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## “I Know That Tune!”

Folk Music, Traditions, Opinions, & Historical Facts



<b>Essential Question</b>	How does public opinion influence the way historic events are remembered?
<b>Educational Goal</b>	To identify the public role opinion plays in remembering historic events.
<b>New York State Learning Standards: Social Studies</b>	Standard 1 – Intermediate; Key Idea 1, Key Idea 2, & Key Idea 4 Standard 2 – Intermediate; Key Idea 1 & Key Idea 4
<b>New York State Learning Standards: The Arts</b>	Standard 3 – Intermediate 5 – 6; Performance Indicator 3d & 3f Standard 4 – Intermediate 5 – 6; Performance Indicator 4c Standard 4 – Intermediate 7 – 8; Performance Indicator 4a, 4c, & 4d

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

## Section 1 Lesson Plans

<b>Essential Question</b>	How does public opinion influence the way historic events are remembered?
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<b>New York State Learning Standards: Social Studies</b>	Standard 1 – Intermediate; Key Idea 1, Key Idea 2, & Key Idea 4 Standard 2 – Intermediate; Key Idea 1 & Key Idea 4
<b>New York State Learning Standards: The Arts</b>	Standard 3 – Intermediate 5 – 6; Performance Indicator 3d & 3f Standard 4 – Intermediate 5 – 6; Performance Indicator 4c Standard 4 – Intermediate 7 – 8; Performance Indicator 4a, 4c, & 4d
<b>Behavioral Objectives</b>	<b>At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze &amp; Interpret three songs used during the American Revolution.</li> <li>2. Compare and contrast opinions and memories of the American Revolution.</li> <li>3. Recognize how opinion and historic events influenced popular Revolutionary era song lyrics.</li> </ol>
<b>Prerequisites</b>	Introduction to the American Revolution and/or British Colonial History
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Folk Music: noun</b> 1. Music, usually of simple character and anonymous authorship, handed down among the common people by oral tradition.  <b>Tradition: noun</b> 1. The handing down of statements, beliefs, legends, customs, information, etc., from generation to generation, especially by <u>word</u> of mouth or by practice: <i>a story that has come down to us by popular tradition.</i>
<b>Materials</b>	Students: Pen/Pencil & Paper; Copies of song lyrics
<b>Intro./Anticipatory</b> <b>Time: 5 – 10 minutes</b> <i>Common Core Goals:</i> Gr 5 ELA-Literacy.RI.5.6 & RI.5.9 Gr 6 ELA-Literacy.RI.6.6 & RI.6.9 Gr 7 ELA-Literacy.RI.7.6 Gr 8 ELA-Literacy.RI.8.6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. As class begins, teacher plays one of the sample songs for the students.</li> <li>2. Class discusses what they thought the song’s message was and how it makes them feel. Students take turns sharing their thoughts.</li> <li>3. Using the students’ answers to previous question, teacher discusses the role of tradition in culture and society, including as a way to record events.</li> <li>4. Teacher introduces role of public opinion in recording events. Examples may be useful, i.e. recalling an event to a friend that changes the story. Ask how many people have experienced this and give an example.</li> </ol>
<b>Development</b> <b>Time: 20 – 30 minutes</b> <i>Common Core Goals:</i> ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4 ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Class is divided into groups of 4 to 5, and groups are given remaining song samples (i.e. the songs not used by teacher for example). One set of sample song lyrics to each group. Groups read through different song lyrics and versions.</li> <li>2. Students answer discussion questions on lyrics sheets (answers will vary).</li> </ol>
<b>Closure</b> <b>Time: 20 minutes</b> <i>Common Core Goals:</i> ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1 ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Student groups present answers to rest of class.</li> <li>2. After each presentation, whole class is invited to present alternate answers.</li> <li>3. Class answers questions: “Do you think the lyrics were effective in influencing their intended audience?” &amp; “Why or why not?” <i>This question can be posed as an informal vote to illustrate how the song lyrics influenced personal opinions in the class vs. past audiences.</i></li> </ol>
<b>Continued Learning Activity</b> <i>Common Core Goals:</i> Gr 5 ELA-Literacy.SL.5.6 Gr 6 ELA-Literacy.SL.6.6 Gr 7 ELA-Literacy.SL.7.6 Gr 8 ELA-Literacy.SL.8.6	As a follow-up project, or homework assignment, have students re-write the lyrics to one of the sample songs, or the lyrics to a current popular song, to reflect their opinions on a current local/national affair, political debate, or issue that they feel strongly about. <b>OR</b> Students will research examples of modern opinion (e.g. the 60s protest era) in music and compare them to a song from the sample activity.  Have students present their songs or research in groups during next class period.

