

## Unit Title: What Really Happened at Lexington?

**Subject/Topic Area:** American History **Grade Level(s):** 6-8

**Designed By:** Colleen Brown, Ashlyn Duncan, Kathryn McClister

**Revisions and Edits:** Lisa Prueter

**District(s):** Appoquinimink

**Time Frame:** 6-8 days

**Date:** March 2009

**Brief Summary of Unit** (This should include a brief unit summary including a description of unit goals, rationale for the approach taken, and where it appears in the course of study.)

**Students will examine primary and secondary documents to determine what really happened at Lexington in April, 1775. Students will explore how historians handle multiple, competing reports of the same event. They will understand the importance of evaluating the usefulness of sources and appreciate the value of consulting multiple sources when investigating a historical event.**

### Stage 1: Desired Results

(Determine What Students Will Know, Do and Understand)

**Delaware History Content Standard** (Write out the Delaware History standard for which instruction is provided in this unit and which are ultimately assessed in the unit.)

**History Two 6-8b:** Students will examine historical documents, artifacts, and other materials and analyze them in terms of credibility, as well as the purpose, perspective, or point of view for which they were constructed.

### Big Idea

Analysis of Historical Documents

**Unit Enduring Understandings**

*Students will understand that...*

Many different types of sources exist to help us gather information about the past. Sources need to be critically analyzed and categorized as they are used.

**Unit Essential Question(s)**

**How can we assess the credibility of a source?**

**What questions should we ask when analyzing a source?**

**Knowledge & Skills**

*Students will know....*

- Historians use multiple, often conflicting, sources when studying the past.
- The strengths and weaknesses of primary and secondary documents.
- Historians evaluate the credibility, bias, purpose, and audience of all sources.

*Students will be able to...*

- Use primary and secondary sources to construct an interpretation of historical events.
- Assess the credibility and reliability of historical sources.
- Explain why there are multiple interpretations of historical events.

**Stage 2: Assessment Evidence**  
(Design Assessments To Guide Instruction)

**Suggested Performance Task(s)**

In Lesson 3, students will use primary and secondary sources to answer the question: **What really happened at the Battle of Lexington?** With a partner, students will create a news article or news cast to explain their conclusions.

Scoring Category	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
<b>Thesis Statement</b>	Interpretation is stated clearly. Thesis is obvious to the audience.	Interpretation is stated, but is not obvious to the audience.	Interpretation is not clear.
<b>Use of Historical Evidence</b>	Interpretation is supported by multiple pieces of historical evidence. Interpretation is highly persuasive.	Interpretation is supported by some historical evidence. Interpretation is somewhat persuasive.	Interpretation is not adequately supported by evidence and is not persuasive.
<b>Explanation of Research Process</b>	There is a thorough critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the documentary sources. There is clear explanation how the documents were used to construct interpretation	There is some critique of sources. There is some explanation of how sources were used to construct the interpretation.	There is minimal critique of sources. There is minimal explanation of how documents were used to construct the interpretation.

**Above the Standard: 7-9**

**Meets the Standard: 5-8**

**Below the Standard: Less than 5**

**Other Evidence** (This could include tests, quizzes, prompts, student work samples, and observations used to collect diverse evidence of student understanding.)

- Homework from Lesson 1: Students write on the strengths and weaknesses of primary and secondary documents.
- Lesson 2: Comparison Chart for two competing versions of “Shot Heard Round the World.”
- End of Unit Transfer Task: Students will use their analytical skills to evaluate the purpose and credibility of a document about slavery in the United States.

## Transfer Task: Slavery in the United States

[http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module7/mod\\_tools.html](http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/module7/mod_tools.html)

Document A:

The Negro slaves of the South are the happiest, and, in some sense, the freest people in the world. The children and the aged and infirm work not at all, and yet have all the comforts and necessaries of life provided for them. They enjoy liberty, because they are oppressed neither by care nor labor. The women do little hard work, and are protected from the despotism [meanness] of their husbands by their masters. The Negro men and stout boys work, on the average, in good weather, not more than nine hours a day... Besides they have their Sabbaths [day of worship] and Holidays...

George Fitzhugh, Virginia lawyer and plantation owner, 1857

1. What was the most likely **PURPOSE** of this document?
  - a. To defend the practice of slavery
  - b. To criticize the practice of slavery
  - c. To offer an unbiased description of slave life
  - d. To end the slave trade
  
2. Is George Fitzhugh a reliable source for information about slavery in the United States? Explain why or why not.

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### Rubric

- 2 – Response includes a valid answer with an accurate and relevant explanation.
- 1 – Response includes a valid answer with an inaccurate, irrelevant, or no explanation.

