



## NSDAR Educational Resources Committee

“Henry Knox and the Noble Train of Artillery”

**Contributor:** Barbara Genter Davis **Grade Level:** 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>

**1. Identify the standards to be addressed:**

US History and Geography Standards:

U3 USHG ERA 3 Revolution and the New Nation (1754 - 1800)

U3.1 Causes of the American Revolution Identify the major political, economic, and ideological reasons for the American Revolution.

5 – U3.1.6 Identify the role that key individuals played in leading the colonists to revolution, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, John Adams, Thomas Paine and others.

5 – U3.1.8 Identify a problem confronting people in the colonies, identify alternative choices for addressing the problem with possible consequences, and describe the course of action taken.

Informational Reading Standards:

Key Ideas and Details

Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

RI.5.1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

RI.5.3. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Craft and Structure

Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

RI.5.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

6. Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

RI.5.6. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

RI.5.7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

9. Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

RI.5.9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Informational Writing:

Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**2. Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:**

The students will learn to think critically about the causes and effects in the fight for the independence of our country. The students will be able to apply these strategies to future study of other primary sources and historical events. Students will study military strategy at the beginning of the American Revolution and discover how it affected the progression of the war.

The outcomes of this lesson are important in helping students identify and analyze primary source documents. After an introduction to The Noble Train of Artillery through secondary sources and a picture book, students will analyze primary source documents to recognize and understand the military strategy used by Henry Knox and George Washington in putting an end to the Siege of Boston by using artillery transported from Fort Ticonderoga to the area surrounding Boston.

**3. Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:**

Texts, digital resources, and/or materials to be used in lesson:

Picture book "Henry and the Cannons" by Dan Brown.

The primary sources the students will analyze are:

\*Map of Boston Environs, 1775 (see link below)

\*Instructions from George Washington to Henry Knox, November 16, 1775 (see link below)

\*Henry Knox's description of a portion of the expedition of The Noble Train of Artillery, January 5, 1776 (see link below)

Primary Source Analysis S.O.U.R.C.E Format (see worksheet below).

4. **Introduction of the topic:**

After the first battles of the American Revolution at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, the British retreated to Boston and began a siege of the city. George Washington and the newly formed Continental Army needed to develop a strategy to force the British to leave the city. In early May 1775, a group of Patriots, under the leadership of Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold, captured Fort Ticonderoga from the British. The Patriots laid claim to all of the artillery and ammunition within the fort. With this much needed artillery 300 miles from Boston, Henry Knox embarked on a mission to transport it through the wilderness of upstate New York back to Boston.

5. **Procedure for Instruction:**

After reading from a secondary source (textbook or on-line resource), students will begin to delve deeper into the events surrounding the transportation of The Noble Train of Artillery from Fort Ticonderoga in upstate New York to Boston, Massachusetts during the winter of 1775-1776.

- The lesson continues with reading aloud of “Henry and the Cannons” a picture book by Dan Brown.
- With this knowledge base, students will read and analyze three primary source documents to gain an understanding of The Noble Train of Artillery initiated by Henry Knox and consented to by George Washington, in an attempt to end the Siege of Boston in 1776.
  - A map of the Boston area, 1775
  - Henry Knox’s Instructions from George Washington, November 16, 1775
  - Henry Knox’s letter to George Washington, January 5, 1776, describing of a portion of the expedition of The Noble Train of Artillery.
- As each primary source document is being studied, students will complete the S.O.U.R.C.E format worksheet in order to fully analyze each document. The teacher may wish to use the first primary source as a whole-group model to show students how to use the S.O.U.R.C.E. format.

Primary Source #1: Use web address to open image of 1775 Boston Environs Map

<http://s3.amazonaws.com/mtv-main-assets/files/modules/boston-environs-1775-loc-web.jpg>

(Creating a QR Code for this web address will allow students to use a device to zoom into all parts of the map.)

This map of the Boston area published in London in 1776 was based on a drawing made in October 1775 by Lieutenant Richard Williams, an officer in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, but not, as the map states, a trained engineer. The map includes points of military interest such as batteries and fortifications; the locations of prominent buildings (Town Hall, Faneuil Hall, and Roxbury Meeting House), roads, hills, nearby islands in Boston Harbor and the area exposed at low tide. It also notes the location of Henry Howell Williams's mansion house on Noddles Island. Oriented with north toward the upper right, this plan was drawn by and for British use and refers to the American militia as the "Rebels."

