LONG MAY IT WAVE:

Fort McHenry
and the War of 1812
A National Curriculum for Grades 4 through 8

Developed by the Friends of Fort McHenry in collaboration with
Fort McHenry National Monument & Historic Shrine and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

Funding provided by the National Park Service, Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Network
LESSON TITLE: Was the War of 1812 Our Second War of Independence?

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COURSE/GRADE: Social Studies/ Grade 4, 8
UNIT: War of 1812- Fort McHenry’s History
TIME NEEDED: One 45-minute class period

LESSON OVERVIEW:
In this lesson, students will compare and contrast the reasons for the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 to determine whether the War of 1812 can really be considered the Second War of Independence. Students need to have some prior knowledge of the Revolutionary War, its causes and how it resulted in America’s independence from Great Britain. Prior to teaching this lesson, review with the students the main events that led to the American Revolution, discuss the colonists’ frustrations, and the major battles and successes of the war. During this lesson students will compare the Declaration of Independence with documents from the War of 1812 to find similarities among the causes and motivations for both wars.

OUTCOMES: At the end of this lesson, students will be able to use primary source documents to compare and contrast the reasons for the American Revolution with those for the War of 1812.

OBJECTIVES:

Focus Questions for the Lesson:
Was the United States really struggling to win its independence from Great Britain a second time during the War of 1812?

Historical Thinking Skills:
Historical Comprehension:
Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage.

Historical Research Capabilities:
Interrogate historical data.

Maryland State Curriculum Content Objectives:
4.5.C.1.b Explain the interactions between colonists and the British during the Pre-Revolutionary period
4.5.C.2.a Describe Maryland’s role in the War of 1812

8.5.C.2.a Explain why the United States adopted a policy of neutrality prior to the War of 1812
8.5.C.2.b Explain how the continuing conflict between Great Britain and France influenced the domestic and foreign policy of the United States

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Maryland Skills and Processes Objectives:
4.6.B.4.a/b/c/d Use timed, on-demand writing to demonstrate understanding on assessments (Constructed Responses)
4.6.F.3.a Recognize relationships in and among ideas or events, such as cause and effect, sequential order, main idea, and details

Common Core State Standards for Literacy: Reading, Informational Text (Grade 4):
RI.4.1. Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
RI.4.2. Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.
RI.4.3. Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.
RI.4.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.
RI.4.9. Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.
RI.4.10. By the end of year, read and comprehend informational texts, including history/social studies, science, and technical texts, in the grades 4–5 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.

Common Core Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Grades 6-8:
RH.6-8.1. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
RH.6-8.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.
RH.6-8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.
RH.6-8.10. By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

MATERIALS:
- Chart paper and a marker
- Student Resource Sheet #1: Liberty and Peace Song
- Student Resource Sheet #2: Declaration of Independence
- Resource Sheet #2a: Transcription of Excerpt from Declaration of Independence
- Resource Sheet #3: Proclamation by President Jefferson, 1807
- Resource Sheet #3a: Transcription of Excerpts from Proclamation by President Jefferson, 1807
- Resource Sheet #4: Madison’s Special Message to Congress, June 1, 1812
- Resource Sheet #4a: Transcription of Excerpts from Madison’s Special Message to Congress, June 1, 1812
- Resource Sheet #5: Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, October 15, 1814
- Student Worksheet #1: Was the War of 1812 Our Second War for Independence?

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PRIMARY SOURCES:


SELECTED VOCABULARY:

plundered, violate
ravage, harass
constrained, commerce
captive, sanctuary
despotic, jurisdiction
belligerent, intrigues
insubordination, subversion
forbearance, impressment
provocation, conquest/conquer
hostile, submission

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PROCEDURE:

1) Motivation

• Have students review what they know about the reasons for the American Revolution: What events or actions led up to the American Revolution?

• Have students recall some causes of the American Revolution, and list them on a piece of chart paper. (Make sure you spend some time reviewing the timeline of events that led up the American Revolution so that the students have a strong background.)

• Pass out and post Student Resource Sheet #1: Liberty and Peace Song, and read it with the students. Ask the students when they think it might have been written (most should say during or after the American Revolution). Then share with them that this song was really written in 1815, almost 40 years after the American Revolution, at the end of the War of 1812.

• Explain that the American Revolution was called the War of Independence; the War of 1812 is some times called the Second War of Independence. Tell students that today they are going to compare and contrast the reasons for both wars to decide whether the War of 1812 was really a Second War of Independence for the United States.

2) Guided Practice

• Pass out the Student Resource Sheet #2: Declaration of Independence and Resource Sheet #2a: Transcription of Excerpt from Declaration of Independence.

• Reveal the lesson vocabulary chart.

• With the students, go through the documents to highlight the vocabulary words and discuss their meaning.

• Read through the document, stopping every few sentences to have the students paraphrase what they’ve just read.

