

BIOGRAPHIES IN AMERICAN HISTORY

The Revolutionary Era



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Biographies of the Revolutionary and Federal Era

We arranged this list of books so that readers can compare biographies about the same figure, and included stories with different perspectives on the same events.

Unlike the early colonial period of American history, primary sources abound for the Revolutionary and Federal era, providing the necessary documentation for the many biographies available for this period of history. Several figures from this period have captured the imaginations of authors, illustrators, teachers, booksellers, children and their parents, and thus the publishing industry. For example, many biographies of the first four presidents, George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison fill the shelves in the children's biography sections of public libraries. Other figures are less well represented. The result of shifting trends and increased awareness of the roles played by underrepresented people of color, such as Crispus Attucks and Benjamin Banneker, and by women, is the increasing availability of biographies about these figures.

David L. Russell in *Literature for Children, A Short Introduction*, (1994) reminds us that children have little knowledge of history, and are still developing senses of a distant time and place. As a result, authors, illustrators and book designers of biographies for children face an array of challenges and considerations. Complicating matters further, children's reading competencies may be insufficiently developed to sustain attention if the narrative contains archaic vocabulary and sentence patterns, and unfamiliar content, however authentic to the period being described. How might authors, illustrators, and book designers approach biography in a manner that is simultaneously lively and engaging, accessible to young readers and historically accurate? How do biographers go about telling a good story?

Russell describes two approaches to biography, authentic and fictionalized. In the former, the author presents factual information about a person's life and times firmly based on documentation. In the latter, a writer imagines scenes, speculates on details, and creates dialogue based on historical research. Either way, authors may write a lively narrative supported and extended by book design and illustrations, thus providing stories about historic figures that capture and sustain the attention of children. It is entirely possible to publish biographies that are playful and provide insight into the past without distorting reality.

About the Bibliography

The biographies are grouped by the major roles these figures filled during the Revolutionary and Federal Era.

Founding Fathers who articulated and disseminated ideas

- Samuel Adams
- Thomas Paine
- Benjamin Franklin

The first four presidents of the United States

- George Washington
- John Adams
- Thomas Jefferson
- James Madison

Influential wives of early Presidents

- Abigail Adams
- Dolley Madison

People of color and women of the American Revolution

- Benjamin Banneker
- Phillis Wheatley
- Crispus Attucks
- Deborah Sampson

Collective Biographies

- Signers of the Declaration of Independence
- Women of the American Revolution
- Black Revolutionary Army soldiers

Additional resources on the history of the Revolutionary and Federal Era

Note: The information about the books listed in the bibliography often includes a "Note." This is the very brief summary of the book that the publisher submits as part of the book's description for cataloguing by the Library of Congress. Our italicized annotation follows this description.

Founding Fathers Who Articulated and Disseminated Ideas

Samuel Adams (1722-1803)

Fradin, Dennis B. Samuel Adams: The Father of American Independence

New York: Clarion Books, 1998, 182 pages.

NOTE: Presents the life and accomplishments of the colonist and patriot who was involved in virtually every major event that resulted in the birth of the United States.

Grades 5 – 8. Well-written narrative revealing the contributions of Samuel Adams who passed into relative obscurity partially because he "took great pains to remain in the shadows and arrange for others to receive the glory" and credit for his accomplishments. Adams exercised the power of the pen. All illustrations, which include original documents and maps, are in black and white.

Fritz, Jean. Why Don't You Get a Horse, Sam Adams?

New York, NY: Putnam & Grosset Group, 1996, 47 pages.

NOTE: A brief biography of Samuel Adams describing his activities in stirring up the revolt against the British and how he was finally persuaded to learn to ride a horse.

Grades 2 – 4. A humorous and accessible fictionalized biography, fully illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman, whose drawings support the humor and reveal details of Revolutionary life. A two-page postscript includes additional facts about Adams.

Heinrichs, Ann. Samuel Adams: Father of the Revolution

Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2004, 32 pages.

SERIES: Our People

Grades 2 – 4. An informal and lively writing style interspersed with illustrations on every page, interesting facts from the era in text boxes, several well chosen primary documents, an eyewitness account of the Boston Tea Party, and the original Bill of Rights.

Burgan, Michael. Samuel Adams: Patriot and Statesman

Minneapolis, MN: Compass Point Books, 2005, 95 pages.

SERIES: Signature Lives

Grade 6 - 8. Wide margins, short paragraphs and well-constructed sentences make the narrative accessible to experienced readers. The illustrations include paintings, maps, primary documents, and sidebars with relevant information.

