

Topic #4 Overview

Main Themes:

1. How the thirteen American colonies were able to win their independence from one of the most powerful nations on earth.
2. How the American Revolution was not only a war for independence, but also a struggle to determine the nature of the nation being created.
3. How Americans attempted to apply revolutionary ideology to the building of the nation and to the remaking of society.
4. How Americans dealt with the problems that remained after or were created by the American Revolution.
5. That the American Revolution was the first and in many ways the most influential of the Enlightenment-derived uprisings against established orders.

Objectives: [You should be able to explain each of these in some detail]

1. The historical debate concerning the nature of the American Revolution and the reasons for disagreement.
2. American war aims and the problems experienced by the revolutionary governments in carrying on a protracted war.
3. The aim of the Declaration of Independence, the reasons for its issuance, and its influence throughout the world since 1776.
4. The indispensable contributions of George Washington to the successful outcome of the Revolution.
5. The diplomatic triumph for American negotiators embodied in the Treaty of Paris.
6. The impact of the Revolution on women, African Americans, Native Americans, and other minorities.
7. The type of governments created by the new states, and the important features in their governments.
8. The features of the Articles of Confederation, and the reasons for its creation.
9. The problems faced by the government under the Articles of Confederation and how they were addressed.
10. How the ways in which property boundaries were established influenced the way early American societies developed.
11. How America's revolution and the whole modern notion of revolution, was to a large degree a product of the ideas of the Enlightenment.