**Lesson # 1**  
**Primary and Secondary Documents**

Ashlyn Duncan

**Lesson Description:** Students will explore the differences between primary and secondary documents, the strengths and weaknesses of both types of sources, and the importance of testing the credibility of sources.

**Time Required:** Two Days

**Essential Question Addressed:**

- What questions should I ask before I use this source?

**Enduring Understanding:**

- Many different sources exist to help us gather information about the past. Sources need to be critically analyzed and categorized as they are used.

**Materials:**

- PowerPoint (attached)
- “Virginia’s God Be Thanked” by Patrick Copland, primary document
- Secondary source explaining Copland’s sermon

**Procedures:** As enumerated on the PowerPoint.

“Memory Fades” Activity from Fran O’Malley

- 1) Have  $\frac{3}{4}$  of students study the “Memory Fades” slide for 20 seconds, then try to re-create it from memory.
- 2) Have other  $\frac{1}{4}$  of students try to draw the slide based on what their classmates have drawn.
- 3) Post the results around the room for a gallery walk.
- 4) Discuss which drawings were primary sources and which were secondary. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of both.
- 5) Students analyze the primary document, “Virginia’s God be Thanked” and the accompanying secondary explanation. Which is a better source for historians? Why?
- 6) PowerPoint presentation on primary vs. secondary documents and the importance of questioning credibility.

**Formative Assessment (“Check for Understanding”):**

Why are both primary and secondary documents necessary in historical research?

## Lesson #2 Shot Heard Round the World

**Katie McClister**

**Lesson Description:** Students will examine two competing interpretations of the “shot heard round the world.”

**Time Required:** Two Days

**Essential Question Addressed:**

- What questions should I ask before I use this source?

**Enduring Understanding:**

- Many different sources exist to help us gather information about the past. Sources need to be critically analyzed and categorized as they are used.

**Materials:**

- **Textbook excerpt “Lexington and Concord”**
- **Schoolhouse Rock Video “The Shot Heard Round the World,” (available on YouTube) and lyrics (attached).**
- **Comparison chart (attached)**

**Procedures:**

1. Students will begin by watching the School House Rock video of “The British are coming! The British are coming!” Students will be instructed to listen for bias and the account of the revolution from the perspective of this video.
2. Next, students will read the excerpt from their book in Chapter 5 about the battles at Lexington and Concord. After reading this material the question will be posed: Is there more to the story? How do we know this? Where can we look to answer this?
3. Next students will watch the SHR video again only this time with the words in front of them to point out obvious biases and perspectives. Students should underline or highlight examples of biases. As a class we will discuss examples as well as similarities and differences.
4. Finally students will create a comparison of the SHR video to the textbook account of “The Shot Heard Around the World.” (Perhaps use a foldable rather than a worksheet)
5. Students will consider if each side is giving full descriptions of the account and which side is more credible based on information given by analyzing both descriptions of the event and comparing them in a graphic organizer.
6. After students are given time to discuss and analyze the similarities and differences of each account in pairs the class as a whole will share ideas and make corrections and/or additions to their graphic organizer.

**Check for Understanding:** Why might there be different interpretations of a historical event? Provide at least two specific reasons in your answer.

**Lesson # 3**  
**What Really Happened at Lexington?**

Colleen Brown

**Lesson Description:** Each student will use various documents pertaining to the Battle of Lexington to create a newspaper article or newscast explaining the “real” story of what happened at the Battle of Lexington.

**Essential Questions:**

- Is this source credible? How do I know?
- What questions should I ask before I use this source? After I use it?

**Enduring Understanding:**

- Many different sources exist to help us gather information about the past. Sources need to be critically analyzed and categorized as they are used.

**Materials:**

Students will receive five documents relating to the Battle of Lexington

1. Major John Pitcairn’s report to General Thomas Gage, the British commander for North America
2. A diary account written by Lt. John Barker, a British soldier
3. Official Statement of John Robbins, Lexington Militia
4. The British Retreat from Concord, 1775, cartoon
5. The Battle of Lexington, 1775, Amos Doolittle sketch

**Procedures:**

Students will then work with a partner to analyze each of the documents and determine their credibility. Students will complete either the written document analysis or the political cartoon analysis sheet for each document. The first document analysis will be modeled by the teacher for the whole class.

