

# The Early Years of the State House Bell

## Grade Levels: K-5

(Expected Class Sessions to Complete: 3)

### **Objectives:**

- Students will identify and list at least three uses of tower bells during colonial times.
- Students will explain the meaning of the State House Bell's inscription and create their own bell and inscription.
- Students will use a graphic organizer to categorize key events of the State House Bell's history in Pennsylvania:
- Students will understand and appreciate the economic and political decision-making processes of early colonists .

**Standards Correlation** : Refer to Standards Grid in Teacher Guide for PA and NJ State Standards:

### **Materials:**

- The Liberty Bell by Gail Sakurai
- Our Liberty Bell by Henry Jonas Magaziner
- The Liberty Bell by Mary Firestone
- A paper with the following message written on it: "Get everyone in the class to move up to the \_\_\_\_\_ (circle-time) area and wait for directions.
- toothpick
- various soft vegetables or fruit

### **Introduction (Before the Lesson):**

- Students should be familiar with Pennsylvania's early history and such terms as William Penn, colony, Quakers, Charter of Privileges, and Pennsylvania Assembly.

## **"Origins of the State House Bell"**

### **Engage/Procedure:**

Whole Class Discussion "Colonial Communication Simulation":

1. Begin the class discussion with the question: "How do people communicate today?" Give them one minute to record a brief list (phone, newspaper, TV, text message,...) and then record their responses on the board or chart. Next, discuss and circle the forms of communication that immediately transfer information. Discuss items left over. (Announcement posters, newspapers, word of mouth,...)Ask, "What makes these items different?"
2. Explain that during colonial times many modes of instant communication listed on the board were not possible. There may have been several thousand people in Philadelphia during

1750's, but it took awhile for a message to spread. Explain that you are going to simulate what communication difficulty may have been like.

3. Select a student and give him/her a message .(*See Handout 1 for example*) This student will represent a colonist. Tell the class that the student has a message to deliver to the class. This message must be delivered immediately to all the colonists as quickly as possible. Explain that the class represents the city of Philadelphia and their desks represent their homes.
4. The "colonist's" goal is to communicate his/her message and to see how quickly the message is acted upon. The "colonist" cannot do the following things:
  - a. Use his or her voice as there was no way to send a colonist's voice as a broadcast.
  - b. Cannot be seen by the everyone in the town all at once as there was no way to send an image to their homes- so students should either close their eyes or turn away so they can not see Student A.
  - c. Cannot write a poster as not everyone could read.

\*The teacher will give no longer than 5 minutes for student and the class to follow the message. (You may encourage the student to be quite creative. He/she may physically travel to each home and lead each person to the meeting area ( like a town crier traveling through town telling the news). He or she may clap and use gestures and model too!)

5. Debrief:

Ask , "What do you think early colonists did to communicate messages immediately?"

Answer: In colonial times bells were used to gather people quickly to disseminate information.

Then play a brief recording of the tolling of the bells and ask the class to imagine other uses of bell ringing. Use think-pair-share for students to list/discuss other possible uses for bells during colonial times. Finally, read a transparency of page 4 paragraph 2 of The Liberty Bell by Gail Sakurai (*Handout 2*) on the overhead and have student pairs read and see if all possibilities were discussed.

Teacher-Directed Instruction:

1. Tell students that today we are going to learn about a special bell made for Pennsylvania during colonial times.
2. Pass out handout on vocabulary terms. (*Handout 3*) Explain that these words have something to do with bells. Ask them to check off the appropriate column. Discuss their responses.

3. Show pictures of various monuments with inscriptions and define an inscription as a piece of writing or a message that is carved or engraved in a hard surface and one that is meant to last for a duration. Discuss the source of the inscriptions are often cited. [www.ace-clipart.com/patriotic-clipart-art-01.html](http://www.ace-clipart.com/patriotic-clipart-art-01.html)
4. Next create synonyms for the words “proclaim” and “inhabitants” by using sentences with context clues. Tell students that these new terms will be found in their upcoming reading.

Ex: The principal proclaimed the fifth graders the winners of the reading contest.  
The inhabitants of Pennsylvania are called Pennsylvanians.

#### Independent Student Activity:

1. Pass out pages 5 -6 of Our Liberty Bell by Henry Jonas Magaziner (*Handout 4*) to read independently. On the board or chart paper list the following questions:
  - a. What was and is the State House Bell?
  - b. Why was it created?
  - c. Why was and is it important?
2. Then have students add new information to their vocabulary handout defining and giving details about the bell. Students put their responses on sticky sheets or index cards to be taped to the board or chart paper.
3. Class discussion of responses and vocabulary handout may be used to assess student’s level of understanding.

