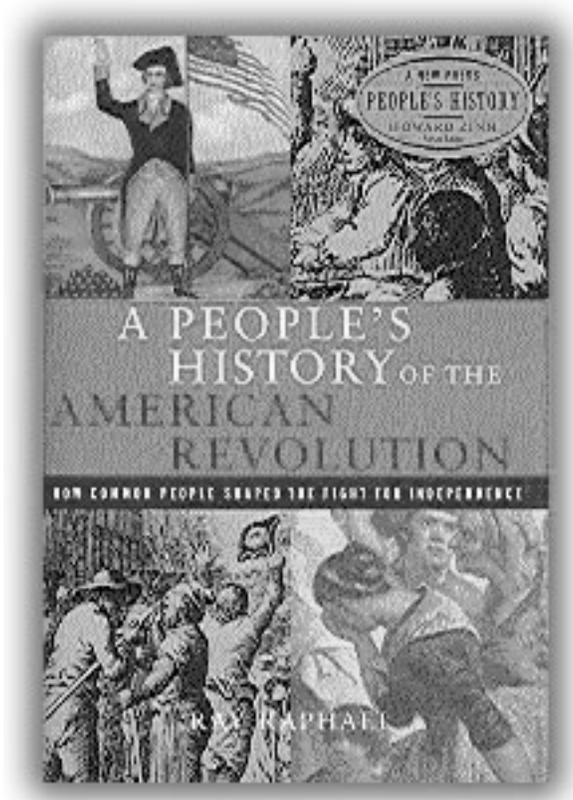


A People's History of the American Revolution:



A Guide for Teaching and Readers' Groups

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CHAPTER 5: NATIVE AMERICANS

WESTERN ABENAKIS

Review:

1. (a) What did Ethan Allen and Colonel Greene want from the Indians? (b) What did Allen and Greene offer in return? (c) According to Greene, why had American soldiers come to Canada? (d) Why had they really come?
2. What did the British want from the Indians?
3. (a) Where did the Western Abenakis live? (b) Why was their homeland deemed so important to European nations? (b) Before 1763, which European power had the Western Abenakis favored, and why?
4. (a) What did the Western Abenakis gain by fighting in the Revolutionary War? (b) How enthusiastically did they fight? (c) In terms of lives lost in battle, how costly was the war to the Western Abenakis?
5. (a) What did the patriots think of the Abenakis' performance in the war? (b) What did the British think of the Abenakis' performance in the war?
6. Explain how Joseph Louis Gill "played both sides against the middle."
7. How did the treaty at the end of the war impact the Western Abenakis?
8. (a) How did the Western Abenakis react to Yankee settlers after the war? (b) What was the population increase for whites around Missisquoi in the 1790s? Express your answer as a percentage. (c) What happened to the Western Abenakis when white settlers took over most of their land?

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion:

1. Read carefully Allen's and Greene's entreaties for support. What do these speeches reveal about white views of Native Americans?
2. (a) Discuss the ways in which the traditional lifestyles of the Western Abenakis had changed by the 1770s, and explain how these changes affected their participation in the Revolutionary War. (b) Discuss the ways in which the traditional lifestyles of the Western Abenakis remained intact into the 1770s, and explain how these traditional ways affected their participation in the Revolutionary War.
3. Patriots criticized the Western Abenakis for their "fickle disposition." Did they deserve to be criticized for their lack of loyalty?
4. Describe and explain the change in the Allens' attitude towards Native Americans.

IROQUOIS

Review:

1. (a) Prior to contact with Europeans, why did the Iroquois live in crowded settlements? (b) What did Deganawida and Hiawatha accomplish? (c) How did contact with Europeans affect the Iroquois population?
2. What was the "Covenant Chain"?

