

The Revolutionary World of World History



ACTIVE LEARNING
FOCUS

FULL UNIT - Teacher Facilitation Guide

Social Sciences, Humanities, Grades 9–10

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is world history, and how is it different from national histories?

LEARNING GOALS

Students will be able to:

- define world history, and
- consider a historical event from multiple perspectives.

LESSON PLAN OVERVIEW

This lesson introduces students to the study of world history. It is intended to broaden students' understanding of historical events and processes, moving from issues and events that happen around students and their communities to issues and events that have implications for everyone around the world. In this lesson, students work to place the American Revolution in a global context.

HOW TO PREPARE

1. Make a copy of:
 - [The Revolutionary World of World History](#) (Google Slides)
 - [The Revolutionary World of World History Thought Catcher](#) (Google Doc)
2. Preview the activities, including all resources.
3. Take note of any changes you would like to make and edit as needed to accommodate your students' needs. Consider which activities lend themselves best to teacher facilitation, group **collaboration**, and/or independent practice and edit the slide deck as needed.
4. The facilitation notes that follow offer suggestions for how to best implement each activity in the slide deck, with active learning in mind.
5. Make a list of must-dos.

LEARNING ARTIFACT OPTIONS

DIFFERENTIATE

1. Questions about the American Revolution from two perspectives: an American historian and a world historian
2. Mock dialogue about the American Revolution between a world historian and a national historian
3. Visual displaying an American historian's perspective on the American Revolution versus a world historian's perspective on the American Revolution

ACTIVITIES

JUMP TO

[Activity 1: Our Revolution \(Slides 2–3\)](#)

- [Slide 2](#)
- [Slide 3](#)

[Activity 2: Whose War? \(Slides 4-5\)](#)

- [Slide 4](#)
- [Slide 5](#)

[Activity 3: The Power of World History \(Slide 6\)](#)

- [Slide 6](#)

[Activity 4: The Questions of World History \(Slide 7-8\)](#)

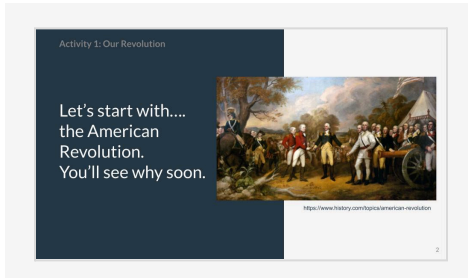
- [Slide 7](#)
- [Slide 8](#)

LESSON FRAMEWORK

ACTIVITY 1: OUR REVOLUTION (SLIDES 2–3)

Learning Goal: Describe the basics of the American Revolution.

Slide 2



Invite students to open and make a copy of [The Revolutionary World of World History Thought Catcher](#). They will use it to capture notes throughout the lesson.

SAY: History is all around us. We see it in our communities and our families, and we learn about the country's history in school and on the news.

Still, there's an even bigger world of history around us. Because of that, we can't always think about it or study it in the same way we would our local or national history. That's where a different kind of history comes into play: world history!

But, what exactly is world history? And what makes it different from national histories, like American history?

Before we start to explore world history, let's take a moment to think about an event in American history: the American Revolution.

Look at the picture on this slide. What information about the American Revolution does it bring to mind?

Facilitate a brief discussion here; students will answer more specific questions on the next slide.

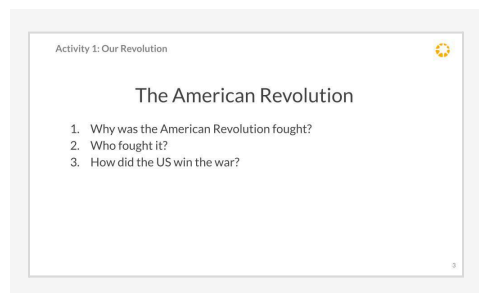


ACTIVE LEARNING

Lead the class through a [visual thinking strategy](#) session with the following questions:

1. What is going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What more do you see? (*Repeat*)

Slide 3



Activity 1: Our Revolution

The American Revolution

1. Why was the American Revolution fought?
2. Who fought it?
3. How did the US win the war?

SAY: *The American Revolution was the event that led to the birth of the United States. What do you know about it?*

Take a few minutes to write down your thoughts about the American Revolution. Use the questions on this slide as a guide. Don't worry about doing any research; just use what you already know to answer the questions as best you can.

This activity will give students a baseline for their impressions of the American Revolution. Most will probably only think of its American dimensions, which is fine at this point. The Revolution will be studied from different perspectives throughout the first three activities to establish the value of looking at issues and events from a global perspective (i.e., studying world history!).



ACTIVE LEARNING

The brainstorming and questions could be done as a class or in small groups. Student answers could also be recorded in a shared space or a graphic organizer to show compare/contrast since they will return to these thoughts in Activity 3.



