

Scott Nelson
TAH 1
3.12.2004

Will the Real Samuel Adams Please Stand Up

“Royal officials and Tories never did grasp the Revolutionaries’ distinction between “the body of the people” and a mindless mob. Because they knew no other way, they interpreted Boston’s politics as a top-down chain of command. In the process, they transformed Samuel Adams into a detestable demon. Now, we honor the mythological figure his enemies created.”

Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past, Ray Raphael

Grade Level: Fifth or Sixth Grade

Topic: Boston and the man who made a revolution: Sam Adams.

Theme: Firebrand or Realist? Was Samuel Adams a revolutionary firebrand, master puppeteer inciting all of Boston’s anti-loyalist mob actions or was he a political realist, working behind the scenes, wading through pre-revolution Boston with patience and caution?

Standards:

California State History Standards:

5.4.7 Explain the early democratic ideas and practices that emerged during the colonial period, including the significance of representative assemblies and town meeting.

5.5.1 Understand how political, religious and economic ideas and interests brought about the Revolution (e.g. resistance to imperial policy, the Stamp Act, the Townsend Acts, taxes on tea, Coercive Acts).

5.5.3 Understand the people and events associated with the drafting and signing of the Declaration of Independence.

5.7.3 Understand the fundamental principles of American constitutional democracy, including how the government derives its power from the people and the primacy of individual liberty.

National History Standards:

Historical Thinking Standard 2 - Historical Comprehension:

D. Students differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations but acknowledge that the two are related; that the facts the historian reports are selected and reflect therefore the historian’s judgment of what is most significant about the past.

F. Students appreciate historical perspectives – (a) describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed

through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded – the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding present-mindedness, judging the past solely in terms of present-day norms and values.

G. Students draw upon data in historical maps in order to obtain or clarify information on the geographic setting in which the historical event occurred, its relative and absolute location, the distances and directions involved, the natural and manmade features of the place, and critical relationships in the spatial distributions of those features and historical event occurring there.

Historical Thinking Standard 3 – Historical Analysis and Interpretation:

F. Students compare competing historical narratives.

H. Students hold interpretations of history as tentative, subject to changes as new information is uncovered, new voices heard, and new interpretations broached.

Historical Thinking Standard 4 – Historical Research Capabilities:

A. Students formulate historical questions from encounters with historical documents, eyewitness accounts, letters, diaries, artifacts, photos, historical sites, art, architecture, and other records from the past.

Timeline:

The following lessons are designed for a 5th or 6th grade, self-contained classroom.

Day 1: Hook, To Tell the Truth (45 minutes)
 Maps Over Time (75-90 minutes)

Day 2: Who was Sam Adams?
 Primary Document Analysis (30 minutes)
 Lecture (45 minutes)
 Writing of Questions (45 minutes)

Teacher Preparation:

Teachers will need access to a computer in the classroom or ideally, a computer lab for a whole class exploration of the Maps Over Time web site. Teachers will also have to become familiar with the site before using it in class. If you are not using the official mourning statement on line, it will have to be downloaded and copied prior to use in class. You will also have to download and copy the National Archives Primary Document Analysis Worksheet before using in class.

Prior Content Knowledge and Skills:

I would teach these lessons as part of a unit on the colonial period, so I would assume that my students would have some understanding of the early democratic ideas and practices that emerged during this time. I would also

assume that my students would have some understanding of the Colonies resistance to British policies, the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, Liberty Riot and the Boston Massacre. I would teach these lessons just after looking at the Boston Tea Party.

I will assume that my students have a working knowledge of the computer and the Internet, as well as access to a computer at school either in the classroom or in a computer lab.

I will also assume my students have a familiarity in using the National Archives Document Analysis sheet.

Introductory “Hook”:

In order to hook my students on this topic I would use the game show format from the old television show ‘To Tell the Truth.’ The show’s panel of four regular hosts, after getting a small clue as well as asking as many questions of the three mystery guests as possible within a certain time, had to identify the real person from the two impostors. The show would always conclude with the phrase, “Will the real _____ please stand up!”

