



ALBUM [NEWSPAPERS DURING THE REVOLUTION](#)

Album Description

This short activity will inspire curious minds to think about how the news was shared in a world before the internet. By exploring different newspapers, students will be able to make inferences and talk about what happened in the time being spoken about but also how the information is presented to the public.

After this, students will have a deeper understanding of the importance and place of newspapers in the colonies during and after the American Revolution. This activity will also help them work on forming arguments about why different pieces of news are more important than others.

This album is connected to another one called [Analyzing the Spread of News During and After the American Revolution](#). They can be done separately or together.

Activity Length

20-25 minutes

Audience

6-8th grade

Essential Questions

How are Revolution Era newspapers similar to and different from today's newspapers?

What can we learn about the Revolutionary Era by studying its newspapers?

Themes



American Revolution, Colonial Newspapers, Press, Printing, George Washington, Newspapers

Background

Resource: [Starting the System exhibition](#) | [National Postal Museum](#)

With this site is the narrative of the early post system in the colonies starting around the 1690s. It was improved greatly by Benjamin Franklin before the Revolutionary War. Benjamin Franklin (1753), as part of his time as the Crown's joint postmaster general for the American colonies before the war, started a weekly mail wagon between Philadelphia and Boston. The system was always working to improve and lower costs.

Additional Resources:

- [Printing Newspapers 1400-1900: A Brief Survey of the Evolution of the Newspaper Printing Press | Headlines & Heroes](#)
- [Before Control-P: The Printing Process | Bibliomania](#)
- [Don't Get Out of Sorts: Composing Text | Bibliomania](#)

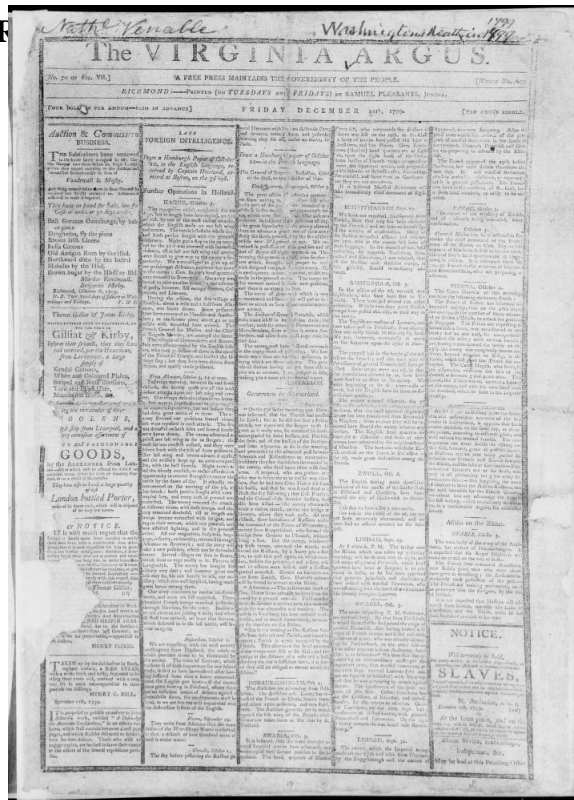
These blog posts from the Library of Congress offer secondary and primary source information about the history of printing in the world and Colonial America specifically.



ACTIVITY STEPS

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IMAGE 1 OF VIRGINIA ARGUS, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1799



Teaching Notes:

Essential Questions

Era newspapers similar to and different from today's newspapers?

What can we learn about the Revolutionary Era by studying its newspapers?

This newspaper has many things, things that may be pulled out, are a business section, foreign affairs and a death announcement of Washington. With details about mourning the president as a nation. With this in mind, for these sources I would give them the time to explore the newspaper. The goal is to build questions and ideas about newspapers and thoughts based on what they find in them.

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/resource/sn84024710/1799-12-20/ed-1/?sp=1&r=-0.124,-0.02,1.342,0.847,0>



- Richmond, Va., December 20, 1799

Genre

- Newspapers

Notes

- - Semiweekly
- - Vol. 4, no. 62 (Nov. 19, 1796)-v.23, no. 3174 (Mar. 29, 1815) ; v. 1, no. 2 [1] (Apr. 1, 1815) -v. 2, no. 61 (Oct. 19, 1816).
- - Publisher varies: Samuel M. Pleasants, Nov. 2, 1814-Feb. 1, 1815 ; Philip Du Val & Co., Feb. 15, 1815-Mar. 25, 1815 ; John Burke, Mar. 29, 1815-Jan. 31, 1816 ; John Burke & L.H. Girardin, Feb. 3, 1816.
- - Prospectus for American Standard (Richmond, Va.)--printed in Virginia Argus issue for July 29, 1811.
- - Issues for Nov. 19,1796- called also whole no. 373-937>.
- - Whole numbering continues while issue numbering ceases, .
- - Supplements accompany some issues.
- - Available on microfilm from University Microfilms International; Microphoto Division of Bell & Howell; the Library of Virginia; and the Library of Congress, Photoduplication Service.
- - Archived issues are available in digital format from the Library of Congress Chronicling America online collection.
- - Also available online.

IMAGE 1 OF THE MONITOR, OR, DELAWARE FEDERALIST (WILMINGTON, DEL.),



Teaching Notes:

Essential Questions

Era newspapers similar to and different from today's newspapers?