#### Closing

Teacher discusses class’ response to the board questions and introduces extension activities that will included as an assessment.

#### Extension/Assessment:

1. Tell the class that Isaac Norris chose a quote he felt was fitting for the bell and for the celebration of the Charter of Pennsylvania’s and its 50<sup>th</sup> year. Now you want them to choose a quote that is fitting to represent not Pennsylvania, but our classroom community.
2. Teacher reviews the direction sheet as well as the provided grading rubric.
3. Distribute the Inscription Mission. (*Handout #5 and have students complete using the direction sheet provided (Handout #6).*
4. Complete this final copy on outline of bell (*Handout #7*)

## **LESSON 2 “How Do You Hide a 2,000-Pound Elephant?”**

#### Engage/Procedure:

#### Whole Class Discussion:

1. Have students make estimations about the weight of the bell, height, etc.
2. Give a series of clues about the weight of the bell and have groups revise the estimation until they arrive at the correct weight. (Please refer to resources for teachers to find the correct size and weight of the bell).

#### Teacher-directed Discussion

1. Discuss the difficulties in moving the bell. Tell the class that the new nation of America was worried about the safety of the bell after the war with England began - as colonists feared the bell would be broken down and melted and formed into a cannon. Have the class predict what the colonists did with the bell. Record predictions on the board or chart paper.
2. Then, introduce the book The Liberty Bell by Mary Firestone. Tell the students that the teacher will be reading this aloud to see if any of the predictions were correct. (Before reading aloud, be sure to tell the class that the State House Bell and the Liberty Bell are both the same bell. Tell them to also listen to when the bell changed its name and why. Tell them to record three new interesting facts from today's reading onto their graphic organizer sheet.)
3. Finally, discuss the information about how the bell was moved. Also discuss how the bell was renamed.

#### Cooperative Work:

1. Tell the students that they are going to imagine that the class represents the citizens of the new nation of America. Their goal is to hide an object that represents the State House Bell. This object will be as big and bulky as the bell except it will not be heavy. (The teacher will show a class a large empty cardboard box or a huge Pilates ball.)
2. The teacher will then put the class into teams of 4 students. These teams each will be given one destination to carry the State House Bell safely during an assigned school day. The bell may not be damaged or altered so that it can be returned to its original form.

#### EXAMPLES:

- A. Get the bell from the class to the cafeteria.
- B. Get the bell from the cafeteria to recess playground.
- C. Get the bell from class to special.

#### Closing:

- Students should record their plans that the group has agreed upon and write them in a final copy for assessment.
- Discuss the outcome of the activity and discuss how it mirrors the difficulties of hiding the State House Bell.

**Post Visit-Extension (Assessments):**

- Prior to visiting ....Ask the students to memorize the Liberty Bell's inscription and while at the Liberty Bell, students should record at least three new facts about why the Liberty Bell is seen as a symbol for freedom for people all over the world.
- After visiting the Liberty Bell:
  1. A class discussion will ensue about how the Liberty Bell Center developed the theme that the Old State House Bell truly represents liberty. List key events and people that the students recall seeing associated with the Liberty Bell.
  2. Pass out a new bell (See handout in image attachment). Have the students record the Liberty Bell's inscription on this bell. Then have them write a brief paragraph of what the inscription and the bell means to the people all over the world. The paragraph should be supported with factual information discussed in class and observed in the center.
  3. Collect and display.

Handout #1 - Message

Get everyone in the classroom to move up the \_\_\_\_\_ (circle time) area and have them wait quietly for directions from the teacher.

Handout/Overhead #2

“In the 1700s, bells were an important means of communication. Bells rang to call meetings, announce news, and signal danger, such as fire or enemy attack. Bells tolled to celebrate special occasions and to mourn the deaths of leading citizens.”

Source: Sakurai, Gail. The Liberty Bell, page 4.

### Handout #3 - Vocabulary

Name:

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#### Vocabulary: The Early Years of the State House Bell

Directions: Read each of the terms in the first column. Place a check under the appropriate column that best describes your knowledge of the word. After reading given information, you may jot down facts in the New Learning Column.

<u>Term</u>	<u>I don't know</u>	<u>I've heard of this</u>	<u>I know</u>	<u>New Learning</u>
<u>1. State House Bell</u>				
<u>2. inscription</u>				
<u>3. Isaac Norris</u>				
<u>4. proclaim</u>				
<u>5. inhabitants</u>				
<u>6. liberty</u>				

Create synonyms for the words “inscription”, “proclaim”, “inhabitants” and “liberty”, then write a sentence with these words and the synonyms.



