

Revolutionary War: A 5<sup>th</sup> grade Focus Unit  
by  
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FEATURED SELECTION:

Esther, B. (1976). *Toliver's secret*. New York: Dell Yearling.

Written at a 5<sup>th</sup> grade level, *Toliver's Secret* is a captivating story of a young girl living during the Revolutionary War. When Ellen finds out her grandfather is a patriot spy, she must risk all she has to deliver a message in a loaf of bread to fellow patriots. Dressed as a boy, it is up to Toliver to take the bread to George Washington whom is waiting for the secret message. Ellen's courage and determination guides her, but after accidentally boarding a British ship, problems start to arise. Ellen must learn to overcome her problems and figure out a solution to get back to her family and deliver her message.

RELATED MATERIALS: The following materials should be discussed at some point during the unit. Each figure relates in an important way to the Revolutionary War. Students will gain a better knowledge of the subject by using these materials. The books can be incorporated using independent reading but would probably be more beneficial in a shared reading setting.

Dalgliesh, A. (1956). *The fourth of July story*. New York: Scribner.

Written by children's author Alice Dalgliesh, *The Fourth of July Story* tells of how thirteen colonies united in search of sweet independence. They selected Thomas Jefferson as the man to write the Declaration of Independence and carried news across the settlements. Jefferson is a major figure for support in *Toliver's Secret*.

Fritz, J. (1996). *Can't you make them behave King George*. New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan.

Winner of the School Library Journal Best Book of the Year and an IRA/CBC Children's Choice Book, this look into King George III's life is comical but allows students to see through the eyes of Britain's rulers. King George did what he was supposed to, he was careful with his people's money and followed the rules. This children's book provides insight into how pesky American's seemed to the King.

Forbes, Esther. (1946). *America's Paul Revere*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Not just soldiers but Patriots fought for America's freedom. Paul Revere, an important figure for Patriot fighters is portrayed through this non-fiction story by Esther Forbes. Students must understand the significance of this man to comprehend the characters in *Toliver's Secret*.

George, J. (2005). *Take the lead George Washington*. New York: Philomel.

A key motivating force during the Revolutionary war was none other than George Washington. Although non-fiction, a view into Washington's life provides a good background into the life of this courageous man and gives students information on the person Toliver must deliver the secret message to.

Monjo, F. N. (1973). *Poor Richard in France*. New York: Rinehart and Winston.

This simple biography of Benjamin Franklin, a major influence during the Revolution, is retold by his Grandson. *Poor Richard in France* examines Franklin's history of events in assisting the revolutionaries in America in a simple, easy to understand way. Children will see the connection between Franklin and Toliver.

#### GOALS:

- Children will gain a better understanding of the events of the Revolutionary War and in particular many influential historical figures involved.
- Students will examine the figure of Toliver, understanding the importance of Patriotism and courage in daily life.
- Students will study the impact of war on families.
- Students will scrutinize the differences between the Patriots and British and be able to see both sides.
- Students will compare and contrast the lives of British and Patriot soldiers.

#### SKILLS:

- Understand that there are two sides to every story
- Decode difficult words using root words
- Be able to successfully use a dictionary
- Students will be able to identify several important leader, minorities, and women of the Revolutionary War
- Portrait painting
- Be able to understand history in different time periods
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#### INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS:

##### **History**

5.1.9 The American Revolution: 1763 to 1783. Analyze the causes of the American Revolution as outlined in the Declaration of Independence

- 5.1.11 The American Revolution: 1763 to 1783. Describe foreign aid to the colonies during the American Revolution
- 5.1.13.1 The American Revolution: 1763 to 1783. Identify contributions of women and minorities during the American Revolution
- 5.1.13 The American Revolution: 1763 to 1783. Explain consequences of the American Revolution including the Articles of Confederation, changes in trade relationships and the achievement of independence by the United States

## English

- 5.2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge
- 5.1.4 Know less common roots (*graph = writing, logos = the study of*) and word parts (*auto = self, bio = life*) from Greek and Latin and use this knowledge to analyze the meaning of complex words (*autograph, autobiography, biography, biology*).
- 5.2.4 Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge.
- 5.4.5 Use note-taking skills when completing research for writing
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## UNIT PLAN:

### Pre-reading

Activity: Start on KWL chart prior to videos.

Teacher will spark student interest by asking what they know about the Revolutionary war to gain independence from Britain. Provide background knowledge for students by bringing in short video clips and pictures of significant people of the time period. Assess each student on participation.

Activity: Food lesson from Rev. War. Use fractions to involve math. This will get students thinking about the past.

Activity: Listen to Revolutionary songs-get students in patriotic mood!

Grouping: Whole group

### Reading

Activity: Teacher will read first couple of chapters of *Toliver's Secret* to students as a class while they follow along in their own copies. After, students should randomly be chosen to read while teacher asks comprehension questions throughout. Discuss.

Activity: Play game that was played during Revolution. Grouping: Whole class

Activity: Reading response journal-This should be completed over at least four chapters. Teacher will assess on accuracy. (individual)

Activity: Character Map-Portrait of favorite character should be painted including various facts and characteristics of selected character. Teacher will assess on detail and written facts.(Individual)

### Responding

Activity: While reading, students will be expected to take detailed notes for each chapter. These notes should include the major turning points and any involve questions for the teacher. The teacher will easily be able to measure understanding of novel through note taking.

Grouping: Individual

### Exploring

Activity: Foreign words, difficult to spell or unfamiliar, do occur in *Toliver's Secret*. Students should be writing these words down while responding to the text and then add these words to words walls. Important words such as Revolution can be analyzed as a class- looking at the root words, and using dictionaries.

Grouping: Whole class/individual

### Applying

Compare and contrast the role of Toliver to one significant character during the Revolutionary War. This is to be outlined then written and include proper grammar and punctuation. Teacher will assess students on knowledge of compared figures.

Grouping: Individual

TIME SCHEDULE: (see pages 374-375 in your textbook)

Use the table function on your Microsoft Word to create a time schedule for your unit:

<b>Day 1</b> *KWL chart *Watch videos and look at pictures to spark interest *fractions *music *Chapter 1	<b>Day 2</b> *Chapter 2 and 3 *Grand discussion *Start word wall	<b>Day 3</b> *Chapter 4 *Reading logs/notes *Word wall *Play games	<b>Day 4</b> *Chapter5 *Painting Of selected character	<b>Day 5</b> *Chapter 6 *Info about author
<b>Day 6</b> Chapter 7 *Important figures during revolution (use related material list)	<b>Day 7</b> *Chapter 8 &9 *Lesson on multiple perspectives *word wall words	<b>Day 8</b> *Chapter 10 *Work on listing characteristics of two figures	<b>Day 9</b> *Chapter 11 *Create outline for two characters	<b>Day 10</b> *Chapter 13 *Share final products with class

ASSIGNMENT CHECKLIST: (see page 372 in your textbook)

\_\_\_\_\_ Read *Toliver's Secret*

\_\_\_\_\_ KWL chart

\_\_\_\_\_ Reader response

\_\_\_\_\_ Reading logs

\_\_\_\_\_ Painting of character

\_\_\_\_\_ Listing of characters

\_\_\_\_\_ Outline