

Wendy Wright
Paper #2 –

My personal interest in George Washington and the Revolution as well my position as a 5th grade Instructional Support Teacher is what drove me to apply to the NEH institute. Initially, I had hoped to teach a social studies unit using primary source materials to enhance the teaching of New York State History and Colonial America. However, last week, I received notice that my teaching duties for the 2005/06 year would be K-4 support position. This change in position has caused the focus of my final project to change. In this new position I will be a consultant teacher. Offering supplemental materials and activities for general education teachers' enrichment will be the bulk of my job. Five teachers I will support teach New York State history. I will offer this limited list of books as a starting point, in an effort to challenge them to gain a deeper understanding of Washington and his contemporaries. The lesson plan listed is one that I had hoped to teach, and am quite confident that one of them will allow me to co-teach to their students.

Below is a list of resources that have either been discussed during the institute or I have found on the web. I know this is not an exhaustive list, but will be a starting point for many elementary teachers. Additionally, I will offer the list of websites Maggie Mey compiled, if a teacher is interested in using artwork to supplement the text.

Adult Books

The Adams Family – Paul Nagel
George Washington – A Guide to Everything Washington – Frank Grizzard
Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation – Cokie Roberts
Martha Washington: An American Life – Patricia Brady
Pox Americana – Elizabeth Ann Fenn
Citizen Washington – William Martin
Back Bay – William Martin
A Peoples History - Howard Zinn

Children & Young Adult Books

George Washington and founding a Nation – Albert Marrin
George Washington – David Adler
George Washington Spymaster - Thomas Allen

Lesson Plan using primary documents: American Colonial Life

Grade 4

Guiding Question - What was life like for people living in the original 13 colonies during the late 1700?

Primary Sources -

- Old photographs (1700 – 1800) – from Historic Museum of Ithaca
- Tombstones – local cemetery – this cemetery has approx. 7 – 10 tombstones that date back to colonial times. They are hard to read, but by making rubbings, students are able to read the information.
- National Archives: www.nara.gov. – this website has images of the American Revolution

Lesson –

This project will begin with a field trip to the local cemetery. Leveled classroom and library books related to the topic of Colonial/Revolutionary times will be available. The class will finish studying Chapters 4 and 5 before students are asked to begin writing obituary. This will ensure a basic level of understanding about the time period.

Task -

Write an obituary for a person memorialized on a tombstone (1750 – 1820). Use information from the epitaph, the textbook, New York: Adventures in Time and Place, -----, web sites, and Historical fiction and non fiction from library, at appropriate reading level, to research about the era in which the person lived. Study the epidemic illnesses or other circumstances that might explain common causes of death at that time.

* The end product will vary in length and product according to student academic level. In addition to the written work, they may supplement their end products by including drawings of the individual in an everyday scene or other ways of displaying their life.