## **Section 1**

### **Sample Song A**

#### “God Save the King” Song History:

Even though this song is the national anthem of Great Britain its exact origins are unknown. The most popular belief is that it came from a song or dance melody of the 15 or 1600s. The earliest printed version of the tune is from a 1744 music thesaurus. It became very popular the following year in England and Scotland and was reprinted in the popular “*Gentleman’s Magazine*.” Over the years, new lyrics have been added or taken away depending on historic events, the king/queen on the throne at the time, etc. While it has been a popular tune from 1745 on, when it actually came to be considered as the de facto national anthem of England is also unknown.

In the United States the tune is still very popular as well, but it is known as “My Country, ‘Tis of Thee.”

#### “God Save the 13 States” Song History:

There are over ten verses to this song recorded from the start of the American Revolution to the end. Verses were added and taken away as the war continued. The author(s) of these lyrics remains anonymous. Then, the lyrics to this song were sung to the tune of “God Save the King.”

#### “God Save Great Washington” Song History:

Various versions of this song had been sung throughout the American Revolution. As George Washington’s inaugural celebrations took place in 1790, Congressman Elias Boudinot recorded many different people singing it for the new president as his party toured New York City.

## **Section 1**

### **Sample Song B**

#### “Brighton Camp” Song History:

This song, also known as “The Girl I Left behind Me,” was a popular tune in England during the 1740s. A period of colonial war against the French sent soldiers far and wide to fend off their attacks, and left them lonely for the ones they loved. It remained popular through the French and Indian War as well as the American Revolution. In America, it was played on fife and drum while the soldiers marched across the country to defeat the British.

#### “The Fate of John Burgoyne” Song History:

As the American Revolution continued, New York State became the center of a British campaign to divide the colonies along its waterways. A force of nearly 10,000 was led by British General John Burgoyne down through the Champlain Valley to the Hudson River. Burgoyne’s forces captured Fort Ticonderoga and continued their march, hoping to make it to Albany to engage with the Continentals there. When news of the capture made its way back to England, King George stated his opinion that the war was soon-to-be over. Burgoyne’s army marched towards Saratoga Springs and engaged in combat with American Gen. Horatio Gates’ forces. The British commander, finding himself outnumbered, surrounded, and unable to retreat, surrendered on October 17, 1777. This surrender at Saratoga became a turning point of the American Revolutionary War. It was immortalized in newspapers and journals, and recorded in a song known as “The Fate of John Burgoyne.”

#### Extra! Civil War History:

As the United States entered into the American Civil War in the 1860s, both sides drew upon the popularity of this song, and verses were written to reflect sentiments on both sides. As a familiar and popular tune, it was easy to teach people the new lyrics and pass on propaganda associated with the war.

## Section 1

### Sample Song C

#### "The Liberty Song" 1768 Song History:

This tune can be considered the first "American" patriotic song published in the 13 Colonies. It was composed in 1768, by Pennsylvanian John Dickinson, who later served in the Continental Congress. It was written in direct protest to the taxes that England was trying to force on her American colonies. Understanding the ability music had to stir emotions and convey ideas, Dickinson wrote to a friend: *"I inclose you a song for American freedom. . . songs are frequently very powerful on certain occasions."* However, the song does not call for American independence, but for England to recognize the fact the colonists expected to have the same rights given to people living in England. The song was sung to a well-known British naval song "Hearts of Oak" and its popularity swept through the colonies. It also started a "song war," as colonists loyal to England wrote a parody of the "Liberty Song" ridiculing the patriotic colonists. This song was simply called "The Parody." These "song wars" were a popular 18<sup>th</sup> century form of political propaganda, and were similar in nature to the smear campaigns carried out by rival political candidates today in their television ads and public debates.

Despite the continuing popularity of many American Revolutionary War era songs in folk music today, (like "Yankee Doodle") "The Liberty Song" is largely unknown to most of the American public. The original tune "Hearts of Oak" is now the official march of England's Royal Navy.

## Section 1

### Sample Song D

#### “Yankee Doodle” Song History:

Because “Yankee Doodle” is such a popular folk song in the United States, one might think that we would know exactly where it came from. However, so many versions of it have been written from the 1750s to modern times that it is impossible to say for certain where the original song came from. What follows is one of the most popular stories about where the song originated.