DIFFERENTIATE

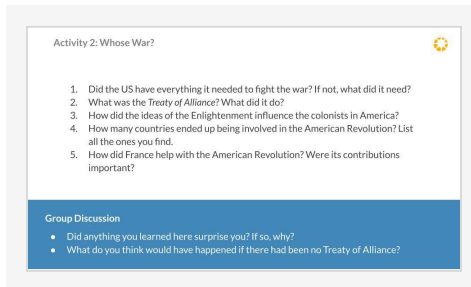
If students have not studied the American Revolution or are having a hard time remembering what happened, some of these sources might help. These are simple, easy to read accounts:

- [American Revolution](#)
- [The American Revolution for Kids](#)
- [Revolutionary War Facts and Figures](#)

ACTIVITY 2: WHOSE WAR? (SLIDES 4-5)

Learning Goal: Learn about global aspects of the American Revolution.

Slide 4



Activity 2: Whose War?

1. Did the US have everything it needed to fight the war? If not, what did it need?
2. What was the Treaty of Alliance? What did it do?
3. How did the ideas of the Enlightenment influence the colonists in America?
4. How many countries ended up being involved in the American Revolution? List all the ones you find.
5. How did France help with the American Revolution? Were its contributions important?

Group Discussion

- Did anything you learned here surprise you? If so, why?
- What do you think would have happened if there had been no Treaty of Alliance?

SAY: *For most Americans, the Revolution was an American event. Americans wanted freedom. Americans fought for it and won it. In reality, though, this might be an even bigger story than that. Let's Take a look.*



ACTIVE LEARNING

Facilitate a [jigsaw](#) activity in which five small groups of students explore the same four resources, but each focus on answering a different question to become an “expert” on that question (note: links are included in the [Revolutionary World of World History Thought Catcher](#) – two resources are videos):

1. Did the US have everything it needed to fight the war? If not, what did it need?
2. What was the Treaty of Alliance? What did it do?
3. How did the ideas of the Enlightenment influence the colonists in America?
4. How many countries ended up being involved in the American Revolution? List all the ones you find.
5. How did France help with the American Revolution? Were its contributions important?

RESOURCES:

- [Treaty of Alliance with France](#)
- [History Brief: Help from France](#)
- [The Enlightenment and the American Revolution](#)

After the five small groups answer their questions, students move to a new group and share as the “expert” on the question their first group answered. Students should write down notes as each new group member shares.

This activity is intended to complicate students' understanding of the Revolution by highlighting the role others around the world played in it.

In the next activity, students will be asked to reconcile this information with the simpler and more American-focused version of the Revolution.

Potential student answers based on resources include:

- Did the US have everything it needed to fight the war? If not, what did it need?

The US lacked many important resources for fighting a war, especially one against a global superpower. These things included being greatly outnumbered in terms of men, the almost total absence of a navy, and a lack of money to buy supplies of all kinds.

- What was the Treaty of Alliance? What did it do?

The treaty created a military alliance between the United States and France against Great Britain. The final clause also invited others to join the war on the side of the US and France.

- How did the ideas of the Enlightenment influence the colonists in America?

The Enlightenment was a European intellectual movement that stressed the concepts of natural rights, liberty, freedom, and others. The writings of one particular Enlightenment philosopher, John Locke, greatly impacted many of the leaders of the American Revolution. Locke wrote about each individual having natural rights, in particular the rights to life, liberty, and property. Locke also said that a government must protect its people and be in the people's best interest. If it does not, the people have the right to overthrow that government. Thomas Jefferson used these ideas when writing the Declaration of Independence.

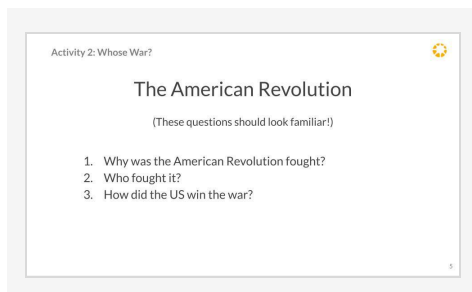
- How many countries ended up being involved in the American Revolution? List all the ones you find.

The United States, Britain, France, Spain, and Holland (the Netherlands) all took part in one way or another.

- How did France help with the American Revolution? Were their contributions important?

France provided essential money, men, and support. French involvement, especially the French navy, was essential to American victory.

Slide 5



Activity 2: Whose War?

The American Revolution

(These questions should look familiar!)

1. Why was the American Revolution fought?
2. Who fought it?
3. How did the US win the war?

SAY: Now that you've thought about the American version of the Revolution and looked at the global perspective, has your impression of the event changed?

Take a few moments to re-answer the questions from Slide 3:

- Why was the American Revolution fought?
- Who fought it?
- How did the US win the war?



ACTIVE LEARNING

Invite students to answer the questions independently, but then turn and talk with a partner. Afterward, partners could come up with a list of differences to share with the class (if you created a shared space or used a graphic organizer in Slide 2).

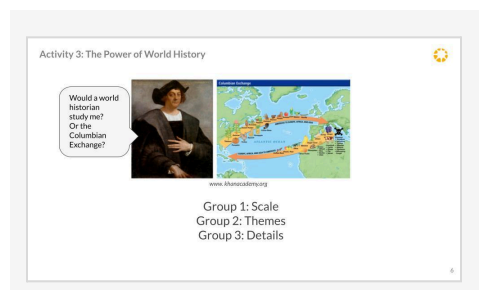
Most students' answers will reflect some changes since Slide 3. If students did not consider the war's international dimensions before, they should now. If they already had a deeper understanding before, that's fine.

