

<b>Grade Level:</b> High School	<b>Study Unit:</b> American Revolution	<b>Lesson Topic:</b> Immigration	<b>Resource Materials:</b> Aitken Bible Preface
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### Objective:

High school students will understand the motivations for **immigration** into colonial America. In addition, students will study political, religious, and economic factors. Finally, students will learn about immigrant Robert Aitken, who rose to become a printer for the Journals of Congress and publisher of the first American Bible.

### Procedure:

- Class discussion on factors that brought immigrants to colonial America
  - Political: immigrants seeking relief from political persecution
    - For example, Germans escaped oppressive policies and wars.
  - Religious: immigrants seeking freedom to practice their beliefs
    - For example, Protestants, Catholics, and others fled Europe.
      - Quakers founded the colony of Pennsylvania.
      - English Catholics founded the colony of Maryland.
  - Economic: immigrants seeking to improve their financial situation
    - For example, Robert Aitken came for economic reasons (see below).
- Explanation of Robert Aitken as an example of an immigrant coming to America
  - Born in Dalkeith near Edinburgh, Scotland, around 1735
  - Learned bookbinding and went into the book business in Paisley
  - Pursuing better business prospects, journeyed to America in 1769
    - Left wife and three kids at home (one child died in his absence)
  - Arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1769, advertised books for sale
  - Received orders for and had printed two books—one a religious work
    - (Aitken is claimed by both Quakers and Presbyterians.)
  - Within the year, returned to Scotland, brought family to America in 1771
  - Opened a business as a bookseller, soon became a publisher and binder
  - Appointed the printer of the Journals of Congress in September 1776
    - Continued as congressional printer until May 1778
  - Printed the first English Bible in America in 1782 (the Aitken Bible)
    - The Aitken Bible was approved by Congress.
    - The Aitken Bible was recommended to Americans.
- Assignment for a student essay about their immigrant ancestors (who, what, when, where, why, and how)

### Closure/Review:

The class will discuss immigration into colonial America. What were three factors that brought immigrants into colonial America? As an example, what people were seeking relief from political oppression? As an example, what people were seeking freedom to practice their beliefs? As an example, what person was seeking to improve his financial situation? How did the story of immigrant Robert Aitken show America as a land offering a better life?