South Carolinians in the Revolution

**Historical Background**

“The perspectives and roles of different South Carolinians during the American Revolution led to a civil war within South Carolina and ultimately impacted the success of the Patriot cause in the Revolutionary War.

The political leaders were wealthy white men who were land owners from the Lowcountry. Most were Patriots who supported independence. South Carolina Patriots created a provisional government to control the colony during the war.

American colonists volunteered as soldiers to fight in colonial militias and with Patriot partisan groups. Patriots were those colonists who supported the Continental Congress and independence. Most were from the Lowcountry and fought in small militias in their local areas.

South Carolina Loyalists, who remained loyal to the King and Great Britain, volunteered to fight on the side of the British. There were more Loyalists in South Carolina than in any of the other colonies, except New York. Most soldiers in the Upcountry were Loyalists, or Tories as the American Patriots derisively referred to them. Many of the Upcountry people were not true loyalists in principal, but instead wished to live their lives without interference. An example would be the number of Upcountry German immigrants who had no allegiance to either the King or to the principles of democracy. Lowcountry Patriots and Upcountry Loyalists fought each other in the Revolutionary War. When the war ended, many Loyalists voluntarily left South Carolina for the Caribbean or Canada. Others were fined or run out of town.

Partisans were Patriots who fought a guerrilla war against the British regular army. They often took British soldiers in the countryside of South Carolina by surprise in hit and run ambushes.

Women managed farms and plantations when the men were away. Some served as messengers or nurses, others sacrificed their homes and fortunes to the Patriot cause. Other women were Loyalists.

Most African Americans continued to work as slaves in South Carolina. Some African Americans served as soldiers in the Continental Army. However, South Carolinians feared a slave uprising so at first they rejected the Continental Congress’s appeal to allow slaves to serve non-military jobs for the army such as cooking. Later, when more manpower was needed, the law was changed to allow 1/3 of the militia to be made up of slaves but they were not allowed to serve as soldiers. African Americans fought with the partisan bands. South Carolina did not offer slaves their freedom in exchange for their service in the army. African Americans fought for the British in response to the promise that they would earn their freedom. In this effort, they were disappointed.

At first, many Native Americans tribes avoided war. After American colonists attacked the Native Americans on the frontier, Native American retaliated. Many supported the British because the British promised to return control of the west to the Native Americans. The Cherokees supported the British and attacked the colonists.”

South Carolina Standards

8.2.2 Compare the perspectives and roles of different South Carolinians during the American Revolution, including those of political leaders, soldiers, partisans, Patriots, Tories/Loyalists, women, African Americans, and Native Americans.

3.3.1 Analyze the causes of the American Revolution – including Britain’s passage of the Tea Act, the Intolerable Acts, the rebellion of the colonists, and the Declaration of Independence – and South Carolina’s role in these events.

Objectives

- Students will analyze primary documents to compare the roles of different South Carolinians during the American Revolution.
- Students will work in pairs to read and analyze primary documents.
- Students will classify Revolutionary South Carolinians as either political leader, soldier, partisan, Patriot, Loyalists, woman, African American or Native American

Time Required

2 class periods

Recommended Grade Level

Elementary/Middle

Lesson Materials

- Digital images from SCDAH relating to South Carolinians in the American Revolution (Request a CD of primary documents from Connie Geer at geerc@mailbox.sc.edu)
- Question sheet
- Compilation chart (one large chart for the entire class; see below)
- Transcriptions of the primary documents included as a part of this lesson are available in South Carolinians in the War for American Independence, a workbook available at SCDAH.

Lesson Preparation

- Print copies of primary documents and question sheet for student analysis.
- Post compilation chart in classroom or display on Smart board.
- Group students in pairs.
- Assign each pair a different profile or person. There are a total of fourteen petitions and letters to be analyzed with fourteen different profiles or people from South Carolina who participated in the American Revolution (See Elementary Modifications below if you teach elementary students).