The truth is, the American Revolution was more of a world war (at least between Europe and North America) than just a local battle for the independence of the United States. It was as rooted in the competitive politics of European powers as it was in the American experience of the Enlightenment. In the next activity, students will investigate what it means to study world history.

ACTIVITY 3: THE POWER OF WORLD HISTORY (SLIDE 6)

Learning Goal: Learn to think like a world historian.

Slide 6



Activity 3: The Power of World History

Would a world historian study me? Or the Columbian Exchange?

www.khanacademy.org

Group 1: Scale
Group 2: Themes
Group 3: Details

SAY: We now know that if people just studied the American Revolution as it happened in the United States, they would miss a huge part of the story. The truth is, the American Revolution can only be fully understood if you look at it as a world history event.

When you do that, you see that our war for independence was also a global war based on the political and economic rivalries of Europe. The American Revolution would not have happened the way it did (or ended the way it did!) without that.

So, let's think a little more about how world history is different from just thinking about the history of the places we live. Look at the pictures on this slide. Would a world historian be more likely to study Christopher Columbus, or the Columbian exchange? You'll find out when you explore the resource linked in your Thought Catcher.



ACTIVE LEARNING

Sort students into three groups. Each group will review the same [What is World History?](#) resource (linked in the thought catcher), but will come up with an explanation for the larger group for one of the following: scale, theme, and details. Each group will share their explanation of how world history focuses on one of those aspects with the larger group.



DIFFERENTIATE

If students are struggling to condense the material from the resource into short explanations, here are quotations from the website. Students could conduct a close reading of these quotes and pull out key words and information to create their own definitions.

Scale: "World history is mostly interested in large-scale things that have effects on large numbers of people or influence multiple regions of the world. World historians also tend to look at events that occur over long periods of time. For example, a world historian would probably not devote extended time to studying the specific details in the diary of Christopher Columbus to learn about his life or the intricate details of his voyages. However, a world historian would study the several centuries of interactions between Europe, the Americas, and Africa that resulted from Columbus's voyages."

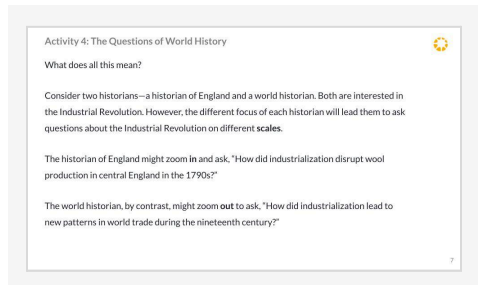
Theme: "Think of themes as categories, ideas, or concepts that organize how someone thinks about a subject. World historical themes are focused on comparison and connection, broad systems, and global interactions."

Details: "But these big ideas are all made up of details! This specific historical knowledge gives you the raw material to build understanding of bigger processes, systems, and themes."

ACTIVITY 4: THE QUESTIONS OF WORLD HISTORY (SLIDES 7-8)

Learning Goal: Consider the same event from multiple perspectives.

Slide 7



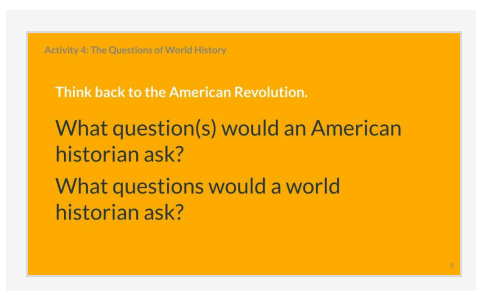
SAY: *So, what does all this mean? Consider two historians—a historian of England and a world historian. Both are interested in the Industrial Revolution. However, the different focus of each historian will lead them to ask questions about the Industrial Revolution on different scales.*

The historian of England might zoom in and ask, "How did industrialization disrupt wool production in central England in the 1790s?"

The world historian, by contrast, might zoom out to ask, "How did industrialization lead to new patterns in world trade during the nineteenth century?"

This slide sets students up for the next activity. As their exit ticket, the next slide asks them to create two questions about the American Revolution. Creating these questions should show how well they understand what it means to study world history.

Slide 8



SAY: *Let's revisit the American Revolution. With your group, answer the following:*

- *What question(s) would an American historian ask? (Write two questions.)*
- *What questions would a world historian ask? (Write two questions.)*



ACTIVE LEARNING PRO TIP

Ask students to write their questions on large butcher paper or a shared, visible space in the room. That way, they can refer to these questions throughout their study of world history. These questions could also be revised and workshopped to lead into a larger research project.



DIFFERENTIATE

Include learning artifact options for students, in addition to or instead of the questions above.

- Students write a mock dialogue about the American Revolution between a world historian and a national historian
- Students create a visual displaying an American historian's perspective on the American Revolution versus a world historian's perspective on the American Revolution

Get more resources like this at www.opportunityeducation.org/resources