

# **A Revolutionary Hero (As seen by his horse)**

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## **Annotated Bibliography:**

Berkin, Carol. *Revolutionary Mothers*. Vintage Books, 2005.

In this book Carol Berkin illuminates the various roles women had during the war. She vividly describes the turmoil and horror of having a war fought on your home front. Berkin explains why women were content to “return to normalcy” following the war. I found this book to be a great personal resource. There are usually only a couple of token women mentioned when discussing this war, so this book speaks for all those “common” people of the gender who contributed so much to the cause. I fully intend to share this information when studying the war with my students.

Bobrick, Benson. *Fight for Freedom*. Byron Preiss Visual Publications, Inc., 2004.

This book presents the events of the American Revolution in chronological order. There is one page of information presented on each topic with a full-size oil painting, photo, political cartoon, or map on the opposite page. This format is visually appealing to children, and the amount of writing seen at one time does not overwhelm them. *Fight for Freedom* contains profiles of the historical figures of the time as well as the anecdotes of soldiers and civilians. Many wonderful primary sources can be found in this book as well as snippets of information on topics related to the Revolutionary War.

Butterfield, Herbert. *The Whig Interpretation of History*. W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1965.

I gained some general lessons about viewing history from this book. Perhaps most importantly to remember when teaching students is to study the past in order to discover significances, not just to learn facts. Yet another point that struck me, primarily due to the focus of my unit, is to always be cognizant of the point of view from which the history is being written. It makes a lot of sense that it is neither fair nor accurate to view events from the past through eyes of the present. The dry and cumbersome manner that this book is written in makes it valuable only to adults.

Fradin, Dennis Brindell. *Let It Begin Here*. Scholastic, Inc.

This nonfiction picture book begins at 9:30 p.m. on April 18, 1775 and ends at 7:00 p.m. on April 19, 1775. It drives home two ideas. First, the British were not at all expecting the colonists to react in the manner they did to their aggression. Second, the War for Independence was to be a long and bloody uphill battle for the colonists. The realistic pictures in this book help students to visualize the setting of the war, the proximity in which the two sides fought, and the inequality of the two armed forces. This

is a quick and accurate description of those first all-important beginnings of the war.

Freedman, Russell. *Give Me Liberty! The Story of the Declaration of Independence*. Scholastic, Inc., 2000.

This book focuses on the causes of the Revolutionary War and the events that led up to the colonists declaring their independence on July 4, 1776. The material is divided into nine chapters, written in large print and consisting of numerous photos, portraits, and cartoons. Presenting this material to the students one section at a time or assigning chapters to individual students would work well for upper grade students. The full text of the Declaration of Independence is included.

Giblin, James Cross. *The Many Rides of Paul Revere*. Scholastic, Inc., 2007.

This is an illustrated biography of the Revolutionary War hero. It begins with his humble beginnings as a French immigrant's son and proceeds through his role in the war. Revere's relationships with family and friends are illuminated as well as his many occupations. The book is written in large, well spaced print and includes photos on just about every page. Students will be enthralled with seeing some of the actual silver products and engravings he made as well as his personal belongings. Included in this book is the poem "Paul Revere's Ride" written by Longfellow and a time line of Revere's life. This is a phenomenal, biographical source.

McCullough, David. *1776*. Simon & Schuster, 2005.

This book focuses on the time period from July 1775 through the first week of 1777 and thus provides a detailed look at American independence. British and American leaders, both military and civilian, are presented without favor. A view of both Patriots and Loyalists, heroes and traitors, is provided as well. The siege of Boston and the organization of the American army are given particular attention. There are numerous primary sources included in this book. These include first hand accounts by late eighteenth century authors and letters exchanged between historic figures of the day. *1776* is an invaluable resource for my own knowledge and understanding of content material.

Moore, Kay. *If You Lived at the Time of the American Revolution*. Scholastic, Inc. 1997.