Thomas Paine (1737-1809)

Farley, Karin Clafford. Thomas Paine: Revolutionary Author

Austin, TX: Raintree Steck-Vaughn, 1994, 128 pages.

SERIES: American Troublemakers.

NOTE: A biography of the writer and political philosopher whose works influenced the American colonists in their revolt against Great Britain.

Grades 6 – 8. *The story of Thomas Paine, who wrote three powerful documents that changed history: Common Sense urging the American colonies to break with England, The Rights of Man, proclaiming the equality of all human beings, and Age of Reason, which attacked organized religion. This book, as with others in the series, focuses on subjects whose "lives are more interesting than others...people who are troublemakers, people whom we cannot ignore." The authors skillfully integrate information about historic events, how people lived and what concerned them with the individual's life story.*

Meltzer, Milton. Tom Paine: Voice of Revolution

New York: Franklin Watts, 1996, 175 pages.

NOTE: The story of the self-educated craftsman who earned a place in history as the voice of the American Revolution.

This biography by a distinguished children's author is accessible to young adult readers and teachers seeking additional information.

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)

Benjamin Franklin led a particularly interesting life, thus inspiring many well-designed and well-written biographies. This group represents the best out of many additional titles.

Adler, David A. B. Franklin, Printer

New York: Holiday House, 2001, 126 pages.

NOTE: The biography of Benjamin Franklin, a printer, scientist, inventor, writer and statesman. Discusses his personal life, his varied interests, and his considerable contributions to his city and country.

Grades 5 – 8. Excellent book design that captures the era in which Franklin lived and worked. The narrative is particularly engaging, including details that highlight Franklin's personality and accomplishments.

Fleming, Candace. Ben Franklin's Almanac: Being a True Account of the Good Gentleman's Life

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2003, 120 pages.

NOTE: Brings together eighteenth century etchings, artifacts, and quotations to create the effect of a scrapbook of the life of Benjamin Franklin.

Grades 5 – 8. The book design of this biography encourages the reader to sample aspects of Franklin's life and accomplishments, offering an alternative to reading a chronological narrative. The design is particularly well suited for the complexities of Franklin's life. Lively writing and humorous anecdotes.

Fritz, Jean. What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?

New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1976, 47 pages.

47 pages, including a page of notes at the end.

Grades 3 – 5. A fictionalized biography, complete with imagined dialogue, written and illustrated with humor and interesting anecdotes. Although there are no sources listed, Fritz's books are well-researched and she catches the essence of her subject.

Giblin, James Cross. The Amazing Life of Benjamin Franklin

New York: Scholastic Press, 2000, 48 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. Picture storybook format with handsome illustrations by Michael Dooling. Printed in double columns, initial caps, and uneven word spacing to graphically echo Franklin’s newspaper, The Pennsylvania Gazette. Back matter includes pages on important dates, Franklin’s inventions, sayings from Poor Richard’s Almanac, historic sites and an author’s note.

Glass, Maya. Benjamin Franklin: Early American Genius

New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2004, 32 pages.

SERIES: Primary Sources of Famous People in American History.

Grades 2 – 3. Beginning biography printed in large font, illustrated with primary documents and text boxes with relevant facts about Franklin’s life and accomplishments.

Libraries shelve the following two titles with history books on the American Revolution (J 973.3).

Harness, Cheryl. The Remarkable Benjamin Franklin

Washington, DC: National Geographic Society, 2005, 47 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. Ben Franklin’s life and times, illustrated with full page illustrations in color, black and white drawings, a Franklin quote on every page, and background information incorporated into the paintings. The narrative and illustrations set a friendly tone.

Dash, Joan. A Dangerous Engine: Benjamin Franklin from Scientist to Diplomat

New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2006.

Grades 6 - 8 and above. This highly engaging new biography explores Franklin’s scientific experiments, with a particular focus on electricity. Using the metaphor of the lightning rod, the second half of the book explores Franklin’s role in the American Revolution. The black and white illustrations echo the humor in the narrative and capture the spirit of Franklin’s life and character. Quotes from Franklin’s writing are incorporated into the narrative throughout. Recommended for all who find Franklin a captivating subject.

The First Four Presidents of the United States

George Washington (1732-1799)

Chandra, Deborah & Madeleine Comora. George Washington’s Teeth

New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 2003, 38 pages.

NOTE: A rollicking rhyme portrays George Washington’s lifelong struggle with bad teeth. A timeline taken from diary entries and other nonfiction sources follows.

