

Middle Grades 6-8
English

The Fighting Ground
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Description

Students will develop an understanding of how the Revolutionary War was fought and what effect it had on the youth and adults of the time period. Students will analyze and critique military-related websites, Blackboard discussion board and assessments, class discussion, and personal experiences to increase critical thinking skills. Students will be completing several writing assignments about war, defiance, and guns while incorporating their own opinions. After completing this text, students will be able to explain the social and moral consequences of war.

Prior to this unit, students are expected to have a basic understanding of the American Revolution (previously taught by social studies teacher). They are expected to know how to write paragraphs and how to verbally communicate their ideas. In addition, they are expected to have a basic knowledge of computers and internet navigation.

Unit Objectives

The students will be challenged to:

- ▶ Analyze how war changes people
- ▶ Judge whether guns should be legalized
- ▶ Recall information about the American Revolution
- ▶ Explain why kids defy parents
- ▶ Compare and contrast the American Revolution to the war in Iraq
- ▶ Evaluate the influence of guns in the community
- ▶ Explain how and why war is glorified

NYS Learning Standards Addressed

▶ ELA Standard 1 - **Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding** - As listeners and readers, students will collect data, facts, and ideas; discover relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and use knowledge generated from oral, written, and electronically produced texts. As speakers and writers, they will use oral and written language to acquire, interpret, apply, and transmit information.

Key Idea 2 - Speaking and Writing

Speaking and writing to acquire and transmit information requires asking probing and clarifying questions, interpreting information in one's own words, applying information from one context to another, and presenting the information and interpretation clearly, concisely, and comprehensibly.

Performance Indicators

- 2D** Develop information with appropriate supporting material, such as facts, details, illustrative examples or anecdotes, and exclude extraneous material.

► **ELA Standard 2 - Language for Literary Response and Expression-** Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary expression - Students will read and listen to oral, written, and electronically produced texts and performances, relate texts and performances to their own lives, and develop an understanding of the diverse social, historical, and cultural dimensions the texts and performances represent. As speakers and writers, students will use oral and written language for self-expression and artistic creation.

Key Idea 1 – Listening and Reading Listening and reading for literary response involves comprehending, interpreting, and critiquing imaginative texts in every medium, drawing on personal experiences and knowledge to understand the text, and recognizing the social, historical and cultural features of the text.

Performance Indicators

- 1A** Read and view texts and performances from a wide range of authors, subjects, and genres
- 1D** Recognize different levels of meaning

Key Idea 2 – Speaking and Writing - Speaking and writing for literary response involves presenting interpretations, analyses, and reactions to the content and language of a text. Speaking and writing for literary expression involves producing imaginative texts that use language and text structures that are inventive and often multilayered.

- 2A** Present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary element found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience
- 2B** Produce interpretations of literary works that identify different levels of meaning and comment on their significance and effect
- 2C** Write stories, poems, literary essays, and plays that observe the conventions of the genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice
- 2D** Use standard English effectively

► **ELA Standard 3 - Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation** Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation - As listeners and readers, students will analyze experiences, ideas, information, and issues presented by others using a variety of established criteria. As speakers and writers, they will present, in oral and written language and from a variety of perspectives, their opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information and issues.

Key Idea 1 - Listening and Reading Listening and reading to analyze and evaluate experiences, ideas, information, and issues requires using evaluative criteria from a variety of perspectives and recognizing the difference in evaluations based on different sets of criteria.

Performance Indicators

- 1C** Understand that within any group there are many different points of view depending on the particular interests and values of the individual, and recognize those differences in perspective in texts and presentations (E.g., in considering whether to let a new industry come into a community, some community members might be enthusiastic about the additional jobs that will be created while others are concerned about the air and noise pollution that could result.).

► **ELA Standard 4 - Language for Social Interaction** Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction - Students will use oral and written language for effective social communication with a wide variety of people. As readers and listeners, they will use the social communications of others to enrich their understanding of people and their views. Performance Indicator-Intermediate

Key Idea 2 – Reading and Writing Written communication for social interaction requires using written messages to establish, maintain, and enhance personal relationships with others.

Performance Indicator

- 2B** Use appropriate language and style for the situation and the audience and take into account the ideas and interests expressed by the person receiving the message

National Educational Technology Standards

▶ Basic operations and concepts

- Apply strategies for identifying and solving routine hardware and software problems that occur during everyday use.

▶ Social, ethical, and human issues

- Exhibit legal and ethical behaviors when using information and technology, and discuss consequences of misuse.
- Research and evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and bias of electronic information sources concerning real-world problems.

▶ Technology productivity tools

- Use content-specific tools, software, and simulations (e.g., environmental probes, graphing calculators, exploratory environments, Web tools) to support learning and research.

▶ Technology communications tools

- Design, develop, publish, and present products (e.g., Web pages, videotapes) using technology resources that demonstrate and communicate curriculum concepts to audiences inside and outside the classroom.