Handout #4 Source: Magaziner, Henry Jonas. Our Liberty Bell, pages 5-6.

“It was 1753. They, the members of the Pennsylvania Assembly, must have been pleased. After waiting for more than nine months, the bell they ordered from English bell makers had finally arrived in Philadelphia.

On behalf of the Assembly, Isaac Norris, the Quaker who was its speaker, had ordered the bell in 1751. It was to be part of the fiftieth-anniversary celebration of the 1701 Charter of Privileges, which William Penn, Pennsylvania’s founder, had granted to the Pennsylvania colonists. That charter had guaranteed religious freedom, an elected assembly, and traditional English liberties. Penn, an ardent believer in such rights, had proclaimed, “The public must and will be served.” He expected a community of brotherly love to develop – tolerant, free, secure, and above all peaceful. It was those very qualities that attracted many colonists to settle in Pennsylvania, one of the thirteen British colonies of North America.

Since the bell was to celebrate the golden anniversary of the Pennsylvania charter, which pledged liberties, Norris had ordered the bell makers to put this biblical inscription on it: “Proclaim Liberty thro’ all the Land to all the inhabitants thereof. Levit. XXV 10”

Now that the bell had arrived, the assemblymen planned to hang it in the tower of the Pennsylvania State House, in Philadelphia. There it would call people together to hear town criers announce important news. No one yet had invented radio or television, so the colonists depended on the town criers for their news.”

## Inscription Mission

Words are powerful tools. Isaac Norris seemed to have the foresight to know this. His chosen quote for the Liberty Bell has been read by millions and clearly sends the message for this mighty symbol.

Your mission is to choose a quote for your bell that best completes the message to represent our class community. You may choose your quote from a variety of resources:

1. a current novel you are reading or have read in class
2. a memorable quote from a historical figure
3. a newspaper or magazine article that interviewed a community role model or local hero. However, your quote must be taken from a printed reference.

Carefully copy your quote and record it here. Then record the resource where you found this line.

My quote:

My reference:

Now you have found the perfect quote for the class community that sends a valuable message!



## Handout#6

Here are the next few steps to complete your mission:

1. Cut out the bell from the given handout.
2. Carefully record your quote in your best script and with careful spelling. Place quotation marks around the quote.
3. Next record the source of the quote.
4. On the back of the bell, write two paragraphs. In the first paragraph tell the origin of the quote and explain the original speaker's purpose in stating it. Tell the meaning of the quote to the speaker.  
In the second paragraph, tell why this quote is important to you. Give at least three ways to apply it in the classroom.
5. Be sure to follow the criteria for writing in paragraph form.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL POINTS \_\_\_\_\_ AVERAGE \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** Below Basic = 0-1.5    Basic = 1.6-2.7    Proficient = 2.8-3.4    Advanced = 3.5-4.0

Score	Quote	Presentati on	Organizati on	Conte nt	Style	Mechanic s
<b>Advanced 4</b>	The quote is accurately given and with correct use of quotation marks. The resource is correctly cited.	Follows model given in class. Work is neatly typed or written and completed in a timely manner.	Your ideas are clearly organized into appropriate paragraphing and transition words.	You present quality ideas supported with many specific facts and details.	You have a variety of sentence structure & originality in word choice with a clear voice.	You always use correct conventions with sentence form, punctuation, capitalization, usage, & spelling.
<b>Proficient 3</b>	Both the quote and citation are given. Inaccuracies may occur within one of them.	Follows model in class with some visual detractors in neatness or lay out. Work is completed in a timely manner.	Most of your ideas are organized and you use fairly appropriate paragraphing & some transition words.	You present good ideas supported with some facts and details.	You use a variety of words & sentence structure that may or may not create a writer's voice.	You mostly use correct conventions. You may have some errors in spelling core & priority words.
<b>Basic 2</b>	Both the quote and citation are given, but contain many errors. Or only one of the two parts is completely given.	The work attempts to follow the class model. Some neatness is needed to make the work more legible. The work may be turned in late.	Your ideas are poorly organized into beginning, middle and end. You do not use appropriate paragraphing or transition words.	You present weak ideas with a few facts and details.	You have limited word choice and sentence structure that inhibit voice.	You have many incomplete sentences & errors in punctuation, capitalization, & usage. You have many spelling errors.
<b>Below Basic 1</b>	One of the two parts is given and may be inaccurately	The piece is difficult to read in parts and does not follow the model. It may be late.	Your writing is not in order. You do not use paragraphs.	You present weak ideas with no support.	You have no variety in word choice & sentence	You have so many convention errors that your content is not readable.

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