

## PEOPLE OF THE REVOLUTION



This lesson will introduce students to some of the diverse peoples living in British North America as the Revolution unfolded. Students will see how this diversity — categorized in many different ways — impacted the ideals and/or experiences of all those who were involved in the Revolution.

This activity is excerpted from Unit 5 of the *Through Their Eyes: Major Causes and Events of the American Revolution* Teacher Resource Guide. To see the full lesson and all supporting materials, visit: [www.amrevmuseum.org/teacher-resource-guides](http://www.amrevmuseum.org/teacher-resource-guides)

### CONTEXT

British North America contained people with many cultures, from many places, who spoke different languages, and with varying systems of belief. To best understand the American Revolution, historians must try to learn as much as possible about all the peoples of British North America, as well as others who participated in the War. One way that they do this is by studying objects and documents from the era.

### AIMS/OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

Identify some of the diverse peoples living in British North America in the 1760s – 1790s

Compare and contrast the needs and concerns of British North America's diverse populations

### MATERIALS

Primary Sources:

Photograph: Poems on *Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* by Phillis Wheatley, 1773  
(Museum of the American Revolution)

Photograph: Hessian Headgear  
(Museum of the American Revolution)

Other Resources:

Thematic Overview

Student Response Worksheet

### PROCEDURES

- First, have students observe and analyze both the Hessian Headgear and the frontispiece of Phillis Wheatley's book of poetry. Ask students to guess what they believe each of these objects' connection to the American Revolution is and record their reasoning on the worksheet.
- Next, have students read the information that accompanies both primary source cards, recording what they have learned about these objects and the people they are connected to on their worksheet: What groups of people would these objects have been most strongly connected to? Is any of the information you learned about them surprising? What new information does this give you about people living in British North America during the late 18th Century?
- Then, have students read the Thematic Overview to identify and learn about several other groups of people present in North America during the Revolutionary Era. As they read, students should think about what needs, wants, and concerns people within these groups may have had as the Revolution unfolded.
- Finally, have students select two of the groups featured in the Thematic Overview to complete a Venn Diagram showing similarities and differences in the needs, wants, and concerns

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for these groups during the Revolutionary period. What might they have needed and wanted before the Revolutionary War? During the Revolutionary War?

While a new American government was being created after the War? Students can complete this work individually, with a partner, or with an adult.

## EXTENSIONS

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Have students explore the galleries within the Museum's **Virtual Tour** and then conduct additional research to compose a report about one of the groups of people they learned about in the lesson and in the Museum's galleries. How did the needs, wants, and concerns of this group impact their decision-making

during the Revolutionary Era? What variety existed within this group, and how might this variety further refine our understanding of the group's needs, wants, and concerns, and of their decision-making?