Anchor Text Guidance: Grade 4, Module 3

The American Revolution

Texts and authors

Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak by Kay Winters
Lexile®: 640

Divided Loyalties: The Barton Family during the American Revolution by Gare Thompson
Lexile®: NP

Text Overview

EL Education's Grade 4, Module 3 is designed to prompt consideration of this compelling question:

- How did the American Revolution and the events leading up to it affect the people in the colonies?

Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak shares the perspectives of Loyalists, Patriots, and neutral colonists during the revolutionary time period. *Divided Loyalties: The Barton Family during the American Revolution* is a three-act play describing the lives of the Bartons, a family of English colonists living in New Jersey at the time of the American Revolution. The family is divided. Robert, the father, remains loyal to the King and Great Britain. His eldest son, William, believes the colonies should become an independent country, and he joins the Sons of Liberty and eventually leaves home to fight in the war. The play presents multiple perspectives on the American Revolution, incorporating real historical events into the drama.

Text Rationale

Grade 4, Module 3 teaches students to analyze how perspective influences opinions through the lens of the American Revolutionary War as they read about the impact of war on specific groups (Patriots, Loyalists, enslaved peoples, and Native Americans). This understanding is built gradually, using both literary and informational texts to build historical context and illustrate the reasons that colonists became either Patriots who fought for independence or Loyalists who fought to remain part of Great Britain.

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Students use this information to ground the reading, writing, and thinking done throughout the module. They work intensively to develop academic and domain-specific vocabulary that they will use throughout the module, and they learn how to use the structure of nonfiction texts to identify main ideas and supporting details and to create summaries.

At strategic points throughout the module, students read selected excerpts of the Declaration of Independence and discuss what the characters in *Divided Loyalties* might think about each excerpt. Students use the connection between this primary source and the characters in the play to extend their thinking about perspectives on the Revolutionary War. Students are exposed to a seminal document in our nation's history as part of a set of informational texts used to build historical background about the American Revolution and the reasons colonists fought for independence.

In this module, students work to become ethical people, treating others well and standing up for what is right (e.g., empathy, integrity, respect, compassion), and work to become effective learners, developing the mindsets and skills for success in college, career, and life (e.g., initiative, responsibility, perseverance, collaboration). They practice respect, perseverance, and integrity as they read and share their ideas about complex texts, work together collaboratively, and participate in discussions where they share their opinions.

Additional Considerations

Investigate the routines, practices, rituals, beliefs, norms, and experiences that are important to students and their families. Integrate this background into the classroom as students discuss the Revolutionary War and its impact on people living in the colonies, including African American enslaved peoples and Native Americans, Indigenous Peoples, First Nations, or American Indians.

Be sensitive to students' own perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, particularly with issues such as war, enslavement, and displacement. Foster inclusive action by creating space for students to express their feelings about the issues embedded in the texts while also being aware that these discussions may unearth trauma or social stigma. Consult with a guidance counselor or school social worker for further investigation of diversity and inclusion.

EL Education recommends that school leaders and teachers read the texts in advance, with their specific school community in mind, to become familiar with the issues presented so that they can discuss them with students and families as needed.

Examples of sensitive topics that teachers should be prepared to address are detailed below.

1. Ethnic and Racial Prejudice

It is important for students to realize how racism arose (in part) from the enslavement and oppression of African American people and the taking of the land from Native Americans, Indigenous and First Nation peoples, and American Indians. The social, cultural, and economic repercussions of this historical perspective and actions remain in our society today. It is imperative that teachers continue to read the set of informational texts in the module to prepare for teachable moments, such as discussing insensitive terms used to describe groups of people.[1]

[1]Please note that Charlotte-Mecklenburg has created a revised version of the text "Loyalists" for students and teachers. This revised version includes a disclaimer noting that changing the original text may lead to missed opportunities to educate and empower students to be actively antiracist and to understand that they are living in a changing world where the work is still necessary (rather than a society where antiracist terms and viewpoints are already broadly accepted). EL Education encourages teachers to mark up the text or share a marked-up copy with annotations so that the original text is still evident.

2. Offensive and Outdated Language

Slaves vs. People Who Were Enslaved

In Unit 1, Lessons 7 and 8, students read an informational text entitled, "An Incomplete Revolution," about the role of African Americans in the American Revolution. The article includes the word *negroes* (in direct quotations from people at the time) and the term *slave*. The use of the word *slaves* to describe African Americans suggests that the individual accepted the term as a definition of their own humanity. Using the term *enslaved*, on the other hand, demonstrates the condition of an individual within the class and economic system of the dominant society of the time. By changing the noun—*slave*—to an adjective—*enslaved*—we grant these individuals an identity as people and use a term to describe their position in society rather than reducing them to just that position. In a small but important way, we acknowledge and carry them forward as people, not the property that they were considered to be during that time.

