

CHARACTER CARDS

(Blue) Sheet 1 of 5

Abigail Adams

Hello, my name is Abigail Adams. I am the wife of John Adams, our second president, and mother of John Quincy Adams, our sixth president. I strongly supported education for women, even though I had no formal schooling. I worked hard to become a strong reader and writer. During the war, I managed our farm, taught our children, and expressed my political views in letters written to my husband.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry an old-looking letter as if it were written from Abigail to her husband, John. After speaking, give the letter to the student playing John Adams.

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Benedict Arnold

Hello, my name is Benedict Arnold. I am infamous for being one of the worst traitors in American history. I am angry at General Washington and Congress because I was not promoted and did not receive the money I felt I deserved. With help from Major André, a British officer, I sold secrets about American troops and movements to the British for twenty thousand pounds. I flee America and escape to England but never receive the full amount of money I was promised.

Performance Instructions: Dress as an American General and carry some folded papers as if they are secrets. After speaking, sneak over to the RED team and give the papers to one student.

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Benjamin Franklin

Hello, my name is Benjamin Franklin. I am one of the most famous Americans during the Revolution. I am an inventor, patriot, ambassador, and even the first postmaster general. The lightning rod was one of my most important inventions. I am also the oldest signer of the Declaration of Independence. During the war, I go to France many times to ask for the assistance of French troops, ships, and money to help defeat the British.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry a cane. While speaking, walk around using your cane for support. **Costume note:** usually Benjamin Franklin is depicted with a bald head and spectacles.

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Betsy Ross

Hello, my name is Betsy Ross. I am known for sewing the first official American flag. My grandson told the story of how George Washington and two other men of Congress came to my house asking for my help. Washington showed me a design of a 6 pointed star, but I took a piece of paper, folded it, and with a single snip of my scissors produced a symmetrical 5 pointed star! Congress adopted the national flag on June 14, 1777 and that day is now known as Flag Day.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry a picture of a 5 pointed star. After speaking, hold up the picture and turn to salute the Betsy Ross flag (presenter will have on display).

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Crispus Attucks

Hello, my name is Crispus Attucks. I am an African American man who was one of the first patriots killed in the early fight for independence. I was a tradesman and a rope maker at the docks in Boston. On March 5, 1770, when the British soldiers were mistreating colonists, I was on the front lines of the march against them. When somebody in the crowd yelled "Fire!" I was shot by the British. This event became known as the Boston Massacre. After my death, patriots reminded each other about my brave sacrifice.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry a paper snowball. After speaking, throw it. Then fall down as if you were shot.

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Deborah Sampson

Hello, my name is Deborah Sampson. As a young woman, I dressed myself up as a soldier named Robert to fight in the Continental Army. I was wounded twice, but no one found out that I was a woman. When a doctor discovered my secret, I was released honorably from the military. After the war, with help from Paul Revere, congress granted me retirement money for my service. Later I became a teacher and enjoyed retelling my experiences as a soldier.

Performance Instructions: Dress like a soldier with a bandaged leg and carry a pretend musket (provided by presenter). After speaking, limp back to your chair as if you were hurt from your injury.

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CHARACTER CARDS

(Blue) Sheet 2 of 5

General Charles Cornwallis

Hello, my name is General Charles Cornwallis. I am the last leader of the British troops during the American Revolutionary War. I will direct the fighting in the southern colonies and defeat many of the colonial forces and march north. My troops and I will become surrounded in Yorktown, Virginia, and after many days of fighting, I will surrender. This loss will win the war for the Americans.

Performance Instructions: *Dress like a British general and carry a white flag and a pretend sword. Speak with a British accent. After speaking, wave the white flag and say "I surrender!"*

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General Rochambeau

Bonjour, my name is General Rochambeau (*RO-sham-BO*). I am the French military leader who assisted the Americans in defeating the British leader, General Lord Charles Cornwallis, at the Battle of Yorktown in October 1781. With the combined efforts of General Washington's 8,845 troops and my 7,800 men, we surrounded the British and forced them to surrender.

Performance Instructions: *Dress like a French general and carry a pretend sword. Speak with a French accent. After speaking, walk up to General Charles Cornwallis, hold out your hand and say, "Hand me your sword!"*

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George Washington

Hello, my name is George Washington. I am known for many things: farmer, surveyor, and Commander in Chief of the Continental Army. I come from a good family and have worked hard all my life. I fought many battles alongside my troops and even helped to finance the Continental Army and Navy. After the war I will become the first elected president of the United States of America.