During the French and Indian War, men from the 13 Colonies were helping England to fight the French. Many times these Colonial American troops were not very well trained and didn’t always have nice uniforms and equipment. Because of this, the well trained and uniformed British soldiers often made fun of the colonial troops; particularly the ones from New England, who many referred to as “Yankees.” It’s said that a British surgeon Dr. Richard Schuckburg watched some of the New England troops marching through Albany to join the British troops there. Dr. Schuckburg was so amused by the appearance and lack of discipline which these soldiers showed that he wrote a song to make fun of the New England soldiers. He took a popular Dutch tune (Albany was originally settled by the Dutch), and put his words to this tune, and thus “Yankee Doodle” was born. “Yankee” referred to the New England troops (and eventually all Colonial American soldiers); while “Doodle” was another name for a silly person.

The verses included here are the earliest published version of the old British “Yankee Doodle,” which was published in England shortly after the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, and renamed “The Lexington March.” It refers to some of the fighting during the French and Indian War, the supposed cowardice and foolishness of the Colonial American troops fighting the French, and some of the New England customs that the British found comical. One hundred-ninety (190) different versions of song are said to exist!

#### “The Yankees Return to Camp” Song History:

As the Revolutionary War got under way, the Americans eventually stole the song away from the British and made it their own. In an ironic twist of fate, this British song meant to ridicule the Americans was played by the Continental Army as the British Army surrendered to the Americans at Yorktown in 1781.

The early American version of Yankee Doodle included verses about an American farmer and his son visiting the Continental Army surrounding the British in Boston after the battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775.

# "I Know That Tune!"

## Teacher's Reference Sheet for Discussion Questions

1. What events or occurrences were these lyrics written to commemorate? *Answers may include:*

**Song A:** *The coronation of a king, the creation of the United States, or George Washington becoming president, etc.*

**Song B:** *People leaving home to fight in a war, the defeat of John Burgoyne/Battle of Saratoga, soldiers fighting in the Civil War, etc.*

**Song C:** *The tax acts imposed on the 13 Colonies, the various "tea parties" the colonists held, or the resolutions signed to those opposed to the tax acts, etc.*

**Song D:** *The French and Indian War or the colonists' participation in that war, the outbreak of the American Revolution, the Siege of Boston, etc.*

2. Comparing lyrics, who (i.e. a woman or man, loyalist or patriot, soldier or civilian) do you think wrote these songs and why? What was their opinion of the events? What tells you this? *Answers may include:*

**Song A:** *A loyalist or a Tory who enjoyed rule by a king, a patriot fighting in the revolution, a person watching the inauguration of George Washington, etc.*

**Song B:** *A soldier leaving to fight in a war who missed his girlfriend, a person who heard news of John Burgoyne's defeat and wanted to spread the word, soldiers who disagreed with the opposing side and wanted to make them look bad, etc.*

**Song C:** *A person who did not like the tax acts to make their opinion known, a loyalist or Tory who felt the rebellion and those participating were silly, etc.*

**Song D:** *A British soldier who thought the American troops did not fight well, etc.*

3. What message do you think the lyricists were trying to send when they wrote these words and who do you think their intended audience was? What tells you this? *Answers may include:*

**Song A:** *We remain loyal to the king of England and are opposed to the American Rebellion because the lyrics discuss the king's long reign, I support and remember all those who fought for independence or George Washington as our leader because the lyrics mention independence, etc.*

**Song B:** *They will continue to fight but wish to return home soon because the lyrics discuss returning safely, they wish for the defeat of the British military because the lyrics discuss the hope for all the American commanders to force British surrenders, they will fight against their enemy for the good of their nation because the lyrics discuss answering the "country's call," etc.*

**Song C:** *Support the American cause of independence by giving your money to the cause because of the chorus, the American supporters are silly and traitors who are wasting their time because of the word "dishonor," etc.*

**Song D:** *It would be easy to defeat the Americans because their armies are disorganized, etc.*

4. What do you think the lyricists wanted their audience feel when they heard these words?  
*Answers will vary.*

5. What do you feel when you hear or sing the song? Are your feelings different now that you know the meaning? If so, how?  
*Answers will vary.*

6. All versions of the song lyrics you have read were sung to the same tune.

Why do you think the different lyricists chose the same tune to convey their message?

*Answers may include:* *Because it was easy to teach/learn if many people knew the original, because changing the words would be an insult to the people who originally wrote and/or sang it, because it was already popular and they hoped the new version of the song would be popular as well, etc.*

7. Which versions of these songs do we sing today? Why do you think only certain versions or lyrics of these songs are remembered today?  
*Answers will vary.*