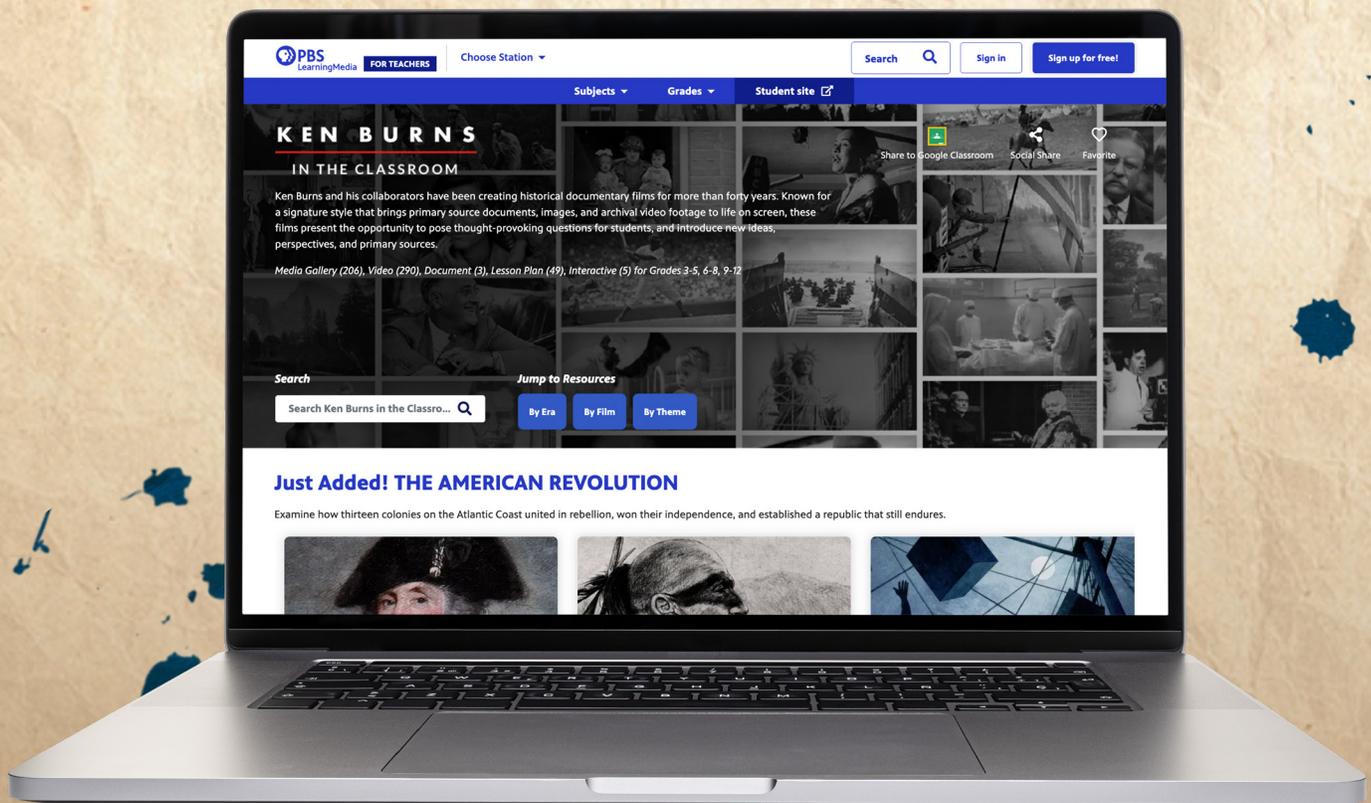
About *The American Revolution*

On November 16, 2025, PBS premiered *The American Revolution*, a six-part, 12-hour documentary series directed by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt about the people who waged and witnessed a war that changed the world. Weaving together a wide variety of perspectives from soldiers, civilians, and leaders — famous and forgotten, young and old, native and newcomer, enslaved and free, rich and poor, Loyalist and Patriot — *The American Revolution* tells how, against all odds, 13 British colonies on the Atlantic Coast united in rebellion, won their independence, and established a republic that still endures.

