

Primary Source Collection

**MAKING THE REVOLUTION:  
America, 1763-1791**

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A collection of primary resources—historical documents, literary texts, and works of art—thematically organized with notes and discussion questions



***Primary Resources by Theme***

I. CRISIS: 1763-1775	pages
1 <a href="#">1763: Britain Victorious</a> –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to British victories in the French and Indian War, 1759-1763 –Benjamin West, <i>The Death of General Wolfe</i> (1759), oil on canvas, 1770	7
2 <a href="#">1764: Loyal Subjects?</a> –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Sugar & Currency Acts, 1764 –Thomas Pownall, <i>The Administration of the Colonies</i> , 1764, selections	12
3 <a href="#">1765-1766: Stamp Act Crisis</a> –Parliamentary debate on the Stamp Act, February 1765, selections –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Stamp Act, 1765-1766 –“A Poetical Dream. Concerning Stamped Papers,” poem, 1765 –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Stamp Act’s repeal, 1766	38
4 <a href="#">1767-1769: The Crisis Deepens</a> –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Townshend Acts, 1767-1770 –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Quartering Act, 1766-1767 –John Dickinson, <i>Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania</i> , Letters 1 & 2, 1767 –Paul Revere & Christian Remick, artists’ depictions of the arrival of British troops in Boston in 1768	33
5 <a href="#">1770: Violence—and Pause</a> –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the violent confrontations with British troops and officials in early 1770 –Benjamin Franklin & Rev. Samuel Cooper, letters on the easing of British-American tensions, 1770-1771, selections	16
6 <a href="#">1772-1773: Crisis Renewed</a> –Boston Committee of Correspondence (Samuel Adams et al.), <i>The “Boston Pamphlet,”</i> 1772, selections –Rev. John Allen, <i>An Oration upon the Beauties of Liberty</i> , sermon on the Gaspée incident, 1772, selections –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Tea Act, 1773-1774 –David Ramsay, <i>A Sermon on Tea</i> , essay, 1774, selections	36
7 <a href="#">1774: Colonies United</a> –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the Coercive Acts & the Quebec Act, 1774 –First Continental Congress: –Petition to King George III –Bill of Rights; Letters to the Americans and to the people of Great Britain	28
8 <a href="#">1775: The Outbreak of War</a> –COMPILATION: Colonists respond to the outbreak of war, 1775 –Sermons on the outbreak of war and the justifiability of revolution, selections –Virginia Committee of Correspondence, announcement of the Battle of Lexington & Concord, broadside, 1775 –Diary of Matthew Patten, New Hampshire, 1776-1776, selections –Second Continental Congress –Olive Branch Petition –Declaration . . . Setting Forth the Causes & Necessity of Their Taking Up Arms	41
9 <a href="#">How Did We Get Here?</a> –Benjamin Franklin, <i>Rules by Which a Great Empire May Be Reduced to a Small One</i> , essay, 1773 –Francis Hopkinson, <i>A Pretty Story Written in the Year of Our Lord 2774</i> , allegory, 1774 –John Adams, letter to Hezekiah Niles, 1818, selection on the American Revolution	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>228</b>

## II. REBELLION: 1774-1776

	pages
1 <a href="#">Loyalists I: Civil War</a>	11
–Loyalists at the outbreak of the Revolution: commentary from Loyalists, Patriots, and Britons, 1775-1776	
–Rev. Myles Cooper (Loyalist), <i>The Patriots of North America: A Sketch</i> , poem, 1775, selections	
2 <a href="#">Loyalists II: Traitor!</a>	20
–Anti-Loyalist broadsides and blank forms of allegiance, 1774-1775	
–Anti-Loyalist violence, 1774-1775: incidents in Peter Oliver, <i>Origin &amp; Progress of the American Rebellion</i> , 1781	
–Nathaniel Hawthorne, “My Kinsman, Major Molineux,” short story, 1830, depicting anti-British mob violence in pre-revolutionary Boston	
3 <a href="#">Loyalists III: Join—or Else</a>	14
–Nicholas Cresswell, travel journal, selections on the treatment of Loyalists in Virginia, 1774-1777	
–Janet Schaw, travel letters, selections on the treatment of Loyalists in North Carolina, 1775	
4 <a href="#">Loyalists IV: Backcountry</a>	8
–Reports to the South Carolina Council of Safety from William Henry Drayton and Rev. William Tennent, selections on the recruitment of backcountry settlers to the Patriot cause, 1775	
5 <a href="#">The Pacifists</a>	7
–Pacifists’ appeals for tolerance: selections from addresses, letters, and records, 1775-1779	
6 <a href="#">The Enslaved</a>	8
–Calls for abolition based on slavery’s inconsistency with ideals in the Declaration of Independence, 1773-1783	
–Slaves’ petition to the Massachusetts assembly to end slavery, 1777	
–The anti-slavery clause of Thomas Jefferson’s draft of the Declaration of Independence, 1776	
7 <a href="#">Common Sense?</a>	23
–Thomas Paine, <i>Common Sense</i> , 1776, Pt. II-IV, selections	
–Praise for <i>Common Sense</i> in American newspapers, January-May 1776, selections	
–Rev. Charles Inglis (Loyalist), <i>The Deceiver Unmasked</i> , 1776, selections	
–Hannah Griffiths, “Upon Reading a Book Entitled Common Sense,” poem, 1776	
–John Adams, autobiography, early 1800s, selection on <i>Common Sense</i>	
8 <a href="#">Declaring Independence</a>	23
–The Declaration of Independence, 4 July 1776 (annotated)	
–Delegates’ letters on the Declaration of Independence, selection, July 1776, June 1826	
–Celebrating the Declaration: selections from newspaper accounts, July-October 1776	
–A Loyalist’s rebuttal of the Declaration: Thomas Hutchinson, <i>Strictures upon the Declaration . . .</i> , 1776, selections	
	<b>TOTAL 114</b>

