

JIC & Determined Lesson Plans

Chapter 1: James Armistead Lafayette: A Fight for Freedom and Equality MIDDLE SCHOOL

Determined: The 400-Year Struggle for Black Equality

The JMC presents eight new lesson plans for middle and high school audiences designed to pair with the Virginia Museum of History and Culture's 2019 exhibition, *Determined: the 400-year Struggle for Black Equality*.

Determined examined the ways in which the arrival of enslaved Africans in 1619 shaped the United States that we know today. The exhibition was arranged in chronological sections, which are reflected in the four chapters of our lesson plans:

The Colonial Period
American Revolution through the Civil War
Reconstruction through World War II
Civil Rights Movement through today.

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CHAPTER 1: JAMES ARMISTEAD LAFAYETTE: A FIGHT FOR FREEDOM AND EQUALITY

The Declaration of Independence and the words “all men are created equal” provided thousands of enslaved Africans high expectations and many were ready to fight for the Country and their own personal freedom. Thousands of enslaved Africans impacted the war right from the start at Lexington and Concord, all the way to the end at Yorktown. This lesson will explore the life of James Armistead Lafayette, an enslaved African Virginian. Working as an undercover spy for George Washington, James risked his life to gather key intelligence about the British that helped secure an American victory at Yorktown. In this lesson, we will discuss whether his efforts in service of the American cause helped or hindered his ability to achieve emancipation.

STANDARDS

Virginia

USI.5 The student will apply social science skills to understand the factors that shaped colonial America by:

- d) describing colonial life in America from the perspectives of large landowners, farmers, artisans, merchants, women, free African Americans, indentured servants, and enslaved African Americans

USI.6 The student will apply social science skills to understand the causes and results of the American Revolution by:

- b) describing how political ideas shaped the revolutionary movement in America and led to the Declaration of Independence
- d) explaining reasons why the colonies were able to defeat Great Britain.

National

NSS-USH.5-12.2 Era 2: Colonization And Settlement (1585-1763)

NSS-USH.5-12.3 Era 3: Revolution And The New Nation (1754-1820s)

KEY HOOK

How does African American involvement in the Revolutionary War highlight the contradiction in the words, “all men are created equal” in the Declaration of Independence?

ADAPTATIONS & SUGGESTIONS

All of our lesson plans are designed to be adaptable to your needs. After downloading a copy of these Google Slides, feel free to rearrange their order, pick and choose elements that work best for your students, or add to the content to supplement an area to which you'd like to add extra emphasis.

Additionally, our activities can be uploaded to any platform (such as Google Classroom) and shared with students directly so that they can complete the activity individually on their own devices. You can also project the lesson plan and have students look on as an entire class as you lead them through it.

- This lesson can be broken into chunks for small group work, and then students can gather afterwards for a large class discussion. For example, students can work through 8-9 and discuss the role African Americans played in the war and then regroup before the entire class completes slide 10 as a formative assessment.
- Students can complete slides 6-7 individually or in small groups and then gather to discuss the D.O.I as a class.
- Small groups could examine selected slides (such as 12, 16, 17, 19, and 20) to complete the primary source activities within them, and then present their findings to the entire class.
- Teachers could show clips from the musical *Hamilton*, particularly the song “Yorktown” or other songs which highlight the Revolutionary War.
- SOL suggestions:
 - Using the vocabulary slides and bubbles included in this lesson, have your students highlight and review the terms and concepts that are essential SOL-related knowledge for this unit. For example: you could discuss the role of African Americans as patriots, key battles, Colonists v. Loyalists, and the Declaration Independence.
 - This lesson could be used to help introduce students to the unit on the Revolutionary War, or a wrap-up review after completing that section of the SOL timeline.

ADDITIONAL READING/RESOURCES

<https://virginiahistory.org/exhibitions/determined-400-year-struggle-black-equality>

<https://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-resources/spotlight-primary-source/lord-dunmores-proclamation-1775>

<https://www.mountvernon.org/george-washington/the-revolutionary-war/spying-and-espionage/american-spies-of-the-revolution/lafayettes-testimonial-to-james-armistead-lafayette/>

<https://www.battlefields.org/learn/biographies/james-armistead-lafayette>

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/lafayette-james-armistead-1760-1832/>

<https://www.history.com/news/battle-of-yorktown-slave-spy-james-armistead>