
Grade Level: High School	Study Unit: American Revolution	Lesson Topic: Culture	Resource Materials: Aitken Bible Preface
------------------------------------	---	---------------------------------	--

Objective:

High school students will understand the formation of **culture** in colonial America. In addition, students will see why European political oppression and religious persecution gave rise to American independence. Finally, students will examine how the spirit of independence in the culture was displayed by the publication of the Aitken Bible.

Procedure:

- Explanation of how European political oppression influenced culture in colonial America
 - For example, in England, the tyrant King Charles I ruled from 1625 to 1649.
 - He dismissed Parliament to rule alone.
 - He forced new taxes on citizens.
 - He caused two civil wars in his country.
 - People from England, as well as other places of political oppression, fled to colonial America.
 - In the culture, this planted a widespread desire for a government which allowed citizens a voice.
- Class discussion of how European religious persecution influenced culture in colonial America
 - For example, in Germany, a religious war called the Thirty Years War lasted from 1618 to 1648.
 - The war was between Catholics and Protestants.
 - Many different princes sought to oppress either religion.
 - It was one of the most catastrophic wars in world history.
 - People from Germany, as well as other places of religious persecution, fled to colonial America.
 - In the culture, this planted a widespread desire for a government which allowed religious freedom.
- Explanation that the French and Indian War from 1754 to 1763 influenced culture in colonial America
 - The war stirred feelings of oppression and persecution.
 - The war united the colonies for a common cause.
 - The war forced the colonists to fight for their freedom.
 - In the culture, the war and its aftermath planted a widespread desire for independent government.
- Class discussion of how a spirit of independence unified people from different backgrounds in the culture
 - Different politics: Cavaliers in VA, Parliamentarians in New England (both fled England)
 - Different religions: Quakers settled PA; Catholics settled MD; Puritans settled New England.
 - Despite their differences, colonists came together for the cause of American independence.
- Explanation of the Aitken Bible as an example of the spirit of independence in colonial culture
 - Colonists demonstrated independence with petitions for Bibles from a source other than Britain.
 - Congress demonstrated independence in ignoring the British license on the Bible.
 - Robert Aitken demonstrated independence in printing the first English Bible in America.

Closure/Review:

The class will discuss culture in colonial America. How did the culture influence the Revolution? How did the Revolution influence the culture? How did the cultural desire for independence lead Congress to approve the Aitken Bible? How did military victories encourage the cultural desire for freedom that lead Robert Aitken to print his Bible? As a symbol of religious freedom in the culture, how could the Aitken Bible have encouraged the War effort?