3. (a) How did the 1768 Treaty of Fort Stanwix help the Iroquois? (b) Who violated that treaty? (c) How did that affect future alliances in the Revolutionary War?
4. (a) Towards the beginning of the Revolution, what did the British ask of the Iroquois? (b) Towards the beginning of the Revolution, what did the Americans ask of the Iroquois? (c) Both the British and the American wooed the Iroquois with parties and lavish gifts. Which side put on a better show?
5. (a) Which Iroquois nations sided with the British, and what were their major reasons for doing so? (b) Which Iroquois nations sided with the Americans, and what were their major reasons for doing so? (c) Did Iroquois nations actually fight against each other?
6. Who won the debate between Joseph Brant and Cornplanter, and what was his decisive argument?
7. (a) Who “won” the battle of Fort Stanwix? (b) How did the Senecas feel about the results?
8. (a) What was the goal of the Sullivan expedition? (b) Was it “successful”? (c) What was the impact on Iroquois women, old men, and children?
9. Who gave up first, the Iroquois or the British?
10. How did Iroquois gender roles change at the close of the war?
11. After the war, what happened to the Iroquois “council fire”?
12. What happened to the community of Oquaga during the Revolutionary War?
13. (a) What happened to Cornplanter’s father? (b) What happened when an Oneida warrior captured his brother?

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion:

1. How did the presence of Europeans in America impact the internal power relationships between Iroquois sachems and warriors?
2. When British and Americans asked for support, the initial response of most Iroquois was “to sit still and see you fight it out.” But they did not sit still. (a) Discuss the forces that drove the Iroquois to take sides. (b) Were these forces irresistible? Was there any way the Iroquois could have sat out the war?
3. Cornplanter counseled peace, Joseph Brant counseled war. Do “hawks” always enjoy a political advantage over “doves”? Compare the experience of the Iroquois with the debate over the Vietnam War, or the debate over whether to enter World War I or World War II, or any other debate concerning war and peace. What kinds of arguments, if any, are strong enough to neutralize the call to war?
4. (a) How do you react to Blacksnake’s battle descriptions? (b) How did he himself react in later years? Do you agree with Raphael that he seemed “confused about his role” as a warrior? (c) Are warriors always confused about their roles when they return to civil society? Compare the experiences of Vietnam veterans suffering from “post-traumatic stress syndrome” with the experiences of decorated heroes from any war. Are there always nagging doubts about killing?
5. Traditionally, European armies waged war by fighting each other, not civilians. (a) How did the Sullivan expedition differ from that tradition? (b) Do you think such an expedition, during those times, could have been waged by Europeans against other Europeans? If so, are there specific examples? If not, why were such actions deemed more appropriate and acceptable against Indians?

6. How do you react emotionally to the two stories related by Mary Jemison at the end of this section?

DELAWARE AND SHAWNEE

Review:

1. In the 1768 Fort Stanwix treaty, who signed away rights to land used by the Delaware and Shawnee?
2. How did European-Americans and Native Americans differ in their concepts of land ownership?
3. (a) Which side did Cornstalk and White Eyes seem to favor? (b) Did the rest of the Shawnee and Delaware agree? Explain.
4. (a) Which side did the Mingo favor, and why? (b) How did actions taken by the Mingo affect relations between the Delaware and the Americans?
5. How did the views of George Morgan, the United States Indian Agent, differ from those of Brigadier General Edward Hand?
6. (a) What happened in the end to Cornstalk, the Shawnee chief friendly towards the Americans? (b) How did other Shawnees respond?
7. What happened in the “squaw campaign”?
8. (a) What did the Americans get out of the council at Fort Pitt in 1778? (b) What did the Delaware appear to get? (c) Why were the Delaware disappointed with the results of the agreement?
9. (a) What did the Americans claim happened to White Eyes, the pro-American Delaware chief? (b) What really happened to him? (c) How did Killbuck and other pro-American Delaware respond?
10. How did Killbuck's pro-American stance affect his relationship with his people? (In addition to the text, consult footnote #99.)
11. (a) Describe what happened at Gnadenhutten. (b) Who were the victims? Had they presented a military or political threat to the Americans?

