

TEACHER CRITICAL CONTENT NOTES

BENCHMARK

SS.5.CG.2.1 *Discuss the political ideas of Patriots, Loyalists and other colonists about the American Revolution.*

BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS

- Students will describe the political philosophy of American Patriots and why those ideas led them to declare independence from the British Empire.
- Students will explain why colonists would choose to side with the British during the American Revolution.
- Students will examine motivations for the decision to not take a side during the American Revolution.

WHERE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN

4th Grade	N/A
-----------	-----

WHERE STUDENTS ARE GOING

Middle School Civics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SS.7.CG.1.5 • SS.8.CG.1.1
-------------------------	--

TIMING/PACING NOTES

- This benchmark may be taught at any point during the school year.
- Teaching this benchmark with fifth grade American History Standard 5 may make content mastery more achievable for students.

UNDERSTANDING THE BENCHMARK

→ What to know:

- ◆ Explain and describe can mean: justify, connect, write, or elaborate
- ◆ Examine can mean: write, compare, or detail
- ◆ A colonist refers to those inhabiting the British (American) colonies during the time of the American Revolution
- ◆ A Patriot was a colonist that fought for colonial independence from the British
- ◆ A Loyalist was a colonist that remained supportive of the British rule over the colonies
- ◆ A third party of colonists chose to remain neutral during the American

Revolution

- ◆ Tensions between the 13 North American colonies and the British government arose around 1763 over issues of government authority and unalienable rights
 - ◆ The Revolutionary War was fought from 1775-1783 between British (American) colonists and Great Britain
 - ◆ Colonists chose sides (or remained neutral) for political, economic, religious, and/or personal reasons
- Main concepts to teach:
- ◆ Colonists' reasons for wanting independence
 - ◆ Colonists' reasons for siding with the British during the American Revolution
 - ◆ Colonists' reasons for not taking a side during the American Revolution
- Examples:
- ◆ Patriots
 - Fought for liberty and independence against British monarch, King George III
 - Believed in unalienable individual rights
 - Wanted the people to give government its power
 - Wanted more limited government
 - Opposed monarchy or aristocracy (non-elected King/Queen whose power comes from family bloodline and not the citizens)
 - Believed the British Parliament was imposing unfair taxes
 - Believed there was no representation in Parliament for the laws or policies impacting British (American) colonists
 - Felt their rights were being violated
 - Felt King George III was acting tyrannical
 - ◆ Loyalists
 - Considered themselves loyal British subjects
 - Believed involving themselves in the revolution would be treasonous
 - Constituted as roughly $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population
 - Believed commerce and trade depended on good relations with the British Empire
 - Many had family or business links with Britain
 - ◆ Other Colonists
 - Colonists that believed in maintaining a neutral stance during the war
 - Did not always agree with every British policy, but still valued their citizenship and benefits of being British subjects
 - Many Quakers were pacifists because they opposed the violence of both the Loyalists and Patriots
 - Feared risks and repercussions of choosing incorrectly
 - Heavily pressured by both sides to conform to one of the sides
 - Enslaved people, Native Americans, and various religious groups also had difficulty deciding which side to choose and the majority remained neutral
 - ◆ Declaration of Independence
 - Adopted on July 4, 1776
 - Written to King George III explaining why the colonies were breaking away from British rule
 - Emphasized the right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness as unalienable rights

CONTENT BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

Information on the American Revolution:

1. [Bill of Rights Institute: Loyalists and Patriots](#)
2. [Smithsonian American Art Museum: Patriots and Loyalists](#)
3. [Museum of the American Revolution: People and Perspectives In Between](#)
4. [Museum of the American Revolution: Support for Independence](#)
5. [Museum of the American Revolution: Opposition to Independence](#)
6. [Britannica: American Revolution](#)

Information on the Declaration of Independence:

1. [Archives: The Declaration of Independence](#)
2. [Kids Britannica: Declaration of Independence](#)
3. [Britannica: Declaration of Independence](#)

Information on laws/statutes regarding the teaching of American History:

1. [Florida State Statute 1003.42: Required Instruction](#)