• Note: The primary sources used in the lesson are very difficult for elementary students in terms of vocabulary and sentence structure. Depending upon the reading abilities of your students, it may be advisable to provide further support to help them decipher the sources. Suggested strategies include:
  o Providing not only the transcriptions of the excerpts but also actual “translations” of the text into “kid-friendly” English.
  o Further excerpting the sources.
  o Assigning smaller chunks of each source to small groups.
  o Reading all documents as a class.

• On chart paper, list the students’ paraphrased statements of the colonists’ grievances against Great Britain. Examples:
  o We want the rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
  o A government should be controlled by the people it governs.
  o When a government abuses its authority, the people have a right to stop that government.
  o This change should not be made quickly, but if after the people have made every effort to get the government to stop its abuses, the people finally have a right to stand up for themselves. (Try a bully on the playground analogy.)
  o This is what the King of England has done to us, so it is our right to throw off this government and to create a new, better one for ourselves.
  o [Some of the specific grievances.]
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Student Resource Sheet #3a: Transcription of Excerpts from President Jefferson’s Proclamation, 1807

FROM THE OFFICE OF
The Mercantile Advertiser,

SUNDAY, July 5th, 1807.

BY THOMAS JEFFERSON,
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A PROCLAMATION.

WASHINGTON CITY, July 2, 1807.

During the wars which, for some time, have unhappily prevailed among the powers of Europe, the United States of America, firm in their principles of peace, have endeavored by justice, by a regular discharge of all their national and social duties, and by every friendly office their situation has admitted, to maintain, with all the belligerents, their accustomed relations of friendship, hospitality and commercial intercourse. . . A free use of their harbours and waters, the means of refitting and of refreshment, of succour to their sick and suffering, have, at all times, and on equal principles, been extended to all, and this too amidst a constant recurrence of acts of insubordination to the laws, of violence to the persons, and of trespasses on the property of our citizens, committed by officers of one, of the beligerant parties received among us. In truth these abuses of the laws of hospitality have, with few exceptions, be come habitual to the commanders of the British armed vessels hovering on our coasts, and frequenting our harbour. They have been the subject of repeated representations to our government. Assurances have been given that proper orders should restrain them within the limit of the rights and of the respect due to a friendly nation; but those orders and assurances have been without effect; no instance of punishment for past wrongs has taken place.

At length, a deed, transcending all we have hitherto seen or suffered, brings the public sensibility to a serious crisis, and our forbearance to a necessary pause. A frigate of the United States trusting to a state of peace, and leaving her harbour on a distant service, has been surprised and attacked by a British vessel of superior force, one of a squadron then lying in our waters and covering the transaction, and has been disabled from service, with the loss of a number of men killed and wounded. This enormity was not only without provocation or justifiable cause, but was committed with the avowed purpose of taking by force, from a ship of war of the United States, a part of her crew . . .

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States:

Without going back beyond the renewal in 1803 of the war in which Great Britain is engaged, and omitting unrepaired wrongs of inferior magnitude, the conduct of her government presents a series of acts hostile to the United States as an independent and neutral nation.

British cruisers have been in the continued practice of violating the American flag on the high way of nations, and of seizing and carrying off persons sailing under it . . .

. . . British cruisers have been in the practice also of violating the rights and the peace of our coasts. They hover over and harass our entering and departing commerce. To the most insulting pretensions they have added the most lawless proceedings in our very harbors, and have wantonly spilt American blood within the sanctuary of our territorial jurisdiction. . .

. . . There was a period when a favorable change in the policy of the British cabinet was justly considered as established. . . it has since come into proof that at the very moment when the public minister was holding the language of friendship and inspiring confidence in the sincerity of the negotiation with which he was charged a secret agent of his government was employed in intrigues having for their object a subversion of our government and a dismemberment of our happy union.

In reviewing the conduct of Great Britain toward the United States our attention is necessarily drawn to the warfare just renewed by the savages on one of our extensive frontiers a warfare which is known to spare neither age nor sex and to be distinguished by features peculiarly shocking to humanity. It is difficult to account for the activity and combinations which have for some time been developing themselves among tribes in constant intercourse with British traders and garrisons without connecting their hostility with that influence and without recollecting the authenticated examples of such interposions heretofore furnished by the officers and agents of that government.

Monticello, October 15, 1814.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for the information of your letter of the 10th. It gives, at length, a fixed character to our prospects. The war, undertaken, on both sides, to settle the questions of impressment, and the orders of council, now that these are done away by events, is declared by Great Britain to have changed its object, and to have become a war of conquest, to be waged until she conquers from us our fisheries, the province of Maine, the lakes, States and territories north of the Ohio, and the navigation of the Mississippi; in other words, till she reduces us to unconditional submission.

Student Worksheet #1: **WAS THE WAR OF 1812 OUR SECOND WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE??**

Directions: Fill in the Venn Diagram below with each of the reasons for war listed on the chart papers posted at the front of the room to compare/contrast the reasons for the American Revolution with the reasons for the War of 1812.

American Revolution  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>War of 1812</th>
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</thead>
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Was the War of 1812 America’s Second War for Independence? Why or why not?  

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