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion:

1. (a) How did the English perceive the relationship between the Iroquois and Delaware? (b) According to Delaware tradition, what was that relationship at the time of the first contact with whites? (Consult footnote #83.) (c) Why do you think the English interpreted the relationship the way they did? (d) What were the consequences of their misinterpretation?
2. Discuss the frontier dynamic that favored violence over peace. Why were “voices of moderation” so often silenced?
3. Why do you think White Eyes remained friendly towards the Americans for so long? In addition to the text, consult footnotes #83, #85, and #87.
4. Was the massacre at Gnadenhutten an aberration by a few zealots, or was it the logical conclusion to American policy?
5. “The world is already too narrow.” What did David Zeisberger mean? Could these words apply to other people of the times?

CHEROKEES

Review:

1. In 1776 were either the Americans or the British supplying arms to the Cherokeees?
2. (a) What happened at Sycamore Shoals? (b) Did representatives of all Cherokee factions participate? Explain.
3. (a) What did the delegation of northern warriors ask of the Cherokeees at Chote? (b) What was the response of young warriors? (c) What was the response of the elders?
4. Who was Nancy Ward, and what did she say about women and war?
5. (a) What did the Cherokeees finally decide to do with the gunpowder they had received as a present? (b) According to the text, "the timing could not have been worse." Why was the timing so bad? (c) Describe the fighting between the Cherokeees and the Americans in 1776.
6. (a) What did white soldiers want to do with Indians they took prisoners? (b) Why did white officials oppose this?
7. (a) Why did Corn Tassel not want to trade land for goods? (b) How much land did the Cherokeees lose in the treaties of DeWitt's Corner and Long Island of the Holston River? (c) What did Dragging Canoe, Young Tassel, and other warriors do when they learned about the terms of the treaty?
8. Who were the Chickamaugas?
9. (a) How did the British surrender affect the Chickamaugas? (b) How did the British surrender affect the moderate Cherokeees?
10. (a) What happened to Corn Tassel? (b) Name two Native Americans from other tribes who met a similar fate.

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion

1. (a) Compare and contrast what happened at Chote with the debate between Iroquois factions when the British asked for their support. (b) The rift between young warriors and elders figured prominently among the Iroquois, Delaware, Shawnee, and Cherokeees. Compare and contrast the *outcomes* of these internal divisions.
2. (a) Discuss the participation of women at Cherokee and Iroquois councils. (Consult footnotes #105 and #107 as well as the text.) Did the women wield any power? (b) Did Euro-American women of those times have any comparable experiences at "councils" where political business was conducted?
3. Dragging Canoe refused to attend the treaty negotiations at Sycamore Shoals and Long Island of the Holston River. Was this appropriate, or do you think he should have participated?
4. (a) Discuss how the actions of the Chickamaugas affected other Cherokeees. (Consult footnote #127 as well as the text.) (b) In fact, historical records show some intermingling between the Chickamaugas and the moderate Cherokeees. Why is this not surprising? What kinds of forces must have continued to pull these factions together, despite their political differences?

CATAWBAS

Review:

1. In earlier times, did the Catawbas way of life more closely resemble that of the Iroquois or that of the Western Abenakis? Explain. (b) By the time of the American Revolution, how did the Catawbas make their living?
2. (a) Which side did the Catawbas support in the war, and why? (b) How enthusiastic was their support? (c) List the battles in which the Catawbas participated.
3. What happened to the Catawba Reservation during the war?
4. (a) Why do you think the Catawbas changed the title of their leader? (b) What were Catawbas who fought at Rocky Mount and Fishing Creek called? (c) Why do you think they weren't called "warriors" like most other Native American fighting men?
5. (a) How did the Catawbas try to "cash in" on their participation after the war? (b) Compared to most other Native Americans, how did the Catawbas fare after the war? (c) How did other groups of Native Americans who sided with the Americans fare after the war?
6. What eventually happened to the Catawba Reservation?
7. What happened to Peter Harris after the war?