After completing each document analysis, each student will determine what really happened at Lexington. The students, working with their partner, will then create either a newspaper article or a newscast which accurately explains what happened, using information from the resources they examined as well as their textbook.

**Check for Understanding:** Why were there so many different accounts of what happened at Lexington?

## Resources: Lesson 2

Lyrics to Schoolhouse Rock's "Shot Heard Round the World":

### "The British are coming! The British are coming!"

Now, the ride of Paul Revere  
Set the nation on its ear,  
And the shot at Lexington heard 'round the world,  
When the British fired in the early dawn  
The War of Independence had begun,  
The die was cast, the rebel flag unfurled.

And on to Concord marched the foe  
To seize the arsenal there you know,  
Waking folks searching all around  
Till our militia stopped them in their tracks,  
At the old North Bridge we turned them back  
And chased those Redcoats back to Boston town.

And the shot heard 'round the world  
Was the start of the Revolution.  
The Minute Men were ready, on the move.  
Take your powder, and take your gun.  
Report to General Washington.  
Hurry men, there's not an hour to lose!

Now, at famous Bunker Hill,  
Even though we lost, it was quite a thrill,  
The rebel Colonel Prescott proved he was wise;  
Outnumbered and low on ammunition  
As the British stormed his position  
He said, "Hold your fire till you see the whites of their eyes!"

Though the next few years were rough,  
General Washington's men proved they were tough,  
Those hungry, ragged boys would not be beat.  
One night they crossed the Delaware,  
Surprised the Hessians in their lair,  
And at Valley Forge they just bundled up their feet!

And the shot heard 'round the world  
Was the start of the Revolution.  
The Minute Men were ready, on the move.  
Take your blanket, and take your son.  
Report to General Washington.  
We've got our rights and now it's time to prove.

Well, they showed such determination  
That they won the admiration  
Of countries across the sea like France and

Spain,  
Who loaned the colonies ships and guns  
And put the British on the run  
And the Continental Army on its feet again.

And though they lost some battles too,  
The Americans swore they'd see it through,  
Their raiding parties kept up, hit and run.  
At Yorktown the British could not retreat,  
Bottled up by Washington and the French Fleet,  
Cornwallis surrendered and finally we had won!

### The winner!

### Hurray!

From the shot heard 'round the world  
To the end of the Revolution  
The continental rabble took the day  
And the father of our country  
Beat the British there at Yorktown  
And brought freedom to you and me and the U.S.A.!

God bless America, Let Freedom Ring!



**Directions:** Compare and contrast the different accounts of the Battle at Lexington from the textbook and the School House Rock video. Are there any similarities? Or are they totally different? If so, consider what would explain the variations?

<u>Source</u>	<u>According to this source what happened at Lexington?</u>	<u>Select a quotation that contrasts with the other account</u>
<b>Textbook Account of “Shot Heard Round the World”</b>		
<b>School House Rock Account of “Shot Heard Around the World”</b>		

1. Why might these sources be different?
2. Describe the purpose of both the textbook account and the School House Rock video. Which is more credible or reliable? Why?
3. Which account would be more likely to come from a patriot? What would be different about their point of view to that of a British soldier?

### Resources: Lesson 3

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Per. \_\_\_\_\_

## Graphic Organizer for Interpreting Primary Sources

Title of Document (if there is one) \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Type of Document:</b> (Is the document a letter, an article, an advertisement, or a government piece?)	<b>Author of Document:</b> (Who wrote the document?)
<b>Date of Document:</b> (When was the document created?)	<b>Source of Document:</b> (In what city, town, or country was the document created?)
<b>Style of Document:</b> (What is unusual about the language used in the document?)	<b>Point of View of Document:</b> (Is the document written in the first person, using the pronoun "I"?)
<b>Main Idea of the Document:</b> (What is the main point the writer is presenting?)	<b>Impact of Document:</b> (What feelings does the document bring up in you, the reader?)
<b>Questions Raised by the Document:</b> (What do you want to know more about? What is still unknown?)	<b>Further Research:</b> (What are some other documents worth finding and reading?)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Per. \_\_\_\_\_

## Analyzing a Visual

1. Who are the characters in the visual? Are they exaggerated in any way?
2. What does the print say? Summarize the captions, titles, signs, or dialogue in the space below?
3. Are there any well-known symbols such as flags, religious symbols, etc.? Why are they there?
4. Based on this information, what is the subject and viewpoint expressed in this visual?
5. Do you think the visual is effective? Why or why not?
6. What would be an opposing opinion to the point of view in the visual?
7. Do you agree with the artist's point of view? Why or why not?