This ‘To Tell the Truth’ activity is a good way to help start my students focusing on whether Samuel Adams was a revolutionary firebrand or a master puppeteer. You will have to pick three of your more able and outgoing students to play the three different versions of Sam Adams. You will have to spend an hour or so prior to this activity in order to help prep them on their roles, or you can try and get three adult males, possibly other teachers at your school or fathers of the students who would be willing to role-play Samuel Adams. Have one of the Sam Adams impostors take on the persona of the puppeteer who pulls all the strings on the common folks of Boston, but actually belittles them. The other impostor could play the happy-go-lucky, slightly inebriated, master brewer who is proud of his product – Samuel Adams Beer (actual empty bottle of the 21st century variety in hand). The third and more realistic version of Sam Adams could be portrayed as a man trying to incorporate all the people of Boston in genuine political revolution. After fifteen to twenty minutes of questions from the class and answers from the different ‘Sams’, have the class vote on which one they think is the real Adams. Finally, the dramatic unveiling will reveal the ‘real’ Sam Adams.

Not only is this format engaging and fun for the students, I think it is an effective way to hook the students into differentiating between historical facts and historical interpretations as well as a great introduction to analyzing and interpreting historical stories.

Lesson Content:

Day 1: Geographical connection - Maps Over Time

It is important for historians to sort out the facts - or the truth - from the fiction in our stories. To really understand the events of the Boston Tea Party, and other Revolutionary events that took place in Boston and the real roles of at least one famous Bostonian at the time – Samuel Adams – we need to get a better understanding of what Boston looked like.

1. Using our school's computer lab of 16 computers, I would have my students pair up and direct the pairs to Maps Over Time, <http://www.mapsovertime.com> . This is a very useful site that allows the students to transform Boston (and other cities) by overlaying old, new, and future maps of the city. The site uses maps from 1775, 1826, and 1995 to compare the changes to downtown Boston over time. By using the control panel the students can turn layers on or off, make them transparent so past boundaries can be seen in comparison with present ones. The site also allows the students to zoom in and out, find street addresses, and rotate the maps.

You would need to spend 15-30 minutes using the tutorial in order to orient the students with the program.

2. The remaining 60 minutes would be spent challenging the students to find as many of the following historical sites and locating them on a copy of the 1776 map: Boston Common, Boston Old South Meeting House, Old State House, Faneuil Hall, the Paul Revere House and Old North Church as well as the site of the Tea Party.

Finally, on the back of the location map I would have the students write a short answer essay comparing the general changes that have taken place along Boston's harbor outline from 1775 to 1995.

Day 2: Who was Sam Adams and what role did he play in the American Revolution as it unfolded in Boston?

1. Using the National Archives Primary Document Analysis Worksheet found at http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/document.html

I would have my class individually analyze the official mourning statement from the Annals of Congress, House of Representatives, 8th Congress, 1st Session, Pages 377 through 378, - Mourning for Samuel Adams. Found at [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/S?ammem/hlaw:@filreq\(@band\(House+of+Representatives+@1\(Abuse+of+the+American+Flag--Mourning+for+Samuel+Adams\)\)\)+@field\(COLLID+llac\)\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/S?ammem/hlaw:@filreq(@band(House+of+Representatives+@1(Abuse+of+the+American+Flag--Mourning+for+Samuel+Adams)))+@field(COLLID+llac)))

2. With the above Ray Raphael quote posted on the board, I would have my class discuss the meaning behind it. Using Raphael's Chapter 3, The Man Who Made a Revolution: Sam Adams, from his book, Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past, I would have the students take notes on a brief, full class lecture on the different portrayals of Sam Adams through history. The lecture would focus on Raphael's claim that "the real Samuel Adams does not live up to the image of a flaming revolutionary. Throughout a political career that spanned four decades, he opposed violent acts that threatened a well-ordered society." I would also share with the class the way the British portrayal of Adams shaped the mythical hero that we are familiar with today.

Conclusion / Evaluation:

After taking a brief snack, or recess break (or possibly on another day), I would conclude this two day focus on Boston and Sam Adams, by having my class do a writing assignment. I would have my students pretend that they are journalists who are going to get the chance to go back in time to interview Sam Adams. Before going though, they need to have a few (5-10) questions written ahead of time. I would ask the students to focus their questions around my theme, whether Sam Adams was a revolutionary firebrand or a cautious and patient political realist.

My evaluation would be three fold: The students' map work, their primary document analysis worksheets, and their questions for Samuel Adams.

Resources:

Founding Myths: Stories That Hide Our Patriotic Past, Ray Raphael

National Archives Primary Document Analysis Worksheet

http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/analysis_worksheets/document.html

Official mourning statement from the Annals of Congress, House of Representatives, 8th Congress, 1st Session, Pages 377 through 378, - Mourning for Samuel Adams.

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Maps Over Time, web site at <http://www.mapsovertime.com>