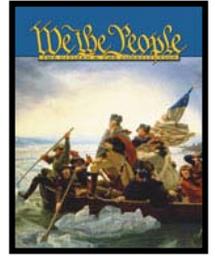


SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

THE BLACK REGIMENT OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
by Linda Crotta Brennan



***WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION
AND LITERACY INTEGRATION***
By Barbara Ashby

Teacher's Guide

Lesson Overview

Following the terrible winter of 1777 at Valley Forge, the men of the Rhode Island regiment had dwindled down to only four-hundred soldiers, half the number needed to continue fighting the British. A new First Regiment was needed and a call went out for volunteers. General James Varnum proposed raising a Black Regiment. The plan was presented to the Rhode Island legislature and on February 23, 1778 a new law was enacted which stated that “every able-bodied Negro, mulatto, or Indian man-slave” could enlist. More historic was that those who enlisted would be given the same “bounty and wages” as white soldiers. More importantly, those who passed muster by Colonel Christopher Greene would become free men. This book is the story of this historic regiment, of the men who served, the battles they fought, and their contribution to the American victory. Through the lesson, students learn about these brave men, research, analyze, and synthesize the major battle and events, and retell the story by writing a newspaper article.

Suggested Grade Level

Upper elementary/middle school

Estimated Time to Complete

One class period or more depending on chosen activities.

Lesson Objectives

Students will

- understand the contributions of African Americans to the American Revolution;
- identify the core democratic principles and responsibilities of freedom of the press and freedom of speech;
- compare and contrast how citizens received news during the Colonial period and today;
- understand the structure of news articles;
- analyze and assess the information and ideas gathered from a variety of print and electronic sources;
- understand terms and vocabulary associated with journalism;

- develop peer editing and proofreading skills.

Materials Needed

- Classroom set of *The Black Regiment of the American Revolution* by Linda Crotta Brennan.
- Classroom set of *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution*
- Index cards for word-wall vocabulary
- Computers for publishing newspaper articles
- Paper, pencils, etc for writing and editing newspaper articles

Before the Lesson

1. Develop a list of words from *The Black Regiment of the American Revolution* to use for vocabulary study and/or a word wall.
2. Choose and prepare one or more of the following activities to conduct during the lesson.
 - Working in pairs or groups of three, have students reread the book and make a list of the men in the Black Regiment. Using other print and media resources, have students write a brief biography of the men in the Black Regiment and compare and contrast this information with other students in the class.
 - Working in pairs or groups of three, have students reread the book and make a list of the major events that occurred, such as Valley Forge, the Battle of Rhode Island, Davenport House, and the Battle of Yorktown. Using other print and media resources, have students gather, evaluate, and synthesize information from a variety of sources on the major events in the book.
 - Discuss with students how people acquire their news during the Colonial period and how people acquire their news today.
 - Teach a lesson on writing a newspaper article including headline writing, byline, graphics, caption, flag, columns, etc. Include the various types of newspaper articles, such as:
 - exposé—uses careful investigation and evidence to expose something wrong;
 - feature story—human interest, story telling, point of view to add depth to the news story;
 - profile—tells a story and gives background information on an individual; or
 - breaking story—provides news as it happens.

Students examine previous research on people and events from *The Black Regiment of the American Revolution* and select a topic for writing a newspaper article. They use a district or school writing process to develop and write a newspaper article. Students engage in peer review activities to edit newspaper articles. They use word processing to complete the final draft of news articles. Students work in teams to design layout for publishing a newspaper.

- Conduct an illustrator study of Cheryl Kirk Noll (<http://cherylkirknoll.com>)
- Conduct an author study of Linda Crotta Brennan (<http://www.lindacrottabrennan.com/>)

Lesson Procedures

1. Introduce the vocabulary words you selected.
2. Introduce *The Black Regiment of the American Revolution* by showing the book's cover, and ask students to make predictions by drawing on prior knowledge.

3. Read and discuss *The Black Regiment of the American Revolution* using a shared reading model.

Essential Questions:

1. How was the Rhode Island Black Regiment established?
2. What incentives did the African Americans, mulatto, and Native American slaves have to join the Rhode Island Black Regiment?
3. In what places did the Rhode Island Black Regiment fight during the American Revolution?
4. How did people receive news during the Revolutionary War period and how do they receive it now?
5. Why were freedom of the press and freedom of speech important to the Founders?
6. Why are freedom of the press and freedom of speech important to the United States now?

4. Lead the class in the activities you selected from the suggested activities above.

Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts Standards, Reading: Informational Text, Grade 5

Key Ideas and Details

2. Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.
9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

English Language Arts Standards, Writing, Grade 5

Text Types and Purposes

1. Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.
2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Production and Distribution of Writing

4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate task, purpose, and audience.
5. With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

7. Conduct short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

English Language Arts Standards, History/Social Studies, Grades 6–8

Key Ideas and Details

3. Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

Craft and Structure

5. Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

Correlations to SVPDP Curricula

SVPDP Curricula	Location	Lesson-Related Content
<i>We the People: the Citizen & the Constitution</i>	Elementary Text Unit One, Lesson 5 Unit Two, Lesson 10	American Revolution, reading, writing, vocabulary, research
<i>We the People: the Citizen & the Constitution</i>	Middle School Text Unit Two, Lesson 9 Unit Three, Lesson 14	American Revolution, reading, writing, vocabulary, research