## III. WAR: 1775-1783

	pages
1 <a href="#">Anticipating War</a>	11
–Edmund Burke (M.P.), speech to Parliament on reconciliation with America, 22 March 1775, selections	
–Benjamin Franklin, letters on the prospects for reconciliation and the beginning of war, 1775-1776, selections	
2 <a href="#">Committing to War</a>	11
–A Loyalist’s appeal to the troops: Peter Oliver, Address to the Soldiers of Massachusetts Bay, Jan. 1776, selections	
–A Patriot’s appeal to the troops: Thomas Paine, <i>The American Crisis</i> #1, Dec. 1776	
3 <a href="#">Leading the War</a>	28
–Correspondence of George Washington as Commander in Chief, 1775-1778, selections	
–Portraits of George Washington as Commander in Chief, 1779, 1780, 1785	
–Military broadsides of the American Revolution, 1775-1778	
4 <a href="#">Sustaining the War</a>	13
–Pacifying Indians on the frontier: three documents, 1776-1778, selections	
–Recruiting enslaved blacks into the Continental Army: six documents, 1776-1781, selections	
–Predicting Britain’s response to the alliance with France: letters of the American negotiators including Benjamin Franklin, 1778, selections	
–Appealing for state aid to the army: letter of Gen. Washington to Gov. Joseph Reed of Pennsylvania, 1780	
–Announcing Arnold’s treason to the army: general orders of Gen. Washington to Gen. Greene, 1780	

—	<b>5</b>	<b><a href="#">Reporting the War</a></b>	10
		–Broadsides reporting news of the war, 1776-1783	
		–Broadside on a parade condemning the treason of Benedict Arnold, 1780	
—	<b>6</b>	<b><a href="#">Fighting the War</a></b>	32
		–Revolutionary War veterans, pension application narratives, 1830s, selections	
		–Philip Freneau, civilian captive, <i>The British Prison Ship</i> , poem, 1781, Cantos II-IV	
		–Boyrereau Brinch, enslaved African American in the Continental Army, narrative, publ. 1810, selections	
		–Boston King, fugitive slave in the British army, narrative, publ. 1798, selections	
—	<b>7</b>	<b><a href="#">Living in War</a></b>	34
		–Margaret Hill Morris, Quaker widow in New Jersey, journal selections, 1776-1777	
		–Molly Guttridge, Massachusetts, “A New Touch of the Times,” poem, 1779	
		–Mary Jemison (Dehgewanus), white Seneca adoptee in New York, narrative selections, 1779-1780	
		–Eliza Yonge Wilkinson, planter’s daughter in South Carolina, letter selections, 1780	
		–Esther De Berdt Reed, <i>Sentiments of an American Woman</i> , broadside, 1780	
		–Anna Rawle, Loyalist’s daughter in Philadelphia, journal selections, 1781	
—	<b>8</b>	<b><a href="#">Losing the War</a></b>	17
		–British satirical rebuses on the U.S. alliance with France, 1778	
		–British political cartoons on Britain’s defeat in the Revolutionary War, 1782	
		–Loyalists and the defeat of Britain: selections from letters, narratives, petitions, and poetry, 1782-1786	
—	<b>9</b>	<b><a href="#">Winning the War</a></b>	18
		–Governors’ appeals urging citizen rededication to the war effort, 1780-1781, selections	
		– <i>Epitaph</i> , satirical epitaph for King George III, broadside, 1782	
		–Benjamin Franklin, letters from Paris on the peace process, 1781-1784, selection	
		–Maps (zoomable) of the United States after the preliminary 1783 peace treaty, 1783-1784	

