



**NSDAR Educational Resources Committee**  
"American Revolution with  
a British Slant"  
Lesson Plan

**Contributor:** Mary Bob McConnaughay Hagmann

**State:** Tennessee

**Topic:** King George and the Pesky Colonies (An Original Play)

**Grade Level:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade

**Time Allocation:** 45 Mins

1. **Identify the standards to be addressed:** An interactive view of the American Revolution with understanding of British aims and American interests.
2. **Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:** The students will role play influential characters from the beginning and close the American Revolution. The students will become visionaries and describe in writing a union which guarantees the objectives of the Constitution of the United States of America.
3. **Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:** Crown, newspaper, tray of letters, tray for tea time, powdered hair, trash can, 2 chair, surrounded by three tables setup in a U shape. Act II-Names of prime ministers for back of chairs and arranged around tables in U shape. Act III Names of American generals for back of chairs arranged around tables.
4. **Introduction of the topic:** Narrator Offers Introduction: 1773-1775 is the beginning of our story. Truly a conflict for many a Torie. American colonists were in a tizzy. The British government had to get busy. Enter the Parlor of George the King. Of American freedom he did NOT sing.
5. **Procedure for instruction:** Self-taught student interactions. Play provided below.
6. **Lesson closure:** Group recites from the Declaration of Independence.
7. **Assessment of student understanding:** The students will become visionaries and describe in writing a union which guarantees the objectives of the Constitution of the United States of America.

# A Play---King George and the Pesky Colonies

Written by: Mary Bob Hagmann

## Act I – The Parlor

Cast:       Narrator  
              Servant 1  
              Messenger  
              King George  
              Queen Charlotte

## Act II – Parliament Years 1763 to 1765

Cast:       Narrator  
              Parliament Member 1  
              American Representative  
              Lord North  
              Earl of Bute  
              George Grenville  
              King George  
              Parliament Member 2  
              Parliament Member 3

### Act III – The Generals

Cast:           Narrator  
                  General George Washington  
                  General Benedict Arnold  
                  General Horatio Gates  
                  General Nathan Greene  
                  General William Heath  
                  General Charles Lee  
                  General Benjamin Lincoln  
                  The Marquis de Lafayette

### Act IV – The Closing and the Beginning

Narrator  
All Cast

## King George and Those Pesky Colonies

King George III (Sitting in the Parlor reading news of the colonies. Newspaper in hand.)

Materials: Crown for King, tray of chocolates, tea, and finger sandwiches, tray with letters, and trash can

**Narrator:**

1773-1775 is the beginning of our story.

Truly a conflict for many a Torie.

American colonist were in a tizzy.

The British government had to get busy.

Enter the Parlor of George the king.

Of American freedom he did NOT sing.

A tale of courage you will hear

As the American Revolutionary was oh so near.

Act I – The Parlor

**Servant 1:** British-made Cadbury chocolate is praised for its rich and creamy texture, Your Majesty. Across the pond, chocolate is far too sweet. Our tempting nibbles today include scones, cakes, macaroons, and of course, real tea without the infusion of herbal additives.

**Enter Messenger:** Letters for your Majesty

**King George:** My wife, Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, you alone understand me. If it were not for my grandfather's death, I would not have this insidious throne at age 23 and we would be merry. My mother was so right with her insistence that we marry in 1761. I do recall writing my first love, Lady Sarah Lenox: "I am born for the happiness or misery of a great nation, and consequently must often act contrary to my passions."

**Wife:** Dear George, You must contain your rage. Those colonist will simmer down.

**King:** I question. Did you know that I did not read until age 11? It was extremely hard to do studies. My tutors knew how hard I was to work and so I have for **Britain**. I am weary of war.

**Wife:** Please do not forget the power of our navy, George. Yes, the Seven Years War with France for the past four years has left you weary. But, do remember our wedding day. You vowed to love me and be good to me for the rest of your life. History will write this to be true.

**King:** Yes dear. Our fifteen children will bring thoughts of joy also.

**Queen:** How proud we were in 1763 that **Britain** emerged from the turmoil of war on top and we remain the highest colonial power.

**King:** Still, our government is not stable, and we remain in major debt. Why cannot the American colonies understand our taxes for such things as tea, stamps, and paper? Their simple defense against the savages of the land increases our debt further. The outrage of the colonies cannot be tolerated. If I read another letter expressing their disapproval of being taxed without their consent, I will explode.

**Queen:** And, George, how can they boycott British goods and buy only from other countries?

**King:** I will not allow this. It makes me half mad.

**Queen:** You must avoid an episode of insanity over such an event my love.

**King:** Still, we cannot afford another war.

(King throws letters into the trash can and storms off.)

Act 2: Parliament Years 1763 to 1765

Materials: Three tables setup in a U shape. Powdered hair. Optional: Gavel

Narrator:

Parliament Years 1763 to 1765

Yes, Britain ended the Seven Years War

King George wanted battle no more.

Numerous Prime Ministers endorsed new laws.

One said this, others noted flaws.

The government was deep in debt this day.

And, what did Parliament have to say:

(Fade off stage)

**Parliament Member:** We are the British Parliament. This legislation will not address American complaints that our new laws are unfair.

**American Representative:** We, colonists of America, will argue that your laws are part of an increasingly corrupt and autocratic empire in which traditional liberties are threatened. The colonial governments of New York and Massachusetts send formal letters of protest.