What can we learn about the Revolutionary Era by studying its newspapers?

In this source, there are marriage announcements, foreign news, and information from the House of Representatives. With this in mind, for these sources I would give them the time to explore the newspaper. The goal is to build questions and ideas about newspapers and thoughts based on what they find in them.

Reference Link: <http://www.loc.gov/resource/sn84038116/1801-08-08/ed-1/?sp=1&r=0.012,-0.016,1.047,0.661,0>



- Wilmington, Del., August 8, 1801

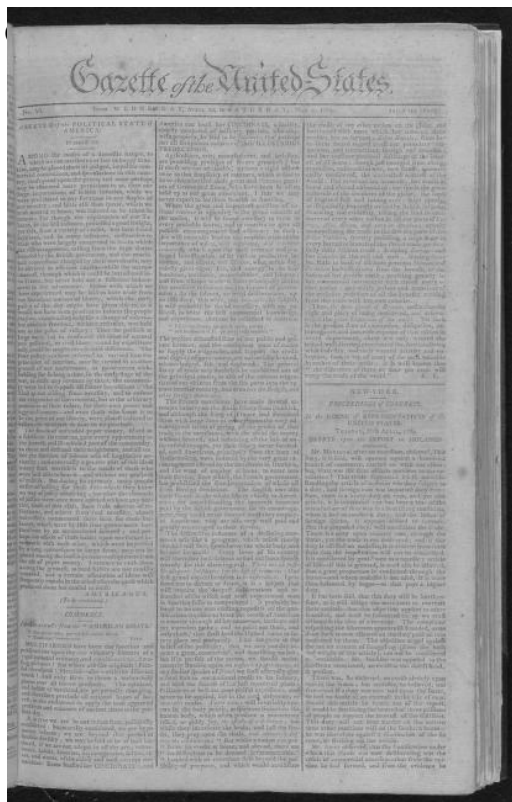
Genre

- Newspapers

Notes

- - Semiweekly
- - Began in 1801; ceased in 1802.
- - Also issued on microopaque from Readex Microprint Corp.
- - Archived issues are available in digital format from the Library of Congress Chronicling America online collection.
- - Description based on: Vol. 2, no. 120 (Aug. 8, 1801).

IMAGE 1 OF GAZETTE



NEW YORK [N.Y.], MAY 2, 1789

Teaching Notes:

Essential Questions

Era newspapers similar to and different from today's newspapers?

What can we learn about the Revolutionary Era by studying its newspapers?

In this newspaper is the announcement of the inauguration of George Washington and his inaugural speech. This newspaper also is the home of letters to and from Washington. There are also minutes from Congress and an essay by Americus. With this in mind, for these sources I would give them the time to explore the newspaper. The goal is to build questions and ideas about newspapers and thoughts based on what they find in them.



Created / Published

- New-York [N.Y.], May 2, 1789


Genre

- Newspapers

Notes

- - Semiweekly
- - No. 1 (Apr. 15, 1789)-no. 104 (Apr. 10, 1790) ; v. 2, no. 105 (Apr. 14, 1790)-v. 2, no. 110 (May 1, 1790) ; v. 2, no. 7 (May, 5, 1790)-v. 4, no. 136 (Sept. 18, 1793) = Whole no. [1]-whole no. 458.
- - Published at Philadelphia, Pa., Nov. 3, 1790-1793.
- - Numbering is irregular.
- - Also issued in microform from Readex Microprint Corp. and on microfilm from the Library of Congress, Photoduplication Service.
- - Archived issues are available in digital format from the Library of Congress Chronicling America online collection.
- - Gazette of the United States & evening advertiser (DLC)sn 83025878 (OCoLC)9855762

Teaching Notes:

 [Nina Earle](#) , this is such a thoughtful and well-crafted culmination of your internship. You've done a fantastic job connecting students to the Revolutionary era through primary sources in a way that feels both grounded and full of discovery. The way you build historical empathy, especially through questions about how news traveled and what that meant for people's understanding of the world, is "spot on" for middle schoolers..

Your lesson combines the wonder of historical maps, newspapers, and critical inquiry, and I love how you've kept the tone openended to encourage student curiosity. The optional mapping extension is a smart touch too, it makes the past feel real and relevant.

Congrats on such a strong finish to your LOC internship. Your work doesn't just teach history, it helps students *experience* it. Well done!



Teaching Notes:

Thank You!




Teaching Notes:

Excellent! Thank you.

Revolutionary era newspapers offer an excellent opportunity to gain perspective on the impacts of media on politics today. Exploring these newspapers and their role in the founding era also help to make dense 18th century documents more accessible. Americans gathered in taverns and in homes to discuss the news and to debate the issues of the day. Students can participate in a similar process to understand the emerging thinking of the revolutionary and constitutional periods.



Teaching Notes:

This is a terrific lesson,  [Nina Earle](#) , the revolutionary period is such a critical one for understanding the principles of freedom of the press and the flow of information within a democratic society.

Thanks for pulling this all together so concisely for an age-appropriate exercise.



Teaching Notes:

Perfect!. I have been thinking about this, too, in my quest for information on a Revolutionary war topic. I took a short class on key documents such as the Stamp Act. Some of the discussions were about spreading information through travel, fliers, and groups of people