## DOCUMENT 1

### **Major John Pitcairn's report to General Thomas Gage, April 26, 1775**

Six companies of Light Infantry were detached by Lt Colo Smith to take possession of two bridges on the other side of Concord, near three in the Morning, when we were advanced within about two miles of Lexington, intelligence was received that about 500 men in arms were assembled, determined to oppose the Kings troops, and retard them in their march. On this intelligence, I mounted my horse, and galloped up to the six Light Companies. When I arrived at the head of the advance Company, two officers came and informed me, that a man of the rebels advanced from those that were assembled, had presented his musket and attempted to shoot them, but the piece flashed in the pan. On this I gave directions to the troops to move forward, but on no account to fire, or even attempt it without orders; when I arrived at the end of the Village, I observed drawn up upon a Green near 200 rebels; when I came within about 100 yards of them, they began to file off towards some stone walls on our right flank. The Light Infantry, observing this, ran after them. I instantly called to the soldiers not to fire, but surround and disarm them, and after several repetitions of those positive orders to the men, not to fire, etc. some of the rebels who had jumped over the wall fired four or five shots at the soldiers, which wounded a man of the Tenth and my horse was wounded in two places, from some quarter or other, and at the same time several shots were fired from a meeting house on our left. Upon this, without any order or regularity, the Light Infantry began a scattered fire, and continued in that situation for some little time, contrary to the repeated orders both of me and the officers that were present. It will be needless to mention what happened after, as I suppose Colo Smith hath given a particular account of it.

## DOCUMENT 2

***Lt. John Barker, British Soldier, 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment***

***Diary Account on the beginning of the march to Lexington***

[April] 19th...about 5 miles on this side of a Town called Lexington which lay in our road, we heard there were some hundreds of People collected together intending to oppose us and stop our going on: at 5 o'clock we arrived there and saw a number of People, I believe 2 and 300, formed on a *Common* in the middle of the Town; we still continued advancing, keeping prepared against an attack tho' without intending to attack them, but on our coming near them they fired one or two shots, upon which our Men without any orders rushed in upon them, fired and put 'em to flight; several of them were killed...

***Lt. John Barker, British Soldier, 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment***

***Diary Account on Battle Road***

We set out upon our return; we were fired on from Houses and behind Trees, and before we had gone  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile we were fired on from all sides, but mostly from the Rear, where People had hid themselves in houses 'till we had passed and then fired; the Country was an amazing strong one, full of Hills, Woods, stone Walls, &c. which the Rebels did not fail to take advantage of, for they were all lined with People who kept an *incessant* fire upon us, as we did too upon them but not with the same advantage, for they were so concealed there was hardly any seeing them: in this way we marched between 9 and 10 miles, their numbers increasing from all parts, while ours was reducing by deaths, wounds and fatigue, and we were totally surrounded with such an incessant fire as it's impossible to conceive, our ammunition was likewise near expended.

## DOCUMENT 3

***Official Statement of John Robbins, Lexington Militia, April 24, 1775, on Lexington Green***

I, John Robbins, being of lawful age, do testify and say, that on the nineteenth *instant*, the Company under the command of Captain John Parker being drawn up (sometime before sunrise) on the green or common, and I being in the *front rank*, there suddenly appeared a number of the King's Troops, about a thousand, as I thought, at the distance of about sixty or seventy yards from us, *huzzaing* and on a quick pace toward us, with three officers in their front on horseback, and on full gallop towards us; the foremost of which cried, 'Throw down your arms, ye villains, ye rebels;' upon which said Company dispersing, the foremost of the three officers ordered their men, saying 'Fire, by God, fire;' at which moment we received a very heavy and close fire from them; at which instant, being wounded, I fell, and several of our men were shot dead by one *volley*. Captain Parker's men, I believe, had not then fired a gun.

DOCUMENT 4



Battle of Lexington  
Amos Doolittle sketch  
1775

Amos Doolittle was a member of the Connecticut militia. He was not present at the Battle of Lexington, but did travel to the site of the battle about one week after the fighting had ended.

DOCUMENT 5



Battle of Lexington  
Amos Doolittle sketch  
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