(Hand over letters)

**Frederick North, Lord North:**

**Frederick North, Lord North here.** I have succeeded Grafton as Prime Minister this 1770 I am popular and an able debater. During peacetime, my financial administration has been sound. The important events of my ministry concern the colonies. My first act is the retention of the tea duty, and we must respond to the Boston Tea Party with the Coercive Acts of 1774. Perhaps I underestimate the colonists' powers of resistance, as I combine severity and conciliation. War with the colonists would be hopeless and impolitic.

**John, 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute:** Remember, in 1762---I , John 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Bute, served as prime minister and enjoyed George's support but George Grenville replaced me.

**Prime Minister George Grenville:** I Prime Minister George Grenville am a better manager of the Commons but George is constantly hectoring me with unwelcome advice and attempts to spoil my actions. Still, I suggested that we reduce duties on sugar and molasses but also enforce the law more strictly.

**King George:** The policies of Charles, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marquess of Rockingham are totally unacceptable. The crisis in the American colonies and the tension with this prime minister are a persistent source of tension and have remained so from 1765-1766. Recall, the 1765 Stamp Act which requires colonists to pay a tax (in the form of a stamp) on printed documents, various licenses, and other goods will increase my funds.

**Parliament Member:** Your Majesty, do you realize that the colonists have rebelled and terrorize British tax collectors?

**Parliament Member:** Our British soldiers must be sent to Boston to support The Townsend Act and prevent further uprisings. It is important that taxes be collected on imports such as glass, lead, paint, paper and tea. Britain is in debt.

### Act 3 – The Generals

Materials: Previous U shape arrangement of tables. Names of generals for the back of each chair. Washington faces the audience. Generals face Washington. When they speak, they turn and face audience.)

**Narrator:**

British troops in BOSTON caused tension and strife

Events transpired and led to loss of life.

The Boston Massacre saw four Bostonians killed.

Redcoats saw that Americans' blood was spilled.

The Sons of Liberty boarded a British vessel filled with tea.

Dressed as Indians, dumped all contents into the sea.

The Continental Generals discussed plans one day.

Listen and you'll hear what they had to say.

**General George Washington:** With war looming, the Continental Congress has formed for the purposes of drawing consensus within the colonies for action against the growing threat of British occupation. I support the Revolution and condemn the monarchy in England. Our iconic American document, the Declaration of Independence will tell the world why America is breaking away from British rule. As Commander in Chief of the colonial forces, I, General George Washington, will serve you.

**Benedict Arnold:** I, Benedict Arnold, will fight brilliantly and bravely during the Battle of Saratoga. I will send the British General John Burgoyne back to England in disgrace after surrendering at the Battle of Saratoga. Am I a spy or a traitor?

**General Horatio Gates:** General Horatio Gates speaking: Perhaps you find me a controversial figure who campaigns to replace General George Washington as

commander in chief. It was to no avail. My plan is to meet the British General William Howe, Commander and Chief, of English forces. He may have a very successful career in America at the beginning but toward the end, his reputation will be damaged due to a great deal of losses.

**General Nathan Greene:** I, General Nathan Greene, remain a respected and faithful servant of the Continental Army and one of General George Washington's most trusted and successful generals. Do remember me for my success in the Southern Campaign against General Cornwallis.

**General William Heath:** My pledge is to fight in the Battle of Lexington, Concord, the Siege of Boston, Long Island, Harlem Heights and many other battle. Still, I wish to have a political career. The British General Thomas Gage will fight our army in the Siege of Boston, the Battles of Lexington and Concord.

**General Henry Knox:** Yes, I am the youngest Major General in the Continental Army My plan is to meet General Sir Guy Carleton, commander of British troops who leads the defense during the Battle of Quebec.

**General Charles Lee:** Do recall, I am second in command to General George Washington. I ought to have been given leadership of the army. Simply because I criticized Washington's decisions and openly attacked his reputation, I was dismissed from the army.

**General Benjamin Lincoln:** General Benjamin Lincoln will fight all over the colonies from northern New York and Massachusetts down to Charleston. My plans are to oversee the surrender of the British. It will be Lord General Charles Cornwallis who is blamed by General Henry Clinton for the loss of the colonies. I plan to read the meticulous war records kept by General Clinton.

**The Marquis de Lafayette:** As a Frenchman, The Marquis de Lafayette will fight in this Revolutionary War as a general and an aide and friend of General Washington

**General George Washington:** Do not forget others who serve their country in battle: Generals: Daniel Morgan, General Joseph Reed, Baron von Steuben, Artemas Ward, Anthony Wayne, and Col. William Prescott.

Act 4 ~~~~~ The Closing and The Beginning

**Narrator:**

Sept 10, 1783 is a special date.

The Treaty of Paris was on the slate.

The American Revolution came to an end.



It was time for a new country to begin and mend.

Say it loud and say it proud.

Voices arise above the crowd:

(All Cast: Walk on stage saying:)

***We the People*** of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

**Narrator:**

The loss of the American Colonies took a tremendous toll.

For King George's "episodes" increased and made him old.

Wife and children stood by his and side.

But, angry, bitter and half mad he died.

Thirteen colonies on the east coast of North America fought.

This was bold and dangerous, but freedom was sought.

Silence does not protect you or me.

The Light of Liberty shines bright you see.

The End

Followup Assignment:

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

**Subject:** *American History*

**Essay**

***We the People*** of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Select one provision of the Constitution as stated in its opening above. What could you promise the citizens of the United States of America if elected a leader of our country?

Examples: What would constitute a perfect Union? How would you establish Justice? What does domestic tranquility mean? What common defense would be necessary to insure freedom? What general welfare should be given each citizen? What are the blessings of America?