

# PATRIOT WAR

## Primary Learning Outcomes

To teach the students about one of the most forgotten events in American history: the Patriot War. The lesson plan presents a brief summary of the war, discusses the causes of the war, and examines the impact that the war had on American history. The supplemental reading supplies a more detailed account of the war.

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## Assessed Standards

**Grade:** 8

### Social Studies

**Standard:** The student will explain significant factors that affected the development of Georgia as part of the growth of the United States between 1789 and 1840.

**Indicator:** Evaluate the impact of land policies pursued by Georgia.

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## Procedures and Activities

Step: 1 Duration: 20 minutes

**Introduce students to the Patriot War using the attached background information and classroom reading.**

### Attachments for Step 1

**Background Information:** Introduction to the Patriot War

**Classroom Reading:** Patriot War

Step:2 Duration: 25 minutes

Explain and discuss the causes of the Patriot War. The attachments contain several thought provoking questions for classroom discussion.

### Attachments for Step 2

**Background Information:** Causes of the Patriot War

Step: 3 Duration: 25 minutes

**Explain and discuss the long term impact of the Patriot War. What did it mean for America's future?**

**Attachments for Step 3**

**Background Information:** Results and Impacts of the Patriot War

Step: 4 Duration: 20 minutes

**Pass out copies of the Patriot War puzzle. Allow students to work alone or in groups.**

**Attachments for Step 4**

**Puzzle**

**Puzzle Answer Sheet**

Step: 5 Duration: 10 minutes

**Pass out copies of the Patriot War Quiz.**

**Attachments for Step 5**

**Quiz**

**Quiz Answer Sheet**

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**Materials and Equipment**

Background information, reading, puzzle, quiz

**Total Duration**

1 hour, 40 minutes

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**Assessment**

Students will be assessed on their participation in the classroom activities and discussion. Their quizzes will be evaluated for accuracy.

## **Attachments for Step 1**

### Introduction to the Patriot War

The Patriot War was fought from 1812 to 1814. In 1812 Spain owned Florida. The war was a fight between American settlers living in Georgia and Spanish Florida. It was called an undeclared war because the United States never actually declared war on Spain and no real American military forces were used during the fight.

The United States wanted to take Florida from Spain. In 1811, the U.S. President James Madison secretly appointed the southern General George Matthews to lead an attack on Spanish Florida. Matthews recruited local Georgians as soldiers. He promised them glory and land in Florida in exchange for fighting. These semi-soldiers called themselves the "Patriots."

The invasion started on March 17, 1812, when the Patriots and a few Navy gunboats attacked and captured Fernandina and Amelia Island. Then they moved on to St. Augustine, Florida in the hopes of pushing the Spanish out of Florida. The Spanish were heavily armed and the Patriots could not defeat them. President Madison started receiving complaints about the Patriots burning and looting local farms. The American public and the Spanish government wanted the Patriots stopped. In response, Madison ordered Matthews to leave Florida and go back to Georgia.

The Patriot army did not break up for two more years. After losing the President's support, the Patriot army started raiding plantations, attacking American Indian groups, capturing runaway slaves, and attacking small Spanish settlements throughout Florida. The army finally broke up in 1814 due to hunger, lack of supplies, and the loss of too many soldiers during Indian attacks.

**Reading:** Patriot War

## Attachments for Step 2

### Causes of the Patriot War

*What do you think caused the Patriot War?*

*Why would the President appoint a secret attack?*

*Why would American citizens band together and attack Spain?*

*Why would they keep attacking even after the President told them to stop?*

Hold discussion on these questions, reminding the students that the world was a very different place in 1812 and the United States was not made up of 50 states.

There were three major causes of the Patriot War.

1. American Expansion
2. Racial Tensions
3. Southern War Fever

#### 1. American Expansion

In the early 1800s there was a belief that the United States was preordained to control the entire continent of North America. Americans thought that it was their destiny to own both Florida and Canada.

Since most Americans believed Florida already belonged to them, that didn't feel like they needed to negotiate with Spain to buy Florida. They could just settle in Florida and drive the Spanish out with force.

#### 2. Racial Tensions

During the 1800s the American South had a plantation economy. This economy was based on slave labor, and owning slaves was very important to southerners. Since Florida belonged to Spain, it was technically a different country. Many slaves would run away from their owners and cross the Florida border. Florida became a safe zone for runaway slaves and free blacks. Sometimes these slaves would join American Indians tribes or establish small towns made up of ex-slaves.

The Spanish would allow these ex-slaves to join their military. They would train them to fight and give them weapons. Southerners were afraid that the runaway slaves in Florida would rebel and attack southern plantations. Many southern slave owners wanted their slaves back and would plan secret attacks on Florida to try and recover them. If Florida became part of the United States then it would become a slave state, a place where owning slaves was legal. Plantation owners could get their slaves back and runaways would have no safe place to go.

#### 3. Southern War Fever

In the 1800s many southerners wanted more land to build plantations and grow cotton and rice. Taking Florida from Spain would grant this wish. Many southern Senators and Congressmen viewed the south as largely independent from the central government. Southern Governors would often build their own armies or militias. These men wanted to go to war with Spain for Florida. When Congress would meet, they would argue for war, which earned them the nickname "Warhawks."

## Attachments for Step 3

### Results and Impacts of the Patriot War

Even though the Patriot War was a small event, it had several areas of long-lasting impact on American history. There are four primary areas of impact:

1. The United States gained new territory.
2. It signaled the decline of Spain as a world power.
3. It showed that the United States was increasing in power.
4. It was an early example of Southern independence.

#### 1. The United States Gained New Territory

Even though the United States did not win the war, the Patriot raids and attacks caused a lot of damage in Florida. The small Spanish army had poor supