

# Section I: War of Independence



**Title:** Lexington and Concord—Historical Interpretation

**Grade Level:** Middle School

**Objectives:** Analyze historical images depicting Lexington and Concord. Interpret the events of Lexington and Concord.

**National History Standards:**

Standard 1: Chronological Thinking; Standard 2: Historical Comprehension; Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation; Era 3:1: The causes of the War of Independence, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory.

**Time:** 45 minutes

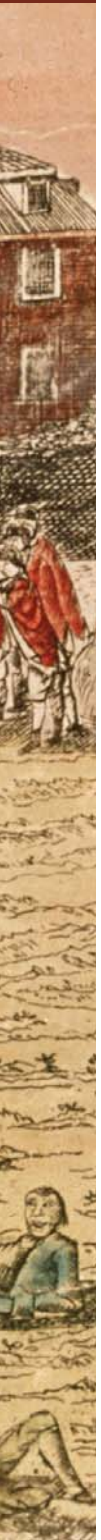
**Background:**

By 1775, Britain had been imposing laws and taxes on its colonies in America without deference to local governments or popular consent for more than ten years—and colonists' protests had become increasingly vehement. Hoping to avert an armed rebellion, British troops in Boston, Massachusetts, marched under the cover of darkness toward nearby Concord to seize the local militia's cache of arms and gunpowder. Patriots from Boston alerted the countryside, and at dawn on April 19, a militia unit gathered on the green in Lexington. They were neighbors, fathers and sons, cousins; at least one was a slave; some were old men, some were teens.

During the standoff between the Americans and British troops, a shot was fired. Nobody on the green in Lexington could tell where the shot came from; nobody would ever know. In the ensuing melee, the redcoats fired a musket volley, fixed their bayonets, and charged. All was confusion; one of the witnesses, Paul Revere, could discern only “a continual roar of musketry.” In fifteen minutes it was over. Eight colonists lay dead and ten were wounded.

From Lexington, British troops marched to Concord, where they destroyed the few supplies the militia had not hidden. After a fierce skirmish with militia, they started back to Boston. Hundreds of militiamen joined the counterattack, forcing the British to make a desperate retreat through a gauntlet of musket fire. Exhausted and panicked, British soldiers lashed out, killing civilians, ransacking and looting houses, and setting fires.

News of the fighting at Lexington and Concord rallied “Friends of American Liberty” in all the colonies. Some colonists recoiled from the notion of taking up arms. Others joined the fight resolved to save themselves and their children from lives of “perpetual slavery” under British rule.





Illustrated map of Lexington, 1775 Courtesy of John Carter Brown Library

“In Lexington the enemy set fire to Deacon Joseph Loring’s house and barn, Mrs. Mullikin’s house and shop, and Mr. Joshua Bond’s house and shop, which were all consumed. They pillaged almost every house they passed by, breaking and destroying doors, windows, [looking] glasses, etc., and carrying off clothing and other valuable effects.”

—Salem Gazette, April 25, 1775

- Materials:**
- Illustrated map of Lexington
  - The Battle of Lexington, engraving by Amos Doolittle, 1775
  - A View of the South Part of Lexington, engraving by Amos Doolittle, 1775 (Doolittle visited Lexington a few weeks after the battle and based his engravings on sketches taken on the spot and on interviews with participants.)
  - Construction paper and drawing materials (colored pencils, markers, crayons)