▶ Technology research tools

- Use content-specific tools, software, and simulations (e.g., environmental probes, graphing calculators, exploratory environments, Web tools) to support learning and research.
- Select and use appropriate tools and technology resources to accomplish a variety of tasks and solve problems.
- Research and evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and bias of electronic information sources concerning real-world problems.
- Design, develop, publish, and present products (e.g., Web pages, videotapes) using technology resources that demonstrate and communicate curriculum concepts to audiences inside and outside the classroom. (

▶ Technology problem-solving and decision-making tools

- Select and use appropriate tools and technology resources to accomplish a variety of tasks and solve problems.
- Research and evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and bias of electronic information sources concerning real-world problems.
- Design, develop, publish, and present products (e.g., Web pages, videotapes) using technology resources that demonstrate and communicate curriculum concepts to audiences inside and outside the classroom.

Learning Experience Activities	The Fighting Ground Approximate Timeline: 21 Days
1.	Introduce <i>The Fighting Ground</i> and brief discussion about the American Revolutionary War. Begin reading text. Read pages 3-6
2.	Read pages 6-13. DYRT Quiz on page 3-13.
3.	Read pages 13-23.
4.	Read to page 32. Discussion questions will be posted on Blackboard daily.
5.	DYRT Quiz 14-32. Collect "24 hour" Homework assignment. Read pages 32-40
6.	Reading pages 32-40 and begin discussion questions 1-4 in class. Questions 5-8 for homework.
7.	Review homework answers and continue reading – pages 40-51 Homework – Read pages 52-62.
8.	Blackboard DYRT Quiz on pages 32-51. Continue reading and discuss 62-68. Homework: Answer questions 9-14.
9.	Read p. 68-79. Homework: answer questions 15 and 16.
10.	Read p. 80-91. Homework: Summarize what you have read and write about how you feel.
11.	Discuss homework. Read pages 92-103. Homework: Answer questions 17 and 18.
12.	Read 103-112 and a DYRT Quiz 80-112.
13.	Crossword Puzzle. Homework: Read pg. 112-123 and answer questions 19 and 20.
14.	Review reading assignment and study questions. Audio Tape or CD- students listen to pages 125-131 in class. Discuss feelings. No Homework.
15.	Analyzing military websites and a writing assignment – How do these websites glorify war? (Will provide worksheet)
16.	Read p. 132-139. Homework: Summarize the reading. How is Jonathan feeling now—explain?
17.	Read p. 140-152. In class: answer the last two discussion questions.
18.	Introduce persuasive writing assignment about whether guns should be legal. Read article in class. Planning page provided for students to list pros and cons.
19.	Write introductory paragraph for persuasive essay and first body paragraph in class. Homework: Write the other 2 body paragraphs.
20.	Conclusion and Review for test
21.	Online assessment in Blackboard

<p>Teaching Tips</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher should become very familiar with Blackboard. • Try electronic assessments feature on Blackboard prior to administering to students
<p>Lesson Extenders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Point Presentation about the Revolution and Jonathan's experiences. • Online discussion with other schools, classes and parents • Artwork expressing the themes or major events of the book. • Watch a movie about the American Revolution • Compare and contrast <i>The Fighting Ground</i> with <i>Johnny Tremain</i> • Teachers can let students create puzzles using the software on the laptop to demonstrate understanding of what was read • Student can use Inspiration to create outlines and graphic organizers to demonstrate reading comprehension • Students can write and record poetry about their feeling that were asked as part of the lesson.

Interdisciplinary Links

Understanding the American Revolution is integral to student understanding of the text. The context of the book is the American Revolution, which is a part of the 7th grade curriculum in Social Studies.

Spotlight on Technology

Prior to this lesson students will have a knowledge of how to use and take care of the wireless internet laptops. Discussions will take place on Blackboard as well as the DYRT quizzes. WORD will be used to word process any writing assignments that need to be completed. Students may use the Blackboard Journal tool to answer homework questions. The Internet is used to research some of the topics that were provided.

Tools and Resources Needed

Hardware:

- ▶ Laptop Computers with Internet accessibility
- ▶ LCD Projector
- ▶ Tape Recorder (opt if have CD)

Software:

- ▶ Microsoft WORD
- ▶ PowerPoint
- ▶ Blackboard V. 6.1
- ▶ Essential Puzzles Software

Web Resources:

- ▶ Kids and Guns in America <http://www.bradycampaign.org/facts/issues/?page=kids>
- ▶ The Fighting Ground by Avi <http://www.kathimitchell.com/fight.htm>
- ▶ The Marines - www.Marines.com
- ▶ The Navy - www.Navy.com
- ▶ The Air Force - www.airforce.com
- ▶ The Army - www.army.com

Print Resources:

- ▶ Avi. The Fighting Ground. New York: Harper Collins, 1984.

Other:

- ▶ Audio Tape or CD of *The Fighting Ground*

Assessment Plan:

- ▶ DYRT Quizzes – hardcopy and online: multiple choice, Day 2, 5, 8, and 12
- ▶ Study Guide Questions – hardcopy and online: Day 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, and 17 – short answer
- ▶ Homework – both reading and writing as we read the text
- ▶ Persuasive Writing Assignment about legalization of guns – which is part of online final assessment – evaluated with ELA 8 rubric
- ▶ Analyzing Military Websites – group work questionnaire and class discussion of results.
- ▶ Online final assessment – multiple choice, True/False, Matching, fill-in the blank

Credits

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