About PBS LearningMedia's Ken Burns in the Classroom *The American Revolution* Collection

The American Revolution Classroom Collection on PBS LearningMedia brings the film's insights, perspectives, and understandings about the Revolutionary era, along with visual storytelling power, to teachers and students. Part of the [Ken Burns in the Classroom](#) hub, this robust collection offers more than 35 free, media-rich, and curriculum-aligned resources for students in grades 3-12.

- Explore the collection at pbslearningmedia.org/americanrevolution



The classroom resources were developed by educators from across the country and vetted by leading scholars. Anchored by an essential question, resources incorporate video clips from the film, teaching tips, and discussion questions. Many also include activities, student handouts, primary sources, and background readings.

- [Meet the Curriculum Writers and Advisers](#)

The classroom resources are organized into five commonly taught coverage areas:

- Life in the British Colonies
- Causes of the American Revolution
- Key Events of the Revolutionary Era
- Key Figures and Ideas of the Revolutionary Era
- Consequences and Legacies of the Revolutionary Era

The American Revolution Classroom Collection aims to help teachers cultivate critical thinking, engage students in historical analysis, and with primary sources, develop students' ability to understand multiple perspectives, connect the past to the present, and develop informed citizens. This collection of resources reflects the various lenses through which to consider the Revolutionary era highlighted in the documentary series, including the global nature of the conflict, the American Revolution as a civil war, and the experiences of Native nations during this time.

Getting Started

For tips on how to get started using the collection, review the [Planning Checklist](#).

For classroom resources and features at a glance, check out the [Quick Guide](#).



Meet the Educators and Content Advisers Behind PBS LearningMedia's *The American Revolution* Classroom Collection

PBS LearningMedia resources are intentionally designed for the classroom in collaboration with educators from across the United States and vetted by subject matter experts.

Educators and the Classroom Resources They Authored



Jennifer J. Abramowski-Tiernan
Education Consultant, Lagrangeville, New York

- [Remembering Benedict Arnold](#)
- [Tsi'yu-gunsini \(Dragging Canoe\) and Resistance to American Expansion During the American Revolution](#)
- [The Role of France in the American Revolution](#)



Jennifer Connolly
Principal and History Teacher, Preston High School, Bronx, New York

- [The Poetry and Legacy of Phillis Wheatley](#)
- [Demographics of the British Colonies](#)



Cora Davis
Middle School Educator and Director of Communications for Notre Dame Mission Volunteers, Tyrone, Georgia

- [The Economies of the British Colonies](#)



Autumn Doss
English Teacher, Don Tyson School of Innovation, Springdale, Arkansas

- [John Adams' Contributions to Constitutional Thinking](#)
- [Women's Contributions to the American Revolution](#)
- [Diction and Pathos in Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*](#)
- [The Debates of the Continental Congress](#)



Jennifer Egas
AP U.S. History Instructor, Georgia Virtual School, Georgia

- [The Impact of Disease on the Revolutionary War](#)
- [Changing Views of King George III: From Reverence to Rebellion](#)

Educator Curriculum Writers and the Classroom Resources They Authored - Continued



Jaclyn Jecha

Educator, New Berlin West Middle and High School, New Berlin, Wisconsin

- [Joseph Brant/Thayendanegea: Native Sovereignty During the Revolutionary Era](#)
- [Native Nations and British Colonial America: Sovereignty, Diplomacy, and Resistance](#)
- [Native Nations Before the American Revolution](#)
- [The Stockbridge Community During and After the American Revolution](#)



David Kendrick

High School Social Studies Teacher, Loganville High School, Loganville, Georgia

- [The Declaration of Independence: Thomas Jefferson's Influences](#)
- [The Complexities of the Articles of Confederation](#)