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion:

1. Compare and contrast the participation in the Revolutionary War of the Catawbas and the Western Abenakis. Consider which side(s) they joined, the type of support they offered, and how they fared in the end.
2. Why do you think the Catawba agreed to hunt runaway slaves (see footnote #142)? Was money the only object?
3. Debate resolution: "The Catawbas benefited from the Revolutionary War." (a) Develop arguments pro and con. (b) Either show how one argument is stronger than the other, or develop a synthesis from the opposing views.
4. How much can we extrapolate from the experiences of one man? (a) Study the brief biography of Peter Harris, then create a list of factual statements about the Catawba participation in the Revolutionary War which we can confirm on the basis of this evidence. Example: "Some Catawbas died of smallpox in the generation preceding the Revolutionary War." (b) What can we infer about the relationship between whites (both English and American) and the Catawbas after the war?

CHICKASAWS, CHOCTAWS, CREEKS, AND SEMINOLES

Review:

1. Which side did the Chickasaws support, and why?
2. Did the Chickasaws participate in the war as enthusiastically as the Catawbas? Explain.
3. What did traders offer the Chickasaws for their furs?
4. What finally induced the Chickasaws to take the war more seriously?
5. (a) After the Revolutionary War, which European nation competed for influence in the Mississippi Valley? (b) How did this affect the Chickasaws?

6. By the end of the war, which side did the Creeks and Choctaws support, and for what reasons?
7. Who was Alexander McGillivray, and what was his main task?
8. What happened at Fallen Timbers? When? Why was it so important?
9. (a) Who were the Seminoles? Where did they come from? Where did they live? (b) Which side did they support, and why? (c) How did the Seminoles fare in the Revolutionary War?
10. According to the text, what were the major impacts of the Revolutionary War on Native Americans? Can you think of any more?

Historical Reasoning/ Discussion:

1. Discuss the impact of liquor among the Chickasaws from the standpoint of (a) the traders (b) British army officers (c) Chickasaw trappers (d) Chickasaw elders (e) Chickasaw women.
2. (a) Why do you think the rift within the Chickasaw, similar to that experienced by other nations, came to a head after the war rather than during the war? (b) List the various groups which vied for Chickasaw support — and for their land — in the wake of the Revolutionary War. (c) Discuss the possible strategies/alignments available to the Chickasaws. (d) Imagine you are a Chickasaw at the time. Create a specific character for yourself, then argue for a particular course of action.
3. Why do you think a pan-Indian Confederation congealed after the Revolutionary War rather than before or during the war?
4. Discuss the factors which made the Seminole experience of the Revolutionary War different from that of other Native Americans?
5. In standard textbooks, the war fought between 1775 and 1783 is often called “the War of Independence.” (a) What might it be called in Native American textbooks? (b) What events and battles might be featured in a textbook focusing on Native Americans?

CLASS ACTIVITIES FOR CHAPTER 5: NATIVE AMERICANS

1. Stage a simulation of an Iroquois council as it considers whether or not to join with the British. Characters can include Joseph Brant, Blacksnake, Cornplanter, young warriors, sachems, women, British officers.
2. Conduct a trial in which American soldiers are accused of murdering 96 mission Indians at Gnadenhutzen. Stage the trial twice: first as it was likely to have occurred, then as it might occur today for a similar crime.
3. Write a dramatic script covering the adventures of Peter Harris, the Catawba, then perform it as “readers’ theater.”
4. Prepare a TV news broadcast covering the murder of Cornstalk and three other Shawnees. Interview participants, relatives, witnesses. What are the reactions from the “public,” both whites and Indians?
5. Simulate a radio talk show. The topic: the death of White Eyes, the Delaware chief. Have both whites and Indians call in. Does everybody buy the official line?
6. Prepare an issue of the *Frontier Gazette* covering any series of events from this chapter. Assume that the editor of this fictive newspaper views events as the majority of

white settlers did. Then prepare an issue of a rival paper, perhaps the *Frontier Times* (or another name of your choice), with a slant more in tune with that of George Morgan.