EL Education recognizes the ways in which engaging with offensive language can have a painful or damaging impact on students. Teaching notes throughout the module take a variety of different approaches to mitigate these effects. For especially sensitive language, teaching notes advise teachers to be candid, clear, and sensitive, as well as create space for students to gauge their own reactions and articulate their needs. Be sensitive to students' and families' feelings and experiences, specifically those who have experienced issues of racism, racial inequality, and racial injustice, as these are still very much part of our country's culture.

"Indians" vs. Native Americans, Indigenous People, First Nations, and American Indians

Within Indigenous communities, discussions of preferred terminology (e.g., American Indian versus Native American) are ongoing, and vast diversity across communities means that reaching consensus about terminology cannot and should not be a goal. Many Indigenous peoples prefer to be identified by their tribal name first before the terms *Native Americans*, *Indigenous People*, *First Nations*, or *American Indians*. The term *Indian* may also cause confusion if there are students whose families are native to India.

Invite students' input and encourage discussion about naming practices, emphasizing the importance of calling people what they want to be called. As a way to demonstrate respect for diversity, aim to be as precise as possible when discussing Indigenous groups. Furthermore, terms such as "Indian giver," "Indian summer," and "Indian burn"—where the word *Indian* means *false* or *harmful*—may seem inconsequential, but implying that Indigenous people are deceitful is inappropriate and conjures harmful stereotypes. More information can be found on the following websites:

- National Museum of the American Indian: FAQ (https://eled.org/2925)
- Indian Country Today: Native American vs. Indian (https://eled.org/2926)

3. War and Violence

Be sensitive to students' own perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences with war, violence, or displacement—including those students who have fled their country of origin due to war or violence. Foster inclusive action by creating space for students to express their feelings about the issues embedded in the texts while also being aware that these discussions may unearth trauma or social stigma. Consult with a guidance counselor or school social worker for further investigation of diversity and inclusion.

4. Family Division

Literature gives students perspectives into other families through the characters' lives. The families presented in *Divided Loyalties* display interpersonal conflict due to the impact of the war, which results in division and displacement. Be sensitive to students' own perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences with family division, discord, or displacement. Foster inclusive action by creating space for students to express their feelings about the issues embedded in the texts while being aware that these discussions may unearth trauma or social stigma. Speak with students and families in advance, especially those who may have sensitivity to the topics discussed.

Tasks

Throughout the module, there are tasks that intentionally or incidentally serve to mitigate possible concerns and support students' enthusiastic, informed, and safe reading.

Unit 1

Lesson 1: In this lesson, students hear a read aloud of the first half of *Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak* by Kay Winters. Monitor them to determine whether there are issues arising that need to be discussed in more detail as a whole group, in smaller groups, or independently. Be aware that students may be sensitive to the issue of children being whipped at school ("The Mistress of the Dame School") or to the Native American perspective ("The Basket Trader"). You may wish to consult the informational section at the back of the book to inform discussion of these issues.

Lesson 2: This lesson begins with students reflecting on the module guiding question: "How did the American Revolution and the events leading up to it affect the people in the colonies?" As students engage in the lesson, they are introduced to the terms *colonies* and *colonists*. As students grapple with those terms, invite them to consider who was represented and who was not represented by the term *colonists*. For example, ask: "Was/is the term commonly understood to include enslaved peoples and Native Americans, Indigenous Peoples, First Nations, or American Indians?"

Encourage students to use Goal 4 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation. Conversation Cues are questions teachers can ask students to help achieve four goals: (Goal 1) encourage all students to talk and be understood; (Goal 2) listen carefully to one another and seek to understand; (Goal 3) deepen thinking; and (Goal 4) think with others to expand the conversation. Identify effective ways to develop culturally responsive practices, celebrating diversity and practicing inclusion.

Lesson 3: Similar to Lesson 1, in this lesson students hear a read aloud of *Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak*, then ask questions and spend time reflecting. Be aware that students may be sensitive to and/or have questions about the enslaved person at the blacksmith's. Again, you may wish to consult the informational section at the back of the book to inform discussion of the issues with the text. Continue to use Goal 4 Conversation Cues to promote productive and equitable conversation and review the importance of respect on the Working to Become Ethical People anchor chart.

Lesson 4: In this lesson, students write a short informative text with a partner to answer the question "Who were the Loyalists, and what did they believe?" Consider adding a prompt, "Why did they believe that?" or "How did the Loyalists' beliefs reinforce their thinking about others, such as other colonists (including enslaved peoples) and Indigenous peoples?"

Examining these historical perspectives is important for students to realize how racism arose (in part) from the enslavement and oppression of African American people and the taking of land from Native American, Indigenous and First Nation peoples, and American Indians.

Lesson 5: In this lesson, students engage in a Think-Pair-Share as they define the terms *patriots* and *liberty* using the following prompts:

- "The text says the Patriots were 'speaking out for liberty.' What does this mean? What is liberty?"
- "Having read a few texts about the American Revolution now, what do you think the Patriots wanted freedom from?"