Mary Kate Lonergan

Social Studies Curriculum Specialist, Fayetteville-Manlius Central Schools, Manlius, New York

- [Analyzing Letters Between John and Abigail Adams](#)
- [Thomas Paine's Common Sense: A Call to Revolution](#)
- [The Coercive Acts and the Road to Revolution](#)
- [The Meaning of Democracy During the Founding Era](#)



Niles Mattier

Instructor of Education, Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts

- [The Influence of Dunmore's Proclamation on the American Revolution](#)
- [James Forten and the Experiences of Black Patriots During the American Revolution](#)



Evangeline Mitchell

Middle/High School Teacher, Klein High School, Klein, Texas

- [The Boston Tea Party](#)
- [Conflict Over Land and the American Revolution](#)

Educator Curriculum Writers and the Classroom Resources They Authored - Continued



Meghan Selway

Veteran Teacher/Curriculum Specialist, Los Angeles, California

- [Patriot, Loyalist, Neutral: Differing Perspectives on the American Revolution](#)
- [Patriots and Loyalists During the American Revolution](#)
- [The Impact of Global Alliances on the Revolutionary War](#)
- [Native Americans and the American Revolution](#)



Marc Turner

U.S. History and Government Teacher, Spring Hill High School, Columbia, South Carolina

- [Nathanael Greene and the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War](#)
- [Freedom and Liberty: The Influence of Revolutionary Ideals](#)



Bonnie Belshe

George Washington's Mount Vernon, Department Chair, Social Studies, Monta Vista High School, Cupertino, California

- [George Washington's Leadership Traits and Strategies](#)
- [George Washington and the Seven Years' War](#)

Content Advisers



Friederike Baer

Film Adviser and Interviewee, Associate Professor History, Penn State Abington College



Alan Taylor

Film Adviser and Interviewee, Professor of History, Emeritus, University of Virginia



Thomas Donnelly

Assistant Professor of Law, University of Richmond, Chief Scholar, National Constitution Center



Serena Zabin

Film Interviewee, Professor of History, Carleton College



Kathleen DuVal

Film Adviser and Interviewee, Professor of History, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Planning Checklist

Get Started Using PBS LearningMedia's *The American Revolution Classroom Collection*

Review your pacing guide/scope and sequence

Note the Revolutionary era topics you are required to teach (from Colonial America through the Revolutionary War) that overlap with the following content coverage areas in PBS LearningMedia's *The American Revolution Classroom Collection*:

- Life in the British Colonies
- Causes of the American Revolution
- Key Events of the Revolutionary Era
- Key Figures and Ideas of the Revolutionary Era
- Consequences and Legacies of the Revolutionary Era

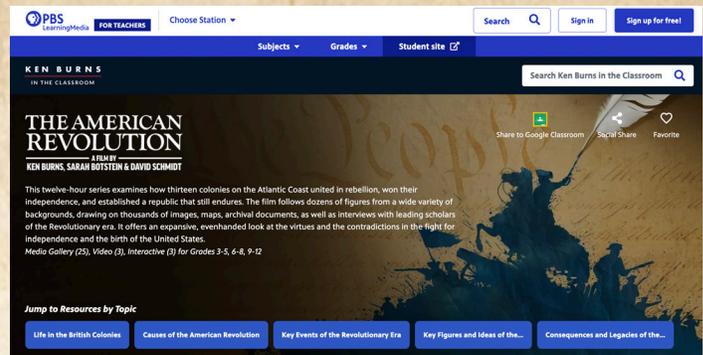
Explore the relevant coverage areas in *The American Revolution Classroom Collection* on PBS LearningMedia

Identify classroom resources within each relevant coverage area that may enhance the topics you are planning to teach or that your students might find interesting and relatable.