7. Choose a group of Native Americans at a specific time, then prepare a petition they might send to white officials protesting the incursions of settlers onto their lands.

9. Create a character who was taken captive as a child by a particular group of Native Americans, then grew up to become a member of that tribe (as did Mary Jemison). In your mind, develop your character: Where and when was he/she captured? Did he/she marry? How old now? Then write a diary/journal in which your character observes some of the events discussed in this chapter. Be sure to make the observations appropriate for the particular character you have created.

9. Conduct a series of in-depth interviews with Dragging Canoe and Attakullakulla, Corn Tassel, or The Raven. Cover the periods before, during, and after the Treaty of Long Island of the Holston River.

10. Prepare a diorama depicting the Sullivan campaign.

11. Draw a political cartoon depicting George Morgan from the standpoint of frontiersmen bent on avenging Indian raids.

12. Deliver a speech in which you try to recruit Western Abenakis to join the patriot army.

13. Deliver a speech by Alexander McGillivray in which he tries to recruit Chickasaw warriors to join the pan-Indian Confederation.

14. Draft a chapter for a 5th grade textbook telling how Native Americans participated in, and were affected by, the Revolutionary War. Make your text understandable for elementary students, but try to give enough sense of the complexities so as not to constitute an over-simplification of history.

UNIT PROJECTS FOR CHAPTER 5: NATIVE AMERICANS

1. How did the *location* of various Native American nations affect their participation in the war? Formulate a hypothesis and apply it to all the groups covered in this chapter.

2. Read Daniel R. Mandell, *Behind the Frontier: Indians in Eighteenth-Century Eastern Massachusetts*, and Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republicans in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. (a) Does the hypothesis you just developed apply the Native Americans in Eastern Massachusetts and the Great Lakes region? (b) How do these new sources contribute to your understanding of Native American responses to the Revolutionary War?

3. Iroquois warriors characterized sachems as “a parcell of Old People who say Much, but who Mean or Act very little.” White Eyes, the Delaware chief, disavowed the actions of “foolish Young Men.” Dragging Canoe referred pejoratively to “old men who were too old to hunt.” Compare and contrast the schism between elders and warriors during the Revolutionary War with the rift between civilian and military factions at any other point in United States history.

4. Recently, Joseph R. Fischer has stated that “Sullivan’s army turned in a credible performance in its operations against the Iroquois.” (*A Well-Executed Failure: The Sullivan Campaign against the Iroquois, July-September 1779*, 197.) Read Fischer, and read also the primary sources reprinted in Frederick Cook, ed., *Journals of the*

Military Expedition of Major General John Sullivan against the Six Nations of Indians in 1779. (a) What criteria did Fischer use to praise the army for a “credible performance”? Why does he also call it a “failure”? (b) Did the officers who kept journals regard their campaign as a success? (c) How do you react emotionally to the documentation of the burning of villages and the destruction of food by the people who performed these deeds?

5. Read the complete proceedings of the Treaty of Long Island of the Holston River (see footnote #121 for citation). How were the final terms of the treaty determined? Should Corn Tassel and The Raven have signed it?

6. Raphael states, “The American Revolution, a fight for freedom from colonial rule, was also the most extensive and destructive ‘Indian war’ in the nation’s history.” Consult a history of Native Americans to see if there are other candidates for this dubious honor. Then decide: Do you agree? What criteria do you use to determine “the most extensive and destructive” war? In making your assessment, do you consider the defeat of the Confederation at Fallen Timbers to be a new and separate war, or the last battle of a war that continued from the time of the Revolution?