
Grade Level: Elementary School	Study Unit: American Revolution	Lesson Topic: Congress	Resource Materials: Aitken Bible Preface
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Objective:

Elementary school students will understand the actions of **Congress** during the American Revolution. In addition, students will see how the colonies pursued economic, political, and religious freedom. Finally, students will explore how the desire for all three freedoms was demonstrated by Congress approving the Aitken Bible.

Procedure:

- The teacher will ask the students to imagine their lunch time is going to be taken away. However, the students can elect two representatives to explain why their lunch time should not be taken away.
 - After a brief discussion between the teacher and the representatives, the lunch time is restored.
 - The teacher will explain this situation is similar to why Congress formed and how it acted.
 - Congress was formed by representatives from the colonies joining a governing body.
 - Representatives acted on behalf of the colonies against British taxes and trade restrictions.
- The teacher will explain how Congress formed and how it progressed.
 - First Continental Congress convened in 1774.
 - Met because of the Intolerable Acts
 - Second Continental Congress convened from 1775 to 1781.
 - Met shortly after the start of the Revolutionary War
 - Adopted the Declaration of Independence in July 1776
 - Congress of the Confederation convened from 1781 to 1789.
 - Met under the Articles of Confederation in March 1781, after ratification
 - Adopted the Constitution of the United States of America in September 1787
- The teacher will explain that Congress defended the colonies when the British restricted their freedom.
 - The British restricted economic freedom, political freedom, and religious freedom.
 - Economic restriction: for example, with the Boston Port Act of 1774, the British closed the port of Boston to business as punishment for the Boston Tea Party.
 - Political restriction: for example, with the Massachusetts Government Act of 1774, the British gave power over Massachusetts to the British-appointed governor.
 - Religious restriction: for example, by funding the Church of England, whose leaders were loyalists, the British helped to make the Church state-sponsored in five colonies.
- The teacher will use the Aitken as an example of how Congress defended all three freedoms with one act.
 - Congress of the Confederation, although it could not tax and so had limited means to offer financial support, it issued an official approval of Robert Aitken printing the Bible in 1782.
 - This meant Congress would let printers profit from the Bible (economic freedom).
 - This meant Congress would not hold a license on the Bible (political freedom).
 - This meant the British could not stop the printing of the Bible (religious freedom).

Closure/Review:

With guided questioning, the teacher will help the students to review the following topics. How did economic freedom help America to flourish in financial ways? How did political freedom unite colonists from different political backgrounds? How did religious freedom encourage people of different faiths to co-exist in peace? Specifically, how did Congress approving the Aitken Bible serve as a symbol of religious freedom?