This book is divided into sections by questions elementary students might have about the war and the people who were involved in it. There are about thirty guiding questions followed by concise, yet interesting, responses. What I particularly like about this book is the way the questions flip-flop back and forth between the scenario for the Loyalists and then the Patriots. It is a conscious reminder to consider the perspective of all the parties involved in an event. This is an easy-to-read book for upper elementary students. It can provide you with a quick reference for the type of questions students so often ask about the everyday life of people from a different time period.

Randall, Willard Sterne. *Alexander Hamilton: A Life*. Perennial, 2003.

This biography provides an in-depth look at one of the pivotal figures in our country's establishment. Randall examines every part of Hamilton's professional and personal life beginning with his humble beginnings. The reader gets to know Hamilton as an entity as opposed to his behavior in one moment of time. This then changes one's perspective of him; you now judge him by the whole of his experiences. This work is based on extensive research and contains a lengthy biography. While the book is naturally not suitable for elementary students, it serves as a reminder to the educator to present a holistic view of historical figures whenever possible.

## Goals:

I will use this unit with my 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading class after completing the necessary components of their literature anthology. As a group we will read the chapter book *Mr. Revere and I* by Robert Lawson. This book is told from the perspective of his horse, and will lend itself perfectly to the central question regarding point of view. Following the reading of this novel, students will participate in a number of activities. The intentions of the activities are for students to gain a realistic image of a revolutionary hero and a deeper understanding of the war. Students will critically view various portraits of their subjects in order to identify numerous personality traits. They will then compare these results with information they gain from researching primary documents of their heroes.

## Essential Questions:

- Who were the heroes of the American Revolution?
- What were the primary personality traits of these heroes?
- How have these figures been romanticized?

## Challenge Questions:

- How did these men and women help to attain the liberty that you enjoy today?
- Which people living today do you predict might become such historical figures?

## Objectives:

- Students will identify the effects of point of view.
- Students will read a variety of nonfiction text.
- Students will become experts on a Revolutionary War hero.
- Students will write from an assigned perspective.
- Students will evaluate primary sources for reliability.

## Standards:

### National History Standard:

#### Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s)

- **Standard 2:** The impact of the American Revolution on politics, economy, and society

### Vermont Standards:

- **5.8 Types of Literature:** Students read a variety of types of literature, fiction, and nonfiction
- **5.13g Responding to Text:** Students respond to literary texts and public documents using interpretive, critical, and evaluative processes. This is evident when students: explain the effects of point of view/bias.
- **6.3c Analyzing Knowledge:** Students analyze knowledge as a collection of selected facts and interpretations based on a particular historical or social setting. This is evident when students: recognize and evaluate the human tendencies to categorize, romanticize, or vilify individuals and groups through selected facts and interpretations.
- **6.4dd Historical Connections:** Students identify major historical eras and analyze periods of transition in various times in their local community, in Vermont, in the U.S., and in various locations worldwide to understand the past, the present, and the relationship between the two. This is evident when students: sequence historical eras; identify the characteristics of transitions between eras, being sure to make connections to the present; and research, examine,

- and analyze historical data from each era.
- **6.6c Being a Historian:** Students use historical methodology to make interpretations concerning history, change, and continuity. This is evident when students: collect and use primary resources in building original historical interpretations.

## **Prior Knowledge Required:**

Students should have some basic knowledge about the Revolutionary War prior to reading *Mr. Revere and I*. My 6<sup>th</sup> grade students studied this time period when they were 5<sup>th</sup> graders. They read about the topic, made maps and time lines, and created objects for each letter of the alphabet using the book titled *Yankee Doodle America* by Wendell Minor to help them recall essential information about the war.

In addition, they should understand point of view and recognize that this chapter book is being told from the first person point of view. I discussed this with students while we were reading short stories in their anthology. They were often asked to analyze situations from different characters' perspectives.