Performance Instructions: *Dress as a Colonial general and carry a pretend sword. After speaking, raise up your sword and say, "First in battle, first in peace, and first in the hearts of my countrymen!"*

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John Adams

Hello, my name is John Adams. I played a leading role in the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. My wife, Abigail, and I were outspoken on the separation from Great Britain. I was the first vice president of our new country and was elected the second president of the United States in 1797. I died on July 4, 1826, at the age of 90. Thomas Jefferson died that same day.

Performance Instructions: *Dress as a colonial man and carry a copy of the Declaration of Independence. After speaking, hold the copy of the Declaration up in the air and say, "Thomas Jefferson still survives!"*

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John Hancock

Hello, my name is John Hancock. I am a delegate from Massachusetts who served as the president of the Continental Congress from 1775 to 1777. I signed my name very large on the Declaration of Independence, some say so that King George III wouldn't have to wear his glasses to see my name. The British considered Samuel Adams and me to be the most dangerous American revolutionaries.

Performance Instructions: *Dress as a colonial man and carry a feather pen and copy of the Declaration of Independence. After speaking, pretend to sign your name very large on the Declaration.*

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John Paul Jones

Hello, my name is John Paul Jones. I am one of America's first great naval officers. My flagship, *Bonhomme Richard* (*BOHN-uhm REE-shard*), attacked a British fleet in September 1779. When my ship began to sink and the British demanded my surrender, I shouted, "I have not yet begun to fight!" We went on to capture the British ship and win the battle. I later became one of the founders of the U.S. Navy.

Performance Instructions: *Dress like a colonial sailor and carry a pretend sword. After speaking, hold up your sword and say, "I have not yet begun to fight!"*

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CHARACTER CARDS

(Blue) Sheet 3 of 5

King George III

(King George the Third)

Hello, my name is King George the Third. I am the leader of the British Empire. I feel that the colonies that England has set up are under my control. The Americans dare to demand certain freedoms, but I will not hear of it! My advisors will pass laws in Parliament to tax the colonies, and if the rebels continue to cause problems, I will send troops to America to stop the Revolution!

Performance Instructions: Dress as a British king, wear a crown, and carry a scepter. Speak with a British accent. While speaking, walk around acting like a royal leader. At the very end, stomp your foot on the ground!

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Lydia Darragh

Hello, my name is Lydia Darragh. British troops were having a meeting in my home when I overheard their plans of an attack for the next day at Whitemarsh, Pennsylvania. The next morning, I will pretend to go get flour, cross the British lines, and warn the American troops about the surprise attack. When the British arrive, the Continental Army will be ready for battle and defeat the redcoats.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry an empty sack marked Flour with paper "secrets" inside. While speaking, sneak over to the BLUE team, reach into the sack, pull out the papers, and give them to one of the students.

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Marquis de Lafayette

Bonjour, my name is Marquis (*Mar-KEY*) de (*day*) Lafayette (*La-fay-ET*). I am a Frenchman who heard about the American fight for independence. I wanted to help, so I volunteered to join the fight for freedom. General Washington was very pleased to have my help. I was wounded at the Battle of Brandywine and went back to France a hero. There, I helped to convince the king of France to join the fight and help the Americans. I also spent much of my own fortune to help the American army.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry a bag of pretend money. Speak in a French accent. After speaking, give the bag to George Washington and shake his hand.

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Martha Washington

Hello, my name is Martha Washington. I am from Virginia and the wife of George Washington. Instead of staying home during the war, I supported my husband and the troops in the battlefield. I spent the cold winters at Valley Forge and Morristown. While there, I organized the women of the camp to help sew shirts, knit socks, and mend clothes. My presence lifted the spirits of my husband and the soldiers.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry a pair of socks. After speaking, walk over and give the socks to the student playing George Washington.

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Mary Draper

Hello, my name is Mary Draper. I wanted to help the Continental Army during the Revolution so I decided to melt down all of my family heirlooms (air-looms). They were pewter items, and made wonderful musket balls for the soldiers. I know my things are important to me, but so are the freedoms for which we are fighting.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry small metal objects. After speaking, kneel down and pretend to melt them down in a fire to make musket balls.

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Mary Ludwig Hays

Hello, my name is Mary Ludwig Hays. I am from New Jersey and want to help the soldiers fight in the Revolutionary War. I will haul water to the weary men on the battlefield. The men call me Molly Pitcher. I wonder if this name will stick with me for the rest of my life? When my husband is wounded, I will take his place behind his cannon and fire round after round at the British.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry a plastic pitcher. After speaking take the pitcher to the BLUE team and pretend to pour out water for them.