Consider adding an additional prompt to ask students who the Patriots were not speaking for and why they were not supporting freedom for all peoples (including African American peoples and Native Americans, Indigenous and First Nation peoples, and American Indians).

Lesson 7: This lesson begins with a rereading of "The Blacksmith's Slave" from *Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak*. In previous lessons, students read about the Loyalist and the Patriot perspectives on the American Revolution. In this lesson, they begin exploring the perspective of an African American enslaved person. This may be a sensitive issue for students who have a background of enslavement in their family or culture. Provide time for silent reflection after the reading to give students time to process any connections they make. Consider explaining to families that this text will be read aloud to students so that they can appropriately prepare them and discuss it afterward.

Students also read an informational text in this lesson entitled "An Incomplete Revolution," about the role of African Americans in the American Revolution. The article includes the use of the word *negroes* in direct quotations from people at the time. It is important that students are made aware that this is not an appropriate term to use now to describe African American people.

The article also uses the term *African American* to describe all enslaved peoples; consider using this text as an opportunity to discuss with students that not all enslaved people were African and many may not have identified with being American. Invite students to reflect on their learning from previous lessons with *Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak*. This supports students in understanding the value and relevance of the activities in this lesson.

Lesson 8: Students continue to closely read "An Incomplete Revolution" to determine the main idea and the structure of the text. Note that the term *slave* is encountered again in this lesson. As with the previous lesson, this may be a sensitive issue for some students. Provide time for silent reflection after the reading to give students time to process any connections they make.

Lesson 9: The lesson begins with a rereading of "The Basket Trader" from *Colonial Voices: Hear Them Speak*. The purpose of this read aloud is to focus students on the perspective of a Native American in the American Revolution. Note that this reading uses the term *Indian*. The perspective portrayed by the author may be confusing. For clarification, the author is explaining the perspective of the people during that time (colonists), not her own, contemporary

perspective. This may be a sensitive issue for students from Native American families. Consider whether any students may be sensitive to the issues that "The Basket Trader" raises based on cultural background and family history. Consider explaining to families that this will be read aloud to students so that they can appropriately prepare them and discuss it afterward.

Lesson 10: In this lesson, students participate in a close read of "American Indians and the American Revolution," focusing on its text structure and the main idea. Continue to be aware that the use of the term *Indians* may be a sensitive issue for students from Native American families. The Close Reading Guide in the lesson materials contains text excerpts, key questions to ask students, and instructional moves required. Continue to use discussion protocols (e.g., Think-Pair-Share, Conversation Cues, and total participation techniques) to engage students in collaborative discussion.

Consider engaging students in a Mini Language Dive (included in the lesson materials) with the sentence, **"Indians knew that/the Revolution was a contest for Indian land/as well as for liberty."** This is an opportunity to further students' understanding of the effect of the war on Native Americans, Indigenous Peoples, First Nations, or American Indians. Refer to the Module 1 Teacher Guide Appendix or the Language Dives in the Curriculum document on the Tools page (https://curriculum.eleducation.org/tools/k-8) for additional information on Language Dives.

Unit 2

Lesson 1: This lesson introduces the text *Divided Loyalties* by Gare Thompson and begins a series of lessons to dive more deeply into the perspectives of those engaged in the American Revolution. Students read a new scene, determine the gist and the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary, analyze character reactions, and write a character analysis paragraph in pairs.

Lesson 5: In this lesson, students read an excerpt from the Declaration of Independence that references July 4th as the day independence was declared from Britain. Consider expanding the discussion to include dialogue on why this date may not be considered an independence day for African American peoples and Native Americans, Indigenous and First Nation peoples, and American Indians.

Lesson 9: Over this and the next several lessons, students write first-person narratives from the perspective of characters in *Divided Loyalties*, building on students' understanding of narratives from Module 2. The narratives they write in this unit are focused on developing point of view by describing how different characters are feeling and what they are thinking. Be sensitive to students' own perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences, particularly with such issues as racism, prejudice, war, violence, and displacement, as those perspectives may surface as emotions as students write.

Unit 3

Unit 3 launches students into their performance task by having them read an opinion letter written from the perspective of William Barton, the main character from the play *Divided Loyalties* (read in Unit 2). Students learn how authors support their points through reasons and evidence by reading and rereading texts as they work to craft their own opinion pieces for their performance task, an American Revolution broadside. Consider bringing in opinion pieces (whether historical or contemporary) written by African American peoples and Native American, Indigenous and First Nation peoples, and American Indians for students to analyze and discuss.

Including Families

Families of students working through this module are invited to discuss any concerns they have about the texts with their children and the teacher. Teaching notes throughout the module recommend that teachers speak to families of students who may be particularly affected by the topics encountered. Notes in the homework materials distributed to families recommend that they reach out to teachers with questions or concerns about the texts. These materials also encourage families to talk with their children about the texts they are reading, particularly if any of the topics raised might be sensitive to a particular student.