Grades 2 – 3. Brock Cole’s lively pen and ink with watercolor drawings compensate for the contrived rhyming text in this humorous account of Washington’s teeth-related health problems.

Giblin, James Cross. George Washington: A Picture Book Biography

New York: Scholastic, 1992, 47 pages.

47 pages. Illustrated. Includes bibliographical references and index.

NOTE: Examines the family life and career of the first American president
Grades 2 – 4. Well-written and researched account of George Washington's personal life and interests as a framework for his public life and accomplishments. Handsomely illustrated by Michael Dooling whose full-page oil paintings depict scenes described in the narrative. Back matter includes important dates, the myth of the cherry tree, a map, information on Mount Vernon, tributes and monuments.

Jurmain, Suzanne Tripp. George Did It

New York: Dutton Children's Books, 2006

Grades 2 – 4. "But George did it" provides a refrain for Washington stepping in to get the job done in the American Revolution and beyond, despite his nerves and initial reluctance to get involved. A humorous approach with illustrations to match.

Schanzer, Rosalyn. George vs. George: The American Revolution as Seen from Both Sides

Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2004, 57 pages.

NOTE: Explores how the characters and lives of King George III of England and George Washington affected the progress and outcome of the American Revolution.

Grades 4 - 6. An accessible account of the American Revolution with biographical information about George Washington and King George III interspersed in the narrative. Watercolor illustrations, maps, and text boxes provide an immense amount of information. Quotes that appear in dialogue bubbles are thoroughly documented.

St. George, Judith. Take the Lead, George Washington

New York: Philomel Books, 2005, 48 pages.

Grades 2 – 4. A fully illustrated picture book format with text arranged by chapters. Both the chatty narrative, which describes the turning point in George Washington's young adulthood, and the pictures are humorous. The back pages contain a list of the main events in Washington's life.

Adler, David A. George Washington: An Illustrated Biography

New York: Holiday House, 2004, 208 pages.

Grades 6 – 8, and for teachers. A well-written and thoroughly researched narrative, with black and white illustrations, primary documents, maps and a genealogy. The back matter includes quotes by Washington, lists of his generals and his cabinet, a timeline, important battles of the American Revolution and extensive source notes. A valuable resource.

John Adams (1735-1826)

Feinberg, Barbara Silberdick. John Adams: America's 2nd President

New York: Children's Press/Scholastic, 2003, 107 pages.

Series: Encyclopedia of Presidents

NOTE: Details the coming of age, diplomatic and presidential career, private life and legacy of America's second president.

Grades 4 - 6. A straightforward narrative with useful sidebars containing additional information about the times. Illustrated with photographs, primary documents, maps and portraits.

Harness, Cheryl. The Revolutionary John Adams

Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2003, 39 pages.

NOTE: A biography of John Adams with emphasis on his role in the American Revolution. *Grades 3 – 5. Picture storybook format with full color illustrations, maps, quotes of historical figures in original spelling and a timeline. Straightforward and accessible narrative.*

St. George, Judith. John & Abigail Adams. An American Love Story

New York: Holiday House, 2001, 136 pages.

Grades 6 – 8 and as a reference for teachers. This handsome book focuses on the lifelong partnership of John and Abigail Adams. The narrative is lively and clearly written. All of the illustrations, portraits and primary documents are in black and white.

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

Harness, Cheryl. Thomas Jefferson

Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2004, 43 pages.

NOTE: Examines the life and times of the multifaceted man who wrote the Declaration of Independence and later became the third president of the United States.

Grades 2 – 4. Picture book format with relatively informal narrative. Illustrations and maps interpret the events and provide information about the era. Back matter includes a summary of the "world of Thomas Jefferson."

Giblin, James Cross. Thomas Jefferson: A Picture Book Biography

New York: Scholastic, 1994, 47 pages.

Grades 3 – 5. Picture storybook format with realistic full-page illustrations by Michael Dooling. The narrative deals candidly with issues such as the ownership of slaves in the context of the times. The narrative reveals Jefferson as the complicated person he was.

Severance, John B. Thomas Jefferson: Architect of Democracy

New York: Clarion Books, 1998, p. 183.

NOTE: Explores the life of the third president, from his childhood in Virginia, through his involvement in the Revolutionary War, to his years in office.

Grades 6 - 8 and as a reference for teachers. A particularly well-written text that brings Thomas Jefferson alive as a personality and as a man of many accomplishments. The illustrations are all black and white reproductions of period portraits, maps and primary sources. Includes a selection of quotes.