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CHARACTER CARDS

(Blue) Sheet 4 of 5

Mercy Otis Warren

Hello, my name is Mercy Otis Warren. I am a famous female author. Through my letters I advised many of our Founding Fathers, including George Washington and John Adams, and was good friends with both their wives. My works had a great influence on bringing awareness to women's issues and furthering America's cause. Drawing on my personal experience and notes, I wrote the first history of the American Revolutionary War, published in 1805.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry a book with the title, "History of the Rise, Progress, and Termination of the American Revolution." After speaking, pretend to autograph your book!

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Nancy Morgan Hart

Hello, my name is Nancy Morgan Hart. I fought battles of the Revolution in my own home. Five Tories came to my house, demanding a meal. I tricked them by giving them drinks (**hand a boy on your team a cup**) and started taking their muskets (**take his musket, provided by presenter**). When they discovered my plan, I held them at gunpoint. I sent my daughter to get help to take away my prisoners.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and bring 1 paper cup. While speaking, have 1 boy and 1 girl from your team help you. The presenter will provide a toy musket for the boy. After speaking, tell your daughter to go get help. Have her shout, "Help! Help!". Practice beforehand!

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Nathan Hale

Hello, my name is Nathan Hale. I was born in Connecticut. I was athletic, intelligent, religious, and kind. I graduated from Yale at the age of eighteen! As a captain in the Continental Army, I volunteered to go behind enemy lines, as a schoolteacher, to spy on the British. I was captured, and on September 22, 1776, at 21 years old, I was executed. Courageous to the end, I said, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry school books. After speaking, have two boys from the RED team come and take you back to your seat. Practice beforehand!

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Patrick Henry

(Be prepared for the program presenter to interrupt you at the moments indicated in parentheses; pause for interruption before continuing with speech.)

Hello, my name is Patrick Henry. "If we wish to be free, we must fight! (pause) I repeat, sir, we must fight! (pause) An appeal to arms and to the God of Hosts is all that is left to us. (pause) If this be treason, make the most of it! (pause) Shall we resort to entreaty and humble supplication? (pause) Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? (pause) Forbid it, almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but, as for me . . . give me liberty or give me death!"

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry a copy of your speech. Speak and gesture dramatically while reciting.

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Paul Revere

Hello, my name is Paul Revere. I am famous for riding a horse to warn the Minutemen. I, along with William Dawes and Samuel Prescott, spread the alarm that the British Regular Army was coming. The colonists armed themselves against the British troops and fought in the battles at Lexington and Concord. I was stopped by the British a few miles beyond Lexington and never made it to Concord.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man. The presenter will hand you a stick horse. After speaking, ride around on the horse and shout over and over "The Regulars are out!" Have two students from the RED team stop you and take away your horse. Practice beforehand!

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Phillis Wheatley

Hello, my name is Phillis Wheatley. I was one of America's first poets and the first African American to publish a book. Despite living as a slave, I had a good education, and I soon learned Greek and Latin. I was only 13 years old when my first poem was published. I wrote poems about my Christian faith, famous people, and the Revolution. I even wrote a poem about George Washington. He enjoyed it so much, I was invited to read it to him. I gained my personal freedom and was a strong supporter of freedom for the colonies.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial woman and carry a copy of one of your poems. After speaking, hand it to the student playing George Washington.

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CHARACTER CARDS

(Blue) Sheet 5 of 5

Samuel Adams

Hello, my name is Samuel Adams. To protest taxes imposed by the British Parliament, I organized the Boston Tea Party. As a delegate from the colony of Massachusetts, I signed the Declaration of Independence. I wrote many articles in Boston newspapers to stir up the emotions of the Americans on the idea of freedom from Great Britain. After the war, I became the Governor of Massachusetts.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry cardboard boxes labeled TEA. After speaking, toss the boxes into the "Boston harbor" one at a time.

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Thomas Jefferson

Hello, my name is Thomas Jefferson. I am the main writer of the Declaration of Independence, as well as our third president. I was a shy law student when the idea of independence was being considered. I was a farmer, an inventor, and the creator of the American coin system. I started the Library of Congress, the University of Virginia, and the Democratic party. As president, I authorized the Louisiana Purchase, which doubled the size of the country.

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry a poster with a picture of a large nickel and your face on it. After speaking hold up your poster and say, "Let's move West!"

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Thomas Paine

Hello, my name is Thomas Paine. I was born in England, but wrote a pamphlet called *Common Sense*, which talked of freedom from Britain. I also wrote *The American Crisis*, which General Washington read to his troops to encourage them in their fight for independence. **(Speak the following with strong feeling)** "These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis shrink from the service of the country. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered." **(End with your fist in the air!)**

Performance Instructions: Dress as a colonial man and carry a book labeled "The American Crisis". Follow acting instructions within your speech.

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