Banished: Louisa Susannah Wells, Loyalist Woman, 1778

Student Worksheet

Historical Context:

Presentism is an attitude of looking at the past using your present-day attitudes and experiences. Trying to step out of the present and into the true context of the past is always a challenge. As you tackle this historical challenge, rather than think about what you would do in Louisa Susannah Wells’ situation, consider her position in society as a female colonist who was loyal to King George III. Try to answer the questions objectively without judging her decisions.

Use your listening skills to discover important information from the first-person narratives, then work with several supporting primary sources to answer questions about the person and/or their experiences.

Instructions:

Answer the questions below using the accompanying primary sources found at: http://americanhistory.si.edu/onthewater/oral_histories/life_at_sea/wells.htm.

The questions are designed to help you practice working with historical documents. Some of these documents have been edited, but all are authentic. As you analyze the documents, take into account the source of each document and any point of view that may be presented in the document.

Questions:

1. According to the words of Louisa Susannah Wells and referring to at least one supporting primary sources, to which social class do you think Miss Wells belonged? Was she poor or wealthy? Cite your evidence.
2. Based on listening to the first-person account of Louisa Susannah Wells and careful reading of an excerpt from her autobiography, explain where Miss Wells was sailing and why.

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3. Based on careful reading an excerpt from the autobiography of James Collins and at least one supporting primary source, list and compare the dangers Miss Wells faced by staying in South Carolina to those of her voyage across the Atlantic.

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