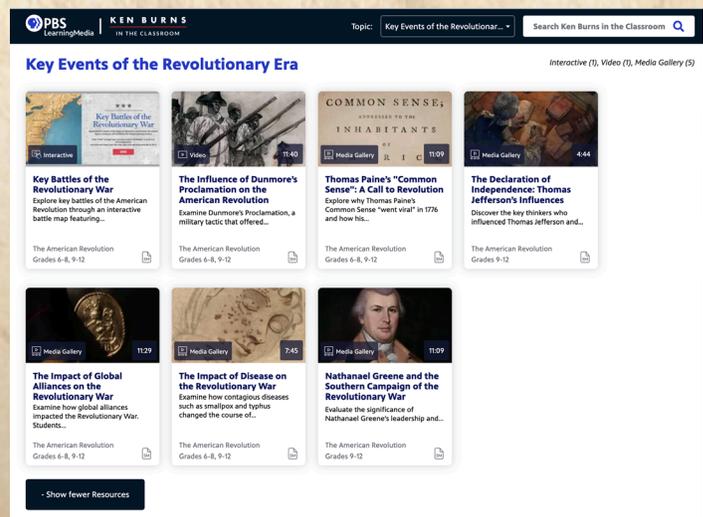
Review the *The American Revolution Classroom Collection* [Quick Guide](#).

Go further, and search the collection at pbslearningmedia.org/americanrevolution.

TIP: Sign in to your free [PBS LearningMedia](#) account to use the “Favorite” feature that will enable you to save relevant classroom resources for later use.



Collection introduction with coverage areas



Classroom resources in the “Key Events” coverage area

Planning Checklist - Continued

□ Preview classroom resources and support materials

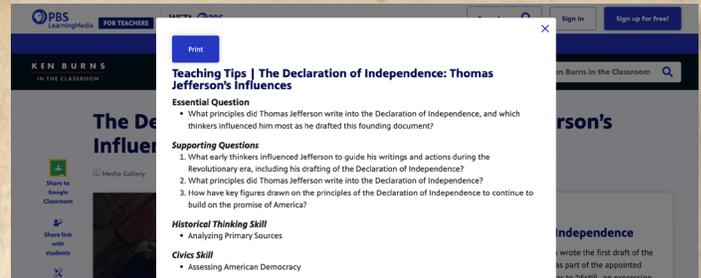
PBS LearningMedia recommends previewing the resource video clips as well as support materials for teaching tips and student activities before teaching with any given resource.

Some resources include interactive media. These include both interactives and interactive lessons, defined as follows:

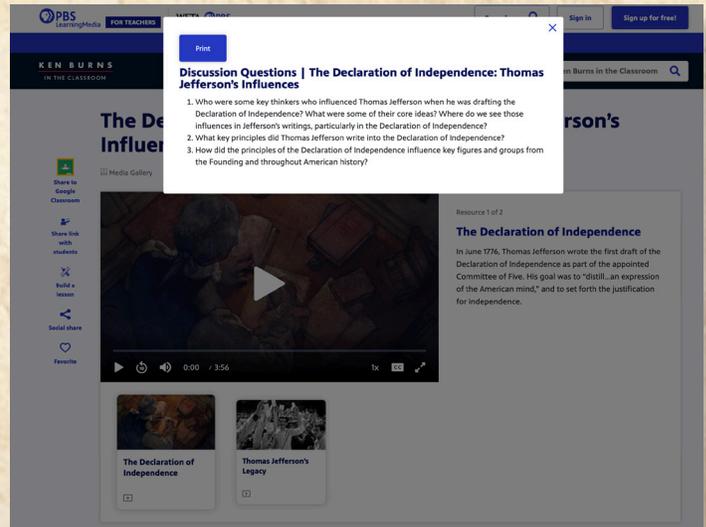
- **Interactive:** An experience that actively engages students as they learn the content. Students have the ability to explore at their own pace and gather information as they proceed through the learning experience. The interactive part of a learning experience is guided by the teacher.
- **Interactive Lesson:** An individualized learning opportunity for students to complete at their own pace. It fully integrates and utilizes media and provides students with engaging learning and assessment tools that support diverse learners. This learning experience is fully contained and does not require facilitation from the teacher.