## Activities:

- Read *Mr. Revere and I* by Robert Lawson.
- Create “upside-down book” pages of events in *Mr. Revere and I*. These are split pages in which students will write about situations in the novel from the points of view of both the colonists and the British. (See pgs. 92-93 of *The Big Book of Reading Response Activities*)
- Conduct a simulation of “The Shot Heard Round the World.” (See *Easy Simulations: American Revolution*) In this simulation students reenact the events of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Then they compare and evaluate six different primary-source accounts of this first battle of the war.
- Create a comparative timeline of the American Revolution and *Mr. Revere and I*. The purpose of this activity is to have students compare the actual events of the time period with those of the historical fiction novel. (See pg. 149 of *The Big Book of Reading Response Activities*)
- Make a collage of various portraits of biography subjects. Compare and contrast these.
- Examine primary documents, including quotations, of biography subjects for revealed character traits.
- Make “Pop Stars.” Students paint two liter soda bottles to look like the revolutionary hero that they researched. These may be displayed with a quote the student found particularly telling about his/her subject’s personality. They could also record the quote on a device that could be activated by a button. This would make a fun, interactive display. (See pg. 148 of *The Big Book of Reading Response Activities*)

## Assessment:

- Vocabulary and comprehension activities for *Mr. Revere and I* (See Teacher Guide in Resources)
- Rubric for reading responses to *Mr. Revere and I* (See Appendix)
- Rubric for students' diary prompt to simulation experience (See Appendix)
- Rubric for time line (See Appendix)
- Rubric for "Pop Stars" (See Appendix)

## Resources:

- Multiple copies of *Mr. Revere and I* by Robert Lawson. Little, Brown, and Company, 1953.
- *Mr. Revere and I* Teacher's Guide by Novel Units, 2004. ([www.educyberstor.com](http://www.educyberstor.com))
- *The Big Book of Reading Response Activities* by Michael Gravois, 2007. ([www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com))
- *Easy Simulations: American Revolution* by Renay Scott, 2007. ([www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com))

## Accommodations:

- *Mr. Revere and I* should be read aloud with the students. It contains some very challenging vocabulary and obsolete language.
- Participation in literature circles will enhance the understanding of all.
- Provide students with an evaluation tool to use when examining primary documents.

## Appendix:

- [www.loc.gov](http://www.loc.gov) (provides a wealth of primary documents)
- [www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty](http://www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty) (an online companion site to the six-part PBS documentary on the American Revolution)
- [www.iboston.org](http://www.iboston.org) (provides detailed information on the sites, people, and events that played a key role in the Revolution)
- [www.paulreverehouse.org](http://www.paulreverehouse.org) (provides details on “The Midnight Ride” as well as other topics relating to Paul Revere)

**Rubric for Constructed Response**  
**Developed by Karen Kurzman (kurzman@comcast.net)**

<b>Expert</b>	<b>Practitioner</b>	<b>Apprentice</b>
Has a strong topic sentence (focus)	Has a strong topic sentence (focus)	Topic Sentence missing
Has a depth of relevant details and elaboration (specific examples, facts, statistics, etc.)	Has relevant details and elaboration (specific examples, facts, statistics, etc.)	Has some relevant details and elaboration (specific examples, facts, statistics, etc.)
Has an insightful concluding sentence	Has a concluding sentence	No concluding sentence

## Diary Prompt Assessment Rubric

(See p. 22 *Easy Simulations: American Revolution* in Resources)

