

Grades: 9-12

Future of America's Past, "The Revolutions"

In THE FUTURE OF AMERICA'S PAST, notable scholar Ed Ayers takes viewers to the sites of complex and evocative chapters in American history. Throughout the series, Ayers meets with public historians working to preserve the past, from National Park Service rangers to curators and community activists. He visits the sites - both familiar and unknown - of monumental events, and brings on guests who offer a range of perspectives.

What does "freedom" mean to those outside the halls of power — and what did it mean during the era of the American Revolution? Host Ed Ayers visits sites in Boston and Philadelphia to put that question to curators, museum educators, a playwright, and a tribal preservation officer. He learns about the ways in which women, Native Americans, and African Americans made the words of the Revolution come true in their own lives. He discovers that some of the most inspiring stories of the Revolution spring from people who remained on its margins.

After watching this episode, choose from the following questions and/or tasks to extend your learning

Question Box 1

- What is the central message in this program? Explain?
- What are the program's supporting claims or reasons that support the central message?
- What is Ed Ayers trying to say through the TV program? What makes you believe this?
- What evidence does Ed Ayers give to support his central idea?
- What is this program "saying"? Cite several pieces of evidence to support your analysis.
- What does "freedom" mean to those outside the halls of power?
- What does "freedom" mean for those living during the era of the American Revolution?
- Describe the ways in which women, Native Americans, and African Americans made the words of the Revolution come true in their own lives?
- Who were in the "margins" of the Revolutionary War? Or other important events in history?
- Many in this episode tell stories of the past during the times of the Revolutionary War, which story that you heard inspired you? Tell why?
- Compare and contrast the ways in which the curators, museum educators, a playwright, and a tribal preservation officer describe the Revolutionary War.

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Question Box 2

- What about Future of America's Past "The Revolutions" stood out to you?
- What did you find most interesting and why?
- How much did you know about the subject before we started?
- How do you feel about this program? Why?
- What does the word "revolution" mean to you and why? Have you seen a "revolution" in your life? What was it? How did it affect the lives of others?

Box 3 (Tasks)

- Research each of the 13 colonies. Why was each colony founded? How do these very different founding stories create different ideologies about freedom?
- The Native American's played a role in the Revolution. What was the role of the Native Americans in the revolution?

Box 4 (Enrichment)

- Abigail Adam's wrote her husband to "Remember the ladies" in this new America. The idea of freedom at the eve of the American Revolution held different notions to different groups. Pick three different groups of people. Discuss how revolutionary the war was for those people
- Look up Belinda's memoir. What was Belinda's story? Why is she not in your history books?
- Some would argue that after almost 250 years we have not realized the dream that all men are created equal. In what ways is this country not equal for all people? What will you do to correct these injustices?

Box 5 (Extend/Real-Life)

- The host of the show interviews a playwright. What exactly is a playwright and how do you become one?
- Learn about the career of a curator at this link: <https://www.cacareerzone.org/profile/27-3043.05>
- Answer the following questions:
 1. What does a playwright do?
 2. Where do playwrights work?
 3. How much education does it require?
 4. How much does the average playwright earn annually?
 5. What skills and abilities are needed to be a playwright?
 6. Select one occupation from the similar list. What occupation did you pick?
 7. Click on that occupation and compare its information to that of the playwright.
 8. Of the two occupations which would you be most interested in and why?