Each resource includes a mix of support materials, including:

- An essential question
- Before viewing, while viewing, and after viewing questions
- “Taking It Further” activity suggestions
- Student handouts
- Discussion questions



Teaching Tips with Essential Question



Teaching Tips with Discussion Questions

- Primary sources
- Background readings

Review resource alignment to national and state curriculum standards.

TIP: Sign in to your free [PBS LearningMedia](#) account to see state standards alignment.

Planning Checklist - Continued

Decide how to incorporate the classroom resources to best support your students

PBS LearningMedia's classroom resources are designed to be flexible. Make it your own! You know your students best and what will make the most sense in your classroom.

Here are a few examples of how to integrate into classroom instruction:

1. Map out when to add pauses during clips as an opportunity to provide additional context to assist your students.
2. Use only parts of a resource, such as the media clip(s), essential question, and one activity.
3. Provide more scaffolding to a primary source or use smaller excerpts of what's provided.

Share with your students

Easily share resources from PBS LearningMedia with your students. Choose the share feature that works best for your classroom:

- "Share link with students" button on the resource page creates a simplified view of the media that can be shared with your class.
- PBS LearningMedia is integrated with Google Classroom, Clever, Schoology, and Remind.

Repeat as many times as needed!

Support Materials for Teachers

USING THIS RESOURCE

Teaching Tips | The Declaration of Independence: Thomas Jefferson's Influences

Support Materials for Use with Students

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Discussion Questions | The Declaration of Independence: Thomas Jefferson's Influences

Support materials to mix and match

The screenshot shows the PBS LearningMedia interface for the resource "The Declaration of Independence: Thomas Jefferson's Influences". The page includes a navigation bar with "PBS LearningMedia" and "FOR TEACHERS" tabs, a search bar, and a "Sign in" button. Below the navigation, there are tabs for "Subjects", "Grades", and "Student site". The main content area features a video player with a play button, a progress bar at 0:00 / 3:56, and a volume icon. To the right of the video is a text description of the resource. Below the video and text are two related resource thumbnails: "The Declaration of Independence" and "Thomas Jefferson's Legacy". A sidebar on the left contains sharing options: "Share to Google Classroom", "Share link with students", "Build a lesson", "Social share", and "Favorite". A red arrow points to the "Share to Google Classroom" button.

Google Classroom and other share icons

Quick Guide to PBS LearningMedia's *The American Revolution* Classroom Collection

| Resource Name & Coverage Area | Grade Band(s) | ELA Connection | Primary Source Documents | Historical Artifacts | Interactive or Interactive Lesson* |
|---|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Life in the British Colonies | | | | | |
| Demographics of the British Colonies | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| Native Nations and British Colonial America: Sovereignty, Diplomacy, and Resistance | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Patriot, Loyalist, Neutral: Differing Perspectives on the American Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | | | |
| Patriots and Loyalists During the American Revolution | 3-5 | | | | |
| Native Nations Before the American Revolution | 3-5 | | | | |
| The Economies of the British Colonies | 6-8, 9-12 | | | | |
| Causes of the American Revolution | | | | | |
| Conflict Over Land and the American Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | | | |
| The Coercive Acts and the Road to Revolution | 9-12 | | | | |
| Diction and Pathos in Thomas Paine's <i>Common Sense</i> | 9-12 | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| The Boston Tea Party | 3-5 | | | ✓ | |
| Key Events of the Revolutionary Era | | | | | |
| Key Battles of the Revolutionary War | 6-8, 9-12 | | | | Interactive |
| The Influence of Dunmore's Proclamation on the American Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| Thomas Paine's <i>Common Sense</i>: A Call to Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| The Declaration of Independence: Thomas Jefferson's Influences | 9-12 | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| The Impact of Global Alliances on the Revolutionary War | 6-8, 9-12 | | | ✓ | |
| The Impact of Disease on the Revolutionary War | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| Nathanael Greene and the Southern Campaign of the Revolutionary War | 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| The Debates of the Continental Congress | 6-8, 9-12 | | | ✓ | |
| The Role of France In the American Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | | ✓ | Interactive Lesson |
| Native Americans and the American Revolution | 9-12 | | | | Interactive Lesson |