**TOTAL 174**

#### **IV. INDEPENDENCE: 1783-1791**

pages

—	<b>1</b>	<b><a href="#">Victory &amp; Union</a></b>	14
		–Thomas Paine, <i>The American Crisis</i> #13, April 1783	
		–George Washington, Circular Letter to the States, June 1783	
		–Newsboys’ new year’s greetings after independence, five poems, 1784-1790	
—	<b>2</b>	<b><a href="#">Promise &amp; Peril</a></b>	18
		–Richard Price, <i>Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution and the Means of Making It a Benefit to the World</i> , 1784, selections	
		–David Ramsay, “The Advantages and Disadvantages of the Revolution . . .,” Appendix 4 of <i>The History of the American Revolution</i> , 1789, selections	
		–Mercy Otis Warren, “A Survey of the Situation of America on the Conclusion of the War with Britain,” Ch. 30 of <i>History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution</i> , completed by 1791, publ. 1805, selections	
—	<b>3</b>	<b><a href="#">Progress &amp; Identity</a></b>	14
		–Founding documents of societies to promote progress, learning, and national identity, 1780-1791, selections	
		–Noah Webster, essays on fostering American identity, character, and education, 1783, 1787, selections	
—	<b>4</b>	<b><a href="#">Patriots &amp; Loyalists</a></b>	9
		–“Phocion” (Alexander Hamilton) and “Mentor” (Isaac Ledyard), pamphlet war on the postwar treatment of Loyalists in New York, 1784, selections	
—	<b>5</b>	<b><a href="#">A Golden Age</a></b>	11
		–Anonymous, <i>The Golden Age: Or, Future Glory of North America</i> , allegory, 1785, selections	
		–Joel Barlow, <i>The Vision of Columbus</i> , allegorical poem, 1787, selections	
—	<b>6</b>	<b><a href="#">A New Man: The American</a></b>	53
		–Michel-Guillaume Jean de Crèvecoeur (writing as J. Hector St. John), “What Is an American?” Letter III of <i>Letters from an American Farmer</i> , written ca. 1770-1778, publ. 1782, selections	
		–Royall Tyler, <i>The Contrast</i> , comedy of manners, 1787	
—	<b>7</b>	<b><a href="#">A Model for Europe</a></b>	7
		–Abbé Claude Robin, <i>New Travels through North America</i> (1781), publ. 1782, Letter XIII, selections	

	–Jacques-Pierre Brissot de Warville, <i>New Travels in the United States</i> (1788), publ. 1791, selections	
— 8	<b><a href="#">A Heads-Up for Europeans</a></b>	8
	–Benjamin Franklin, <i>Advice to Those Who Would Emigrate to America</i> , 1782, selections	
	–Benjamin Rush, <i>Information to Europeans Who Are Disposed to Migrate to the United States of America</i> , 1790, selections	
		<b>TOTAL 134</b>
	<b>V. CONSTITUTION: 1780-1791</b>	pages
— 1	<b><a href="#">Abandoning the Articles</a></b>	15
	–Founders on the defects of the Articles of Correspondence, correspondence selections, 1780-1787	
	–James Madison, “Vices of the Political System of the United States of America,” memorandum, 1787	
— 2	<b><a href="#">Creating a New Constitution</a></b>	17
	–On creating the U.S. Constitution: commentary by delegates and observers, 1787	
	–The United States Constitution, 1787; ratified 1788	
— 3	<b><a href="#">Promoting the Constitution</a></b>	15
	–Francis Hopkinson, “The New Roof,” Federalist allegory & poem, 1787, 1788	
	–Albany [NY] Federal Committee, <i>The 35 Anti-Federal Objections Refuted</i> , pamphlet; with selections from broadsides of the Albany Anti-Federal Committee, 1788	
— 4	<b><a href="#">Opposing the Constitution</a></b>	16
	–Anti-Federalist letters to newspapers on the proposed Constitution, 1787-1788, selections	
	–Anti-Federalist essays of “Philadelphensis” (Benjamin Workman), 1787-1788, selections	
	–Appeals for calm during the ratification debates, 1787-1788, selections	
— 5	<b><a href="#">Adding a Bill of Rights</a></b>	12
	–On adding a bill of rights to the Constitution: commentary from letters, addresses, and newspapers, 1787-1789	
	–The Bill of Rights, 1789; ratified 1791	
	–Déclaration des Droits de l’Homme et du Citoyen (Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen), France, 1789	
— 6	<b><a href="#">Inaugurating a Government</a></b>	17
	–On establishing the new federal government: commentary from letters and news accounts, 1788-1795	
	–On the inauguration of George Washington, 30 April 1789, from David Ramsay, <i>The History of the American Revolution</i> , 1789	
— 7	<b><a href="#">Portraying the Founders</a></b>	12
	–Portraits (11) of the Founders in a transitional era, 1780-early 1790s	
	–On the death of Benjamin Franklin (17 April 1790): articles and tributes, April-June 1790	
		<b>TOTAL 104</b>
		<b>COLLECTION TOTAL: 754</b>