Sirimarco, Elizabeth. Thomas Jefferson: Our Third President

Chanhassen, MN: The Child's World, 2002, 48 pages.

Series: Our Presidents. Spirit of America

Grades 3 – 5. An accessible and straightforward biography, including a discussion of Jefferson as a slave owner and possible father of Sally Hemmings's children. Illustrated with photographs, paintings, primary documents and maps. Sidebars, a timeline and the glossary provide useful information.

Venezia, Mike. Thomas Jefferson: Third President 1801-1809

New York: Scholastic, 2004, 32 pages.

SERIES: Getting to Know the U.S. Presidents

NOTE: An introduction to the life of Thomas Jefferson, a man whose ideas helped create a new kind of government and who became the nation's third president.

Grades 2 – 3. See notes below under James Madison about this series.

James Madison (1751-1836)

Venezia, Mike. James Madison: Fourth President

New York: Children's Press, division of Scholastic, 2004, 32 pages.

Series: Getting to Know the U.S. Presidents

NOTE: An introduction to the life of James Madison, a man of poor health who could not fight in the Revolutionary War but whose ideas formed the core of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and who became the nation's fourth president.

Grades 2 – 4. The basic facts of Madison's accomplishments as president, printed in a primary-sized font. The narratives in this series are as lively as the humorous cartoon drawings interspersed with more conventional illustrations.

Santella, Andrew. James Madison

Minneapolis, MN: Compass Point Books, 2003, 64 pages.

Series: Profiles of Presidents

Grades 3 – 4. Contemporary book design including photographs, paintings and drawings, sidebars, maps, a glossary and a timeline increase the accessibility of the clear text.

Roberts, Jeremy. James Madison

Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2004, 103 pages.

Series: Presidential Leaders

NOTE: A biography of the fourth president of the United States, who helped ensure ratification of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Grades 6 – 8. The straightforward narrative of Madison's life and career is interspersed with passages that reveal his personality. Illustrations, quotes and brief special sections contribute to portraying the era.

Influential Wives of Early Presidents

Abigail Adams (1744-1818)

Somerville, Barbara A. Abigail Adams: Courageous Patriot and First Lady

Minneapolis, MN: Compass Point Books, 2006, 111 pages.

Series: Signature Lives

Grades 5 – 8. The narrative focuses on the events of the Revolutionary period from the perspective of Abigail Adams' life and character. Well illustrated with paintings, original documents, photographs, maps and sidebars.

St. George, Judith. John & Abigail Adams: An American Love Story

New York: Holiday House, 2001, 136 pages.

Grades 6 – 8 and as a reference for teachers. This handsome book focuses on the lifelong partnership of John and Abigail Adams. The narrative is lively and clearly written. All of the illustrations, portraits and primary documents are in black and white.

Wallner, Alexandra. Abigail Adams

New York: Holiday House, 2001, 32 pages.

Grades 2 - 3. A handsome picture book illustrated by the author covering the basics of Abigail Adams's life. This book would be excellent as a read-aloud.

Dolley Madison (1768-1849)

Ashby, Ruth. James and Dolley Madison

Milwaukee, WI: World Almanac Library, 2005, 48 pages.

Series: Presidents and First Ladies

Grades 4 - 6. Contemporary book design replete with paintings, drawings, maps, sidebars, original documents, photographs, a timeline and glossary. The emphasis is the Madisons' life together, before, during and after the presidential years.

People of Color and Women of the American Revolution

Benjamin Banneker (1731-1806)

Blue, Rose. Benjamin Banneker: Mathematician and Stargazer

Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press, 2001, 48 pages.

SERIES: Gateway Biography

Grades 4 - 8. An excellent biography. The author acknowledges that there are incomplete records and there are some things we can't know for sure. Attention is given to Banneker's correspondence with Thomas Jefferson and other primary sources are cited.

Maupin, Melissa. Benjamin Banneker

Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2000, 40 pages.

Series: Journey to Freedom/The African American Library

NOTE: Describes the life and accomplishments of Benjamin Banneker in the fields of science and architecture, as well as his impact as one of the pioneers in promoting equality.

Grades 4 - 6. This, like other titles in this series, is a handsomely designed book, with illustrations on each double spread. Maps, original documents, paintings, quotes, photographs, and the well-written text invite the reader into this important story.

McGill, Alice. Molly Bannaky

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999, 30 pages.