[http://www.masshist.org/online/siege/doc-viewer.php?item\\_id=2053](http://www.masshist.org/online/siege/doc-viewer.php?item_id=2053)

Primary Source #2: Use this web address to view source -  
<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-02-02-0351>

Instructions to Colonel Henry Knox 16 November 1775

You are immediately to examine into the state of the Artillery of this army & take an account of the Cannon, Mortars, Shells, Lead & ammunition that are wanting; When you have done that, you are to proceed in the most expeditious manner to New York; There apply to the president of the provincial Congress, and learn of him, whether Col. Reed did any thing, or left any orders— respecting these things, & Get him to procure such of them as can possibly be had there.<sup>1</sup> The president if he can, will have them immediately sent hither; If he cannot, you must put them in a proper Channel for being Transported to this Camp with dispatch before you leave New York.

After you have procured as many of these Necessaries as you can there, you must go to Major General Schuyler & Get the remainder from Ticonderoga, Crown point, or St Johns—If it should be necessary, from Quebec, if in our hands—the want of them is so great, that no trouble or expence must be spared to obtain them—I have wrote to General Schuyler, he will give every necessary assistance, that they may be had & forwarded to this place with the utmost dispatch<sup>2</sup>

—I have given you a Warrant to the paymaster General of the Continental army, for a Thousand Dollars, to defray the expence attending your Journey, & procuring these Articles, an Account of which you are to keep & render upon your return. Given under my Hand at Head Quarters at Cambridge this 16 day of November Annoque Domini 1775

Go: Washington

Endeavour to procure what Flints you can.<sup>3</sup>

Primary Source #3: Use this web address to view source -  
<http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-03-02-0019>

To: George Washington from Colonel Henry Knox 5 January 1776  
From Colonel Henry Knox Albany Jany 5 1776

Sir

I did myself the honor to address your Excellency from Fort George on the 17 Ult.—I then was in hopes that we should have been able to have had the Cannon at Cambridge by this time the want of Snow detain'd us some days & now a cruel thaw, hinders from Crossing Hudsons River which we are oblig'd to do four times from Lake George to this Town—the first severe night will make the Ice on the river sufficiently strong 'till that happens the Cannon & mortars must remain where they are most of them at the different crossing places & some few here—these inevitable delays pain Me exceedingly as my mind is fully sensible of the importance of the greatest expedition in this Case—In eight or nine days after the first severe frost they will be at Springfield from which place we can get them easily transported Altho there should be no snow—but to that the roads are So excessively bad Snow will be necessary<sup>1</sup>—We got over 4 more dble fortified 12 pounders after my last to your excellency—I send a duplicate of the List for fear of miscarriage of the other List,<sup>2</sup> General Schuyler has been exceedingly assiduous In this matter, as to myself my utmost endeavors have been & still

shall be use[d] to forward them with the utmost dispatch. I have the honor to be with the greatest  
Respect Your Excellencys Most Obdt Hble Servt

H. Knox

S.O.U.R.C.E. Format for Analyzing Primary Sources

Student name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

S - Source Type: What type of source is it? Does it have a title?

PS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

O - Origin:

Where did it come from? Who created it? When was it created?

PS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

U - Understanding:

Summary of main points - What is this source about? What message was the source's creator trying to convey?

PS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #4: \_\_\_\_\_

R - Related Ideas: What other people, places, or events are related to this source?

PS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #4: \_\_\_\_\_

C - Conclusion: How does this source support your understanding of its creator, time, place, or event?

PS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #4: \_\_\_\_\_

E - Evidence: State some evidence from the source that supports your conclusion.

PS #1: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #2: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #3: \_\_\_\_\_

PS #4: \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Lesson Closure:**

After reviewing and analyzing the primary source documents using the S.O.U.R.C.E format, the students will discuss with their learning partner(s) the importance and challenges involved with Henry Knox's Noble Train of Artillery. The students will discuss why the military strategy of transporting the artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston became an essential strategy in ending the British siege of Boston.

7. **Assessment of Understanding:**

In a descriptive paragraph, each student will answer the following question, using supporting evidence from the three analyzed primary sources: How did the military strategy of The Noble Train of Artillery lead to the British evacuation of Boston, and impact the progression of the American Revolution?

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