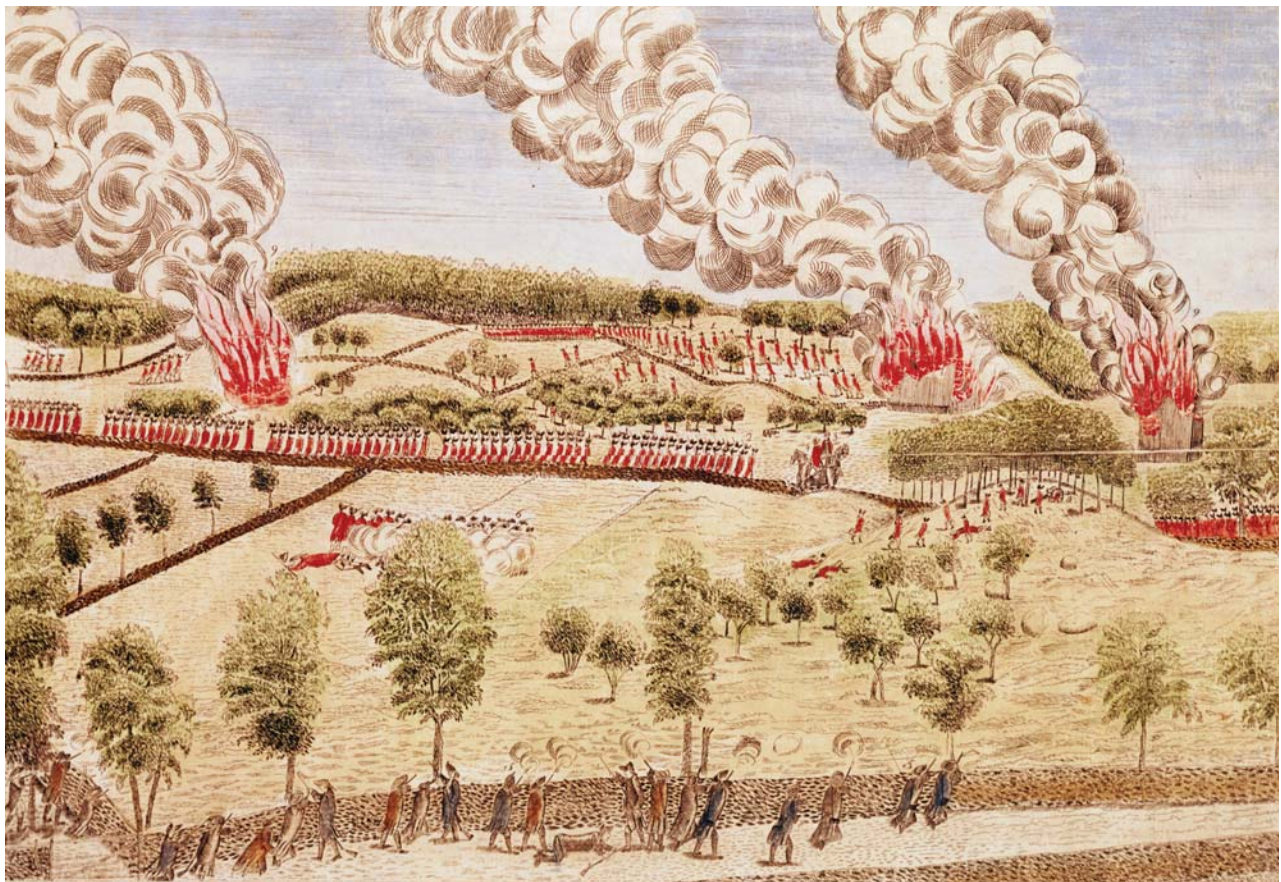
**Lesson:**

Explain the events leading up to the battles at Lexington and Concord. Then pass out copies of the map of Lexington and Amos Doolittle's engravings. Have the students answer the following questions about each engraving: What event does the picture show? Who do you think was the intended audience? Is the image a positive portrayal or a negative portrayal? Which side of the conflict do you think the artist was on? Why do you think the artist was on that particular side? Where is the battle taking place? How are the troops on each side organized? (You may want to print and distribute the Student Analysis Chart which will allow students to easily compare and contrast their answers related to each primary source.)

After students analyze the pictures and discuss what they show, have them consider how to best portray Lexington and Concord. You may want to have some students consider this from the American perspective and others from the British. Suggestions include biography, interview, letter, personal journal, artwork, poem/song, newspaper article, or presentation. The chosen method must include specific dates, references to the two battles, and other surrounding events. Students may incorporate extra research in the library or outside of class. Also, they may work individually, with partners, or in small groups, depending on the activity they wish to pursue and on how they want to distribute tasks.



*The Battle of Lexington, engraving by Amos Doolittle, 1775 Courtesy of Connecticut Historical Society*



*A View of the South Part of Lexington, engraving by Amos Doolittle, 1775 Courtesy of Connecticut Historical Society*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Lexington and Concord—Historical Interpretation**

Use images of the battles at Lexington and Concord to answer the following questions:

	<b>Image 1</b>	<b>Image 2</b>	<b>Image 3</b>
<b>What event does the picture show?</b>			
<b>Who was the intended audience?</b>			
<b>Is this image a positive portrayal or a negative portrayal?</b>			
<b>Which side of the conflict do you think the artist was on?</b>			
<b>Why do you think the artist was on that particular side?</b>			

# Bibliography

## General

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## Section I: War of Independence

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## Section V: Cold War/Vietnam

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# *The Price of Freedom: Americans at War* Teacher's Manual DVD Menu

## ***Americans at War*, produced by The History Channel**

An introduction to the themes of the exhibition

### **War of Independence**

**First-Person Accounts, produced by Pyramid Studios:**

- Lydia Minturn Post, Long Island housewife, 1776
- James Collins, teenage soldier, no date
- Doonyontat, Wyandot chief, 1779
- Elijah Churchill, recipient of the first Purple Heart, 1783

### **Mexican War**

**First-Person Accounts, produced by Pyramid Studios:**

- José María Tornel y Mendivil, Mexican secretary of war, 1837
- George Ballentine, English volunteer for the United States, 1853
- Juan Bautista Vigil y Alarid, acting governor of New Mexico, 1846
- Ulysses S. Grant, American soldier, 1885

### **Civil War**

**First-Person Accounts, produced by Pyramid Studios:**

- Louis Myers, Third West Virginia Infantry, 1862
- William G. Christie, Minnesota soldier, 1863
- Eugenia Phillips, spy for the South in Washington D.C., 1861
- Spottswood Rice, African American Union soldier, 1864

### **World War I**

**World War I Overview, produced by The History Channel**

### **World War II**

**World War II Cartoons, produced by The History Channel**

**World War II Overviews in the Newsreel format,  
produced by The History Channel**

- From World War I to World War II
- The North Atlantic and North African Theater
- The European Theater
- The Pacific Theater

**The USO in World War II, produced by The History Channel**

**First-Person Accounts, produced by Pyramid Studios:**

- George Hynes, U.S. Army, a last letter home, 1942
- Robert Morris, U.S. Coast Guard, fighting in Italy, 1943
- Robert Sherrod, journalist, the beach at Tarawa, 1943
- Ann Darr, Women Airforce Service Pilots, 1997
- Daniel Inouye, Medal of Honor recipient, 2000

### **Vietnam**

**Excerpt from *Huey Helicopter—Air Armada*, The History Channel  
documentary, 2002**

**First-Person Accounts, produced by Arrowhead Film & Video:**

- Hal Moore, commander of a Seventh Cavalry Regiment  
battalion, 2003
- Fred Castleberry, veteran of the Twenty-fifth Infantry Division, 2002
- Clarence Sasser, recipient of the Medal of Honor, 2004,  
(produced by Pyramid Studios)



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