

LEADERSHIP AND ALEXANDER HAMILTON



This lesson will introduce students to different styles of leadership and ask them to consider one Revolutionary leader's personal leadership style by examining choices he made during the Revolutionary War.

This activity is excerpted from Unit 3 of the *Hamilton Was Here: Rising Up in Revolutionary Philadelphia* Teacher Resource Guide, which supported the Museum's past exhibition of the same name. To see the full lesson and all supporting materials, visit: www.amrevmuseum.org/teacher-resource-guides. To learn more about the exhibit, visit: www.amrevmuseum.org/exhibits/past-exhibitions/hamilton-was-here

CONTEXT

Leaders set the tone and often determine the outcomes of the projects, movements, and teams that they lead. Studying leaders throughout history to understand what qualities made them successful or problematic allow us to learn which kinds of leaders we value in our own lives and what kind of leader we wish to be ourselves.

AIMS/OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Evaluate different leadership styles, including Hamilton's, and consider how the ideal leader and necessary qualities depend on the circumstance

MATERIALS

Primary Sources:

Painting: *Battle of Princeton* by William Mercer, circa 1786–90 (Philadelphia History Museum)

Other Resources:

Leadership Styles Definition Sheet

Leadership and Hamilton Worksheet

Thematic Overview: Hamilton and the Revolutionary War

PROCEDURES

- First, share the primary source card featuring the painting, *Battle of Princeton* by William Mercer. Ask students to reflect on their observations of the painting as they answer the prompts that accompany its description: Who are the most important people in this painting? Why do you believe that they are the most important people? What would it feel like to be there? (Hint: Think about your five senses, and emotions.) What would it take to be successful in a battle like this?
- Next, ask students what qualities they believe a leader needs to have, in general (e.g., confidence, good communication skills, creativity), recording their responses on their worksheets.
- Finally, have students review different leadership styles on the Leadership Styles Definition Sheet. With these styles in mind, have students read the Thematic Overview then answer the following questions on their worksheet: Which leadership style(s) might have applied to Hamilton? What makes you say this? Would the same leadership style that helped him in battle work for him as a political leader? What leadership style do you think is best suited for political leaders, such as governors, presidents, prime ministers, etc.? Does it depend on the situation? Why or why not?
- Students should submit their worksheet for review once they finish it.

EXTENSION

Ask students to construct a leadership profile of another historical figure or a contemporary one. Students can conduct research about their chosen individual, then analyze the information they gather to evaluate what type of leader that person is/was and how effective they are/were in the role of a leader. Students should provide evidence from their research to support their conclusions.