

# Reinventing the Revolution!

## Song/Poem Project

### 8<sup>th</sup> U.S. History



#### Rationale

Over the past several weeks, we've read a number of primary sources on the Revolution:

- The Declaratory Act (1766), by Britain's Parliament
- John Adams' diary entry on the Boston Massacre (1773 – three years after the event itself in 1770)
- The Declaration of Independence (1776), primarily by Thomas Jefferson (with help from John Adams and Ben Franklin, among others)
- John and Abigail Adams' letters to each other about women's independence (1776)
- Two of George Washington's letters during the Revolutionary War (1776 & 1778)
- The last two paragraphs of George Washington's Farewell Address (1796), as quoted in *Hamilton's* "One Last Time"

This semester, we have also watched *Hamilton: An American Musical* transform the words of primary sources into song, with genres including hip-hop ("Nonstop") and ballads ("One Last Time").

Now, it's your turn to apply your creative spirit to a primary source from Revolutionary times!

## Goals

During this project, you will get to...

- 1) Connect history with music or poetry
- 2) Imprint some Revolutionary language on your brain
- 3) Write a song or poem that makes people think in interesting ways about the Revolution (and, thus, about any kind of rebellion or challenge to authority)
- 4) Perform your song or poem for your classmates – on an audio recording, a video or in person
- 5) Have fun!

## Detail

- You may work alone, in a pair, or in a group of three.
  - If you work with other people, I will ask you at the end to reflect on what you and each group member contributed. Your contributions will likely be different (one person might work on lyrics while another writes melody, or one person might search for styles of poems or songs that would work while another looks for sources). However, all contributions should be approximately equal in terms of effort and commitment.
- If writing a song rather than a poem, you may use the melody from a song that already exists, whether from *Hamilton* or somewhere else. If you use a melody from an existing song, be sure to list the artist and song title you've used directly under your song's title. You are also quite welcome to write your own melody.

## Time Frame

We will be working on this project in class on Nov. 30/Dec. 1 (block), Dec. 5, Dec. 7, Dec. 8 and Dec. 12. You will also be able to work on this for homework for several nights as needed. Please do not spend huge amounts of time outside school on this project unless you get totally carried away. I am not expecting Pulitzer Prize-winning brilliance – just happily energetic and thoughtful work!

## Technical Information About Presenting Your Project

*(Many thanks to Ms. Andrews for these details)*

### For videos

- Email is never the best option for sharing/transporting video files. They're usually too large to attach.
- If you are doing a video, first make sure to **convert** your video into a standard format like .mp4.
  - If you're working in iMovie on a Mac, you can do this through the File-Share menu, where you can choose to save the movie you've made in the .mp4 format.
  - On a PC, there's usually some bundled software for movie creation, but it will vary from computer to computer.
- Then you'll want to upload that video file to your Google Drive (which can take a while depending on movie length/file size).
  - You can then open/play that file from any computer where you can access Google Drive (such as the desktop computer in Room 21).
  - You could also share the file with Ms. Cooper from your Google Drive: [cooperprep@gmail.com](mailto:cooperprep@gmail.com).
- Another option is to just bring in the laptop/device on which you've created the video/audio, provided you have such a device.

### For simple audio content creation (with no video):

- You can use an iPhone to create a Voice Memo. If you have an iPhone 5 or 6, I can plug it into my iPhone dock with speakers to play it.
- There's also a program called Audacity available on some desktop computers on campus. You would want to export Audacity content as an .mp3 file before sharing it.

## A Number of Places to Find Primary Sources About the Revolution

There are two ways you could find a useful primary source. (Keep in mind you will likely use only several sentences or maybe a paragraph or two – not the whole thing!)

- 1) Look through the readings we have done, including the textbook readings, during this unit. Which events or people particularly interested you? Try searching for an event or person with the words “primary source” after it.
- 2) Browse through one or more of the sites below. These are just some of the many, many sites out there with Revolutionary primary source documents.

History Central

<http://www.historycentral.com/documents/Revolt.html>

Digital History

<http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/era.cfm?eraID=3&smtID=3>

Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/NewNation.html>

Teaching American History

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/american-revolution/>

Smithsonian Source: Resources for Teaching American History

<http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/primarysource/results.aspx?hId=1004>

## GRADING RUBRIC: Reinventing the Revolution Song/Poem Project

### Content & Creativity of the Song/Poem Itself (20)

- Your song or poem fully shows the ***meaning*** and ***historical context*** of the document. In other words, we should be able to figure out what is happening from your song or poem itself, without any outside context or information. (12)
- Your song or poem is pleasant to read, watch and/or listen to. It shows attention to language in everything from word choice to proofreading (no typos). (5)
- Your song or poem has a “wow” factor (3)
  - Shows spark, enthusiasm, creativity, energy, etc.
  - Leaves us feeling we understand the Revolution – and rebellion in general – more deeply

### Working Process & Details (20)

- On the day of the presentation, you bring the song or poem in a format that we are easily able to present in class (see tech details on guidelines). Or, you may read or sing the project in class on that day. Either option is just great. (8)
- If you are working in a group, the group works well together and shares the work responsibly and equitably. If you are working alone, you motivate yourself, find the thinking space you need, and ask questions of Ms. Cooper or classmates as needed. (6)
- You turn in the primary source(s) you used, along with any brainstorming notes or worksheets you used along the way. (6)

**TOTAL (40)**

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