Grades 3 - 6. A large picture book with beautiful illustrations. Relates how Benjamin Banneker's grandmother journeyed from England to Maryland in the late seventeenth century, worked as an indentured servant, began a farm of her own, and married one of her own slaves after she freed him. The story is slightly fictionalized, but the main facts are accurate. This would be a wonderful read-aloud to whet students' appetite to learn more about Banneker.

Pinkney, Andrea Davis. Dear Benjamin Banneker

San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1994, 30 pages.

Grades 3 – 6. An exceptionally beautiful picture book, illustrated by Brian Pinkney. Covers the main points of Banneker's life and includes quotes from primary sources. This would be a wonderful read-aloud to get students excited about Banneker.

Wadsworth, Ginger. Benjamin Banneker: Pioneering Scientist

Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, 2003, 47 pages.

SERIES: On My Own Biography

NOTE: Introduces Benjamin Banneker, a free black man of the eighteenth-century who loved to learn and used his knowledge and observations to build a wooden clock, write an almanac, and help survey the streets of Washington, D.C.

Grades 3 – 4. This book is in an early reader format. Some questionable information is presented as fact, but this is a good, short introduction to Banneker. The text is accessible and the illustrations are vivid.

Phillis Wheatley (1753?-1784)

Gregson, Susan R. Phillis Wheatley

Mankato, MN: Bridgestone Books, 2002, 48 pages.

SERIES: Let Freedom Ring

Grades 3 – 6. One in a series of biographies in American history. This book has an attractive layout and many sidebars that give information about revolutionary times. Illustrations are vivid; the text is clear and accessible and includes questions for the reader to consider.

Lasky, Kathryn. A Voice of Her Own: The Story of Phillis Wheatley, Slave Poet

Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2003, 38 pages.

NOTE: A biography of an African girl brought to New England as a slave in 1761. She became famous on both sides of the Atlantic as the first Black poet in America.

Grades 3 – 6. A large format picture book that would be an excellent introduction to Phillis Wheatley's life and poetry. The writing is dramatic and entertaining; the author used careful research and speculates about emotions and experiences. The illustrations by Paul Lee are beautiful, powerful, and evocative of the period.

McLendon, Jacquelyn Y. Phillis Wheatley: A Revolutionary Poet

New York: PowerPlus Books, 2003, 112 pages.

SERIES: Library of American Lives and Times

Grades 5 – 9. An excellent, thorough and balanced biography. The author clearly distinguishes between what is actually known about Wheatley and the stories that surround her life. Helpful background information is included about the period. The historical pictures have captions that explain when and by whom they were created.

Crispus Attucks (1723?-1770)

McLeese, Don. Crispus Attucks

Vero Beach, FL: Rourke Pub., 2005, 32 pages.

SERIES: Heroes of the American Revolution

NOTE: Introduces the life of Crispus Attucks, a former slave who died in the Boston Massacre, a fight between the British and American colonists that occurred before the American Revolution.

Grades 3 – 5. A short, straightforward biography that provides the basic facts and explains why so little is known about Attucks. Some background information about slavery and the revolutionary period is provided. The captions for the historic illustrations do not explain when and by whom the images were made.

Deborah Sampson (1760-1827)

Burke, Rick. Deborah Sampson

Chicago: Heinemann Library, 2003, 32 pages.

SERIES: American Lives

NOTE: A biography of a young woman who, disguised as a man, served in the army during the American Revolution.

Grades 3 – 5. A basic biography in an attractive format. Includes sidebars, map, and timeline.

Collective Biographies

These books have separate chapters or sections devoted to specific people of the period.

Fradin, Dennis B. The Signers: The Fifty-Six Stories Behind the Declaration of Independence

New York: Walker, 2002, 164 pages.

NOTE: Profiles each of the fifty-six men who signed the Declaration of Independence, giving historical information about the colonies they represented.

Includes the text of the Declaration and its history.

Grades 4 – 8. A large and well-formatted book that includes a two-page spread about each of the signers, as well as information about the individual colonies and the story behind the writing of the Declaration of Independence. The writing is lively and engaging; the wood-cut illustrations by Michael McCurdy are very appealing; the maps, quotes from primary sources, introduction and afterword are all valuable. A delightful and useful book.

Harper, Judith. African Americans and the Revolutionary War

Chanhassen, MN: Child's World, 2001, 40 pages.

Series: Journey to Freedom/The African American Library

NOTE: Portrays the treatment and struggles of African Americans during the Revolutionary War and their contributions to the war effort.

