

Activity steps:

(5- 10 minutes) First start with discussion about what news looked like. The goal is to ultimately talk about news before the internet, but to get there you can show students a modern newspaper's website. Choose any newspaper that you like but scroll through it as a class so they can see what it looks like and what kind of articles it has.

Below are some leading questions for such a discussion with your students.

- Besides the virtual newspaper, how else do you get news today?
 - How do your parents, and grandparents get the news?
 - Are digital newspapers better than print newspapers? Why?
 - Do you trust one more than the other?
 - How does someone get the printed newspaper, today?
 - During the Revolutionary War before cars, computers, and telephones. how would someone get the news or communicate with someone who lived far away?
 - How are newspapers created during the Revolutionary war? (For more information to talk about answers to this question use blogs above.)
1. (10 minutes) Then, put your class in groups, one newspaper per group. In their groups let the students explore the newspaper that they were given. Have the students work together to discuss, explore and ask questions about the document they were given. The goal is not that they read everything in the newspaper, but to explore it and ask questions about it.

While students explore, have them think about the question: **what they are finding in the newspapers, and why?**

Some questions that teachers can use for discussion or to guide students as they explore:

- When/where is the newspaper from?
- What is the most important news in the paper?
- What page is that news on?
- Where is news coming from?
- Does this paper report on the Government? Which House of Congress does the paper report on?
- There are titles and different kinds of fonts, does that make the overall paper easier to read? Is one font easier to read than another?
- What does the placement of news say about the importance of the subject? Are the most important and newest things on a certain page? Is it the same as today?
- Is there anything interesting in the heading of the newspaper?

If you would like to pick additional newspapers for your class to explore, you can use the link below to find additional materials.

[Directory of U.S. Newspapers in American Libraries | The Library of Congress](#)

[About this Collection | Chronicling America | Digital Collections | Library of Congress](#)

2. (5 minutes) After giving them some time to explore, have them come together as a group and pick two things from the newspaper that they think are important. These can be items that connect to the American Revolution or the location and date of the newspaper. Whatever it is that they find important and why they found it important. While doing this you can have them use the [Library of Congress's Primary Source Analysis Tool for Students](#) to help them as a group come up with their answers.

3. (5 minutes) Lastly pull the class all together and have each group share what they found. Asking them why they picked those things, and such will help them with defending their argument that they chose the most important things in their paper. The goal of this discussion is to talk about all of the different things that they find in the newspapers and how people got all of their information from them. Following each source is a short preview for teachers, to some of the things that can be found in the newspapers.