Lesson Procedure

- Begin by passing out the copies of digital images to student pairs.
- Give students just 5 minutes to try to identify what kind of document they have.
- Next, pass out the transcriptions of the documents (transcriptions available in South Carolinians in the War for American Independence, a workbook available at SCDAH.)

http://library.sc.edu/blogs/academy
• Explain to students that the American Revolution in South Carolina was fought with the help of people from different backgrounds including men, women, Native Americans and African Americans.
• Explain to students that their goal is to classify their person as political leader, soldier, partisan, Patriot, Loyalists, woman, African American or Native American (be sure to mention that some persons will cross roles e.g. Native American and soldier). Students will also need to determine how their person participated in the war.
• Give students time to complete the task using the question sheet, assisting as necessary. Teacher may need to assist students in making inferences. Set a time limit for analysis based on the needs of your students.
• As students complete questions they should add their information to a large chart or Smart board form to share with the class (see format below).
• Bring the class back together. Use the completed chart to discuss findings with the class, allowing students to take ownership of information and explain as needed.

Assessment
• Choose two different profiles from the completed class chart to compare. Do you think one of your profiles deserves more attention because of their participation? Support your answer with evidence from the document.
• What kind of people fought the American Revolution in South Carolina? Did every participant in the war fight? What kinds of things did people do to help in the war effort?

Elementary Modifications
• Depending on your student group, you may want to focus on one or just a few of the documents. You may also want to pick out appropriate paragraphs in the longer transcriptions to keep down on confusion.
• Pass out one of the copied documents to students.
• Instruct students to look over the document. Ask: what kind of document do you think this is? (letter, business form, interview, play, story, etc.). Allow time for student responses.
• Explain to students that they are looking at a letter.
• Ask: what do you see that tells you this document is a letter? Allow time for student responses.
• Pass out the transcription or transcribed selection from your selected document. Explain to students that because the old documents are sometimes hard to read, people transcribe or re-write the information so that the document is easy to read.
• Read the transcription or selection aloud to the class. Ask: why is this person writing? Allow time for student responses.
• Explain to students that after the American Revolution, people who participated in the war had to petition the government for pay or to have their property replaced that was lost in the war. Explain that the letter is a petition to ask the government to pay them for service or to pay for something they lost in the war.
• Reread the transcription. Ask students to listen carefully to what the person seems to be asking for. Ask: what is this person asking of the government? Give time for student responses.

• Explain to students that the American Revolution in South Carolina was fought with the help of people from different backgrounds including men, women, Native Americans, political leaders and African Americans.

• Write the classifications on the board. Instruct students to classify this person into one of the following categories on the board. Go down the list having students vote on the category the person should be placed. Ask students to give clues from the document to support their choice.

• Repeat these procedures with a different document, advancing to independent work with the documents if possible.

• Assess by asking students what kinds of people participated in the American Revolution.

Digital Collections Information
To see other collections that may be helpful to your search, visit the Digital Collections homepage or visit SCDL’s collections.
Student Question Sheet

1. What is your person’s name? ________________________________

2. Is this person a male or female? ______________________________

3. Classify your person as one of the following war participants.
   a. Soldier
   b. Patriot (supporter of the colonies)
   c. Loyalist (supporter of the king)
   d. African American
   e. Native American
   f. Woman
   g. Political leader

4. What in the document led you to the classification above? ________________________________

5. What is the person asking for in the document? ________________________________

6. What reason do they give to prove that they deserve what they are asking? ________________

7. Do you think they should get what they are asking? Why or why not? ________________________________

8. Did this person fight in the war? Explain, on the battlefield, at sea, etc. ________________

9. Did this person have to give up anything for the war? If so, what? ________________________________

10. Based on evidence from the document, what did this person contribute to the war effort? ________________________________
### Class Compilation Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Person</th>
<th>Classification</th>
<th>Description of Participation in American Revolution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>