Essential Elements	5	3	1
Historical Accuracy	<p>Student included references to historical events consistent with the era under study.</p> <p>Student included descriptions and discussions of historical events that were factually accurate.</p>	<p>Student included references to historical events consistent with the era under study.</p> <p>Student provided some evidence of understanding the facts of the historical event, but included some inaccuracies or eliminated some of the most essential facts of the event.</p>	<p>Student did not include references to the historical event under consideration.</p> <p>Student provided little evidence of understanding the essential facts of the historical event under consideration.</p>
Characterization	<p>Student response clearly indicated that he/she assumed the role of his/her character while writing.</p> <p>Student response indicated how he/she felt about the events.</p> <p>Student demonstrated an understanding of the event and how it affected him/her as if he/she were living during that era.</p>	<p>Student response clearly indicated that he/she assumed the role of his/her character while writing.</p> <p>Student response indicated how he/she felt about the events.</p> <p>Student showed little evidence of understanding how the event affected his/her life.</p>	<p>Student response wasn't consistently written from the role of his/her character.</p> <p>Student response indicated how he/she felt about the events.</p>
Responsiveness to the Prompt	<p>Student addressed all the essential components or questions of the diary prompt.</p>	<p>Student addressed most of the essential components or questions of the diary prompt.</p>	<p>Student response showed little relationship to the diary prompt.</p>

### Time Line Rubric

Essential Elements	1	2	3	4
<b>Events</b>	<b>More than one significant event is omitted.</b>	<b>A significant event is omitted.</b>	<b>All relevant events are included.</b>	<b>Events are labeled and dated accurately.</b>
<b>Illustrations/Descriptions</b>	<b>An illustration or caption is omitted.</b>	<b>Caption(s) contain some inaccuracies or omit essential facts.</b>	<b>All events include illustrations with captions.</b>	<b>Events include descriptive captions.</b>
<b>Presentation</b>	<b>No attention paid to appearance.</b>	<b>One element of the presentation format is missing.</b>	<b>All work is in presentation format.</b>	<b>Time line is orally presented.</b>

## Pop Star Rubric

<b>Essential Elements</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Appearance</b>	<b>Pop Star bears no resemblance to the famous person.</b>	<b>Pop Star resembles the assigned famous person.</b>	<b>Pop Star is identifiable.</b>	<b>3-D materials were used to add detail to the Pop Star.</b>
<b>Recording</b>	<b>Chosen quote has no significance.</b>	<b>Quote is ambiguous.</b>	<b>Recorded quote was significant in history and is easily interpreted.</b>	<b>Quote is recorded with forcefulness and expression.</b>

## Reflection Paper:

The course “The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty” has been valuable to me and my teaching. From the week-long course, I thought of a way I could incorporate the history content with my teaching of perspective during reading class. My students are reading *Mr. Revere and I* by Robert Lawson. This book is told from Paul Revere’s horse’s point of view. Since Robert Lawson is also an illustrator, the book contains humorous illustrations of characters. Students will examine these illustrations to analyze characters, just as they will examine photos and portraits of Revolutionary heroes later.

One benefit I reaped from the course was acquiring a number of books. Besides having a class set of the Robert Lawson book, I now have biographies and stories of time travel to share with the students regarding the Revolutionary War. In addition, I have resources with new ideas I’ll use including using music and simulations to help students really understand the events. The new materials make it exciting to teach a topic you have in the past, but now maybe with a new slant.

The time this course has allowed me to spend with peers is the most valuable component of all. The discussions about events in past and current history have been mind provoking. As a teacher from a very small school, it has also been wonderful to hear about how colleagues of the same grade level are teaching this content. The ideas and resources I have walked away from our meetings with have been relevant and helpful. The opportunities for this type of sharing are few and far between in this profession.

“The Enduring Legacy of the American Revolution: Liberty” gave me the opportunity to hear guest speakers and authors. If I had not been part of this course, this would not have been possible. Yes, I attend professional workshops, but the content is always education-based, and the focus most frequently is incorporating new teaching strategies. It is very rare to have the opportunity to listen to an expert in a field of knowledge. From these experiences, my own knowledge was increased and my perspective altered.

In conclusion, I feel I have profited from being a part of this course. I feel that students benefit from having teachers who continually try to expand their knowledge and renew their excitement for teaching. Thus, I believe my present and future students will also reap the rewards of my participation.