Quick Guide to PBS LearningMedia's *The American Revolution* Classroom Collection - Continued

| Resource Name & Coverage Area | Grade Band(s) | ELA Connection | Primary Source Documents | Historical Artifacts | Interactive or Interactive Lesson* |
|---|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Key Figures and Ideas of the Revolutionary Era | | | | | |
| George Washington's Leadership Traits and Strategies (in partnership with George Washington's Mount Vernon) | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| James Forten and the Experiences of Black Patriots During the American Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| The Experiences of a Common Soldier During the American Revolution: Joseph Plumb Martin | 6-8, 9-12 | | | | Interactive |
| Analyzing Letters Between John and Abigail Adams | 3-5 | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Women's Contributions to the American Revolution | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| The Poetry and Legacy of Phillis Wheatley | 9-12 | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Motivations for Serving During the American Revolution: John Greenwood | 6-8, 9-12 | | | | Interactive |
| The Stockbridge Community During and After the American Revolution | 9-12 | | | | |
| Changing Views of King George III: From Reverence to Rebellion | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| Tsi'yu-gunsini (Dragging Canoe) and Resistance to American Expansion During the American Revolution | 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| Joseph Brant/Thayendanegea: Native Sovereignty During the Revolutionary Era | 9-12 | | | ✓ | |
| Remembering Benedict Arnold | 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| The Experiences of a Young Girl During the American Revolution: Betsy Ambler | 3-5, 6-8 | | ✓ | | Interactive |
| George Washington and the Seven Years' War (in partnership with George Washington's Mount Vernon) | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |

Quick Guide to PBS LearningMedia's *The American Revolution* Classroom Collection - Continued

| Resource Name & Coverage Area | Grade Band(s) | ELA Connection | Primary Source Documents | Historical Artifacts | Interactive or Interactive Lesson* |
|--|---------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Consequences and Legacies of The Revolutionary Era | | | | | |
| The Complexities of the Articles of Confederation | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| John Adams' Contributions to Constitutional Thinking | 9-12 | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Freedom and Liberty: The Influence of Revolutionary Ideals | 9-12 | | ✓ | | |
| The Meaning of Democracy During the Founding Era | 6-8, 9-12 | | ✓ | | Interactive Lesson |

*Interactive: An experience that actively engages students as they learn the content. Students have the ability to explore at their own pace and gather information as they proceed through the learning experience. The interactive part of a learning experience is guided by the teacher.

Interactive Lesson: An individualized learning opportunity for students to complete at their own pace. It fully integrates and utilizes media and provides students with engaging learning and assessment tools that support diverse learners. This learning experience is fully contained and does not require facilitation from the teacher.



The American Revolution Quick Links & Information

- *The American Revolution* Classroom Collection on PBS LearningMedia
pbslearningmedia.org/americanrevolution
- Teaching *The American Revolution* at 250 Years: Centralized hub for educational content and events related to *The American Revolution* and teaching the 250th anniversary of the United States, including classroom resources from local PBS member station producers
pbslearningmedia.org/pbsteach250
- *The American Revolution* series on PBS: How to watch; community events; resource center for librarians, colleges and universities, museums, and individuals; and more pbs.org/americanrevolution
- *The American Revolution* Youth Media Challenge: To engage students in Revolutionary ideas through media-making youthmedia.kqed.org/americanrevolution
- Stay up to date and find more relevant teaching content:
 - [Facebook](#)
 - [Instagram](#)
 - [YouTube](#)
 - [PBS LearningMedia Teachers' Lounge Blog](#)

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