Grades 4 – 6. This, like other titles in this series, is a handsomely designed book, with illustrations on each double spread. Maps, original documents, paintings, quotes, photographs, and the well-written text invite the reader into this important story. Includes brief profiles of Elizabeth Freeman, Phillis Wheatley, Peter Salem, Agrippa Hull, James Armistead, and James Forten.

Kneib, Martha. Women Soldiers, Spies, and Patriots of the American Revolution

New York: Rosen Pub. Group, 2004, 112 pages.

SERIES: American Women at War

NOTE: Includes information about Deborah Sampson, Nancy Hart, Lydia Darragh, Mercy Otis Warren, Esther DeBerdt Reed, Elizabeth Martin, Sybil Ludington, and Margaret Corbin

Grades 4 – 8. Provides excellent information about these women using many quotes from primary sources. Includes a timeline and helpful source notes.

Redmond, Shirley-Raye. Patriots in Petticoats: Heroines of the American Revolution

New York: Random House, 2004, 128 pages.

SERIES: Landmark Books

NOTE : Profiles girls and women who participated in the American Revolution by refusing to buy British merchandise, collecting money, and even going to war as wives, nurses, spies or soldiers.

Grades 3 – 6. Provides brief information about 24 women, including an introduction to the period and sidebars about interesting aspects of women’s lives. The writing is straightforward and accessible.

Additional History Resources

Bober, Natalie. Countdown to Independence: A Revolution of Ideas in England and Her American Colonies: 1760-1776

New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2001, 342 pages.

NOTE: Examines the people and events both in the American colonies and in Great Britain between 1760 and 1776 that led to the American Revolution.

Grades 6 – 8 and above. This book answers the question; “How did the social, political, and intellectual developments of the colonial period precipitate a shocking revolution by the American colonists against Great Britain?” The author provides the perspectives of people on both sides of the conflict and provides biographical information through primary sources such as letters, diaries, and speeches. An excellent and thorough resource for students and teachers.

Cox, Clinton. Come All You Brave Soldiers: Blacks in the Revolutionary War

New York: Scholastic Press, 1999, 182 pages.

NOTE: Tells the story of the thousands of black men who served as soldiers fighting for independence from England during the American Revolutionary War.

Grades 5 – 8. Beginning with Crispus Attucks, this book profiles the many black men who took part in the fight for independence. Includes useful and compelling information about other key figures, various battles, the situation of slaves, free blacks and indentured servants, and living conditions during the war.

Stanley, Diane. Joining the Boston Tea Party

New York: HarperCollins, 2001, 42 pages.

SERIES: The Time-traveling Twins

NOTE: With the help of their grandmother's hat, the twins journey back in time to the Boston Tea Party.

Grades 2 – 5. Using an imaginative, humorous approach, this book makes the time period exciting and accessible. Excellent historical information and detail; the illustrations by Holly Berry are lively and inviting.

Allen, Thomas B. George Washington, Spymaster: How the Americans Outspied the British and Won the Revolutionary War

Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2004, 149 pages.

NOTE: A biography of Revolutionary War general and first President of the United States, George Washington, focusing on his use of spies to gather the intelligence that helped the colonies win the war.

Grades 6 – 8 and any younger reader particularly interested in espionage. An innovative approach to the story of Washington’s role in the American Revolution. The book design intentionally resembles the printed leaflets of the era that were so influential in the dissemination of ideas that led to the Revolution. This book is shelved with books on the American Revolution (J 973.3).

Yoder, Carolyn P. George Washington: The Writer – A Treasury of Letters, Diaries, and Public Documents

Honesdale, PA: Boyds Mills Press, 2003, 141 pages.

NOTE: A collection of letters, dairy entries, speeches, and other documents written by George Washington, with brief introductions and archival photographs that provide historical background.

High school and above. Washington’s writing style and spelling provide a significant challenge to the reader. Yoder introduces each document and shapes the story in clear, accessible prose.

EDITORS

Sasha Lauterbach has been a teacher and storyteller. For the past eighteen years she has served as librarian at the Cambridge Friends School, a Quaker school for grades pre-kindergarten through eighth whose mission includes anti-bias work and teaching about social justice. Sasha teaches courses in research, drama, folklore, mythology, biography, and media literacy.

Marion Reynolds, a former elementary teacher, has taught children's literature at Tufts University for more than a decade. Her course focuses on current issues and trends in the field, in particular how books for children are situated in the culture in which they are written, published, distributed and read. Marion also teaches courses in mathematics education and elementary curriculum, and serves as coordinator of the Joint Elementary Licensure Program at Tufts.