

Crispus Attucks

First Man to Fall in the American Revolution

Overview:

Crispus Attucks, an American legend, was the “first martyr” of the American Revolution, killed in what is known now as the Boston Massacre. While little is known about Attucks, factual information about colonial tensions with Britain, investigation into the cultural and societal history of New England, and testimonies of the riot-like event that caused his death, give us a picture of Attucks’ commitment to freedom. As a runaway slave, was his involvement in this public protest a further demonstration of his abhorrence for tyrannical authority?

Lesson Objective:

In this lesson, students will:

- Study the dramatic events that led to the Boston Massacre
- Learn why colonists felt that British taxation was unfair
- Understand the types of protest used by colonists
- Read about the post-Revolution formation and activity of abolitionist groups
- Evaluate how filters and bias affect historical records
- Learn how and why famous people are memorialized
- View multimedia, learn relevant vocabulary, and apply understanding through group discussions
- Frederick Douglass, Dred Scott, William Cooper Nell, John Adams, Peter Salem and others

Lesson Prompt:

When you think about the American Revolution what comes to mind? Why would a man who escaped from slavery later oppose tyranny on behalf of the nation that had enslaved him? Is liberty a cause worthy dying for? In this lesson, we’re going to learn more about a person who might not be familiar to you, but who was the first to give his life fighting for freedom from England.

Share the prepared PowerPoint slide deck with students.

This lesson includes a prepared PowerPoint slide deck that orients students to Attucks' possible family background and the colonial tensions that led to the Boston Massacre. The slides feature content related to the lesson objectives, and are supplemented by the activities in the Activity Pack, including the Critical Thinking Exercises. These supplemental materials can be used to spark group discussion and allow independent classwork. Select activities from the accompanying Activity Pack according to your time allowance and student appropriateness.

Included in the Activity Pack are:

Activities and Assignments (grades K-8)

Multiple Choice Questions (grades 4-8)

Critical Thinking Exercises (grades K-5 with guidance; 6-8 unassisted)

Word Scramble

Coloring Page (grades K-3)

Vocabulary: Abolitionism, Alliance, Artifacts, Barracks, Bayonets, Berate, Emancipation, Hypocrisy, Iconic, Incite, Instigator, Invoke, Martyr, Massacre, Patriot, Red Coats, Smuggling, Tory

Recommended Resources:

[Crispus Attucks and The Boston Massacre - One Minute History](#) (1 minute)

[Crispus Attucks, First Martyr of the American Revolution | Biography -YouTube](#)

(~ 2 min)

[Who Was Crispus Attucks? - YouTube](#) (~ 2 min)

[Crispus Attucks - Black History Month - YouTube](#) (~ 4 min)

[Boston Massacre](#)

Crispus Attucks: Black Leader of the Colonial Patriots by Dharathula H. Millender

Black Heroes of the American Revolution by Burke Davis

Boston's Massacre by Eric Hinderaker

Standards and Learning Objectives

Mapped to the College, Career and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies State Standards published by the National Council for the Social Studies

K-2

Civics

D2.Civ.2.K-2. Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community.

D2.Civ.8.K-2. Describe democratic principles such as equality, fairness, and respect for legitimate authority and rules.

D2.Civ.14.K-2. Describe how people have tried to improve their communities over time.

History

D2.His.1.K-2. Create a chronological sequence of multiple events.

D2.His.2.K-2. Compare life in the past to life today.

D2.His.3.K-2. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped a significant historical change.

D2.His.6.K-2. Compare different accounts of the same historical event.

D2.His.9.K-2. Identify different kinds of historical sources.

D2.His.10.K-2. Explain how historical sources can be used to study the past.

D2.His.14.K-2. Generate possible reasons for an event or development in the past.

3-5

Civics

D2.Civ.8.3-5. Identify core civic virtues and democratic principles that guide government, society, and communities.

D2.Civ.14.3-5. Illustrate historical and contemporary means of changing society.

History

D2.His.2.3-5. Compare life in specific historical time periods to life today.

D2.His.3.3-5. Generate questions about individuals and groups who have shaped significant historical changes and continuities.

D2.His.4.3-5. Explain why individuals and groups during the same historical period differed in their perspectives.

D2.His.5.3-5. Explain connections among historical contexts and people's perspectives at

the time.

D2.His.6.3-5. Describe how people's perspectives shaped the historical sources they created.

D2.His.9.3-5. Summarize how different kinds of historical sources are used to explain events in the past.

D2.His.12.3-5. Generate questions about multiple historical sources and their relationships to particular historical events and developments.

D2.His.14.3-5. Explain probable causes and effects of events and developments.

D2.His.16.3-5. Use evidence to develop a claim about the past.

6-8

Civics

D2.Civ.6.6-8. Describe the roles of political, civil, and economic organizations in shaping people's lives.

D2.Civ.10.6-8. Explain the relevance of personal interests and perspectives, civic virtues, and democratic principles when people address issues and problems in government and civil society.

D2.Civ.14.6-8. Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.

History

D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.

D2.His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.

D2.His.4.6-8. Analyze multiple factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.

D2.His.5.6-8. Explain how and why perspectives of people have changed over time.

D2.His.6.6-8. Analyze how people's perspectives influenced what information is available in the historical sources they created.

D2.His.10.6-8. Detect possible limitations in the historical record based on evidence collected from different kinds of historical sources.

D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.

D2.His.15.6-8. Evaluate the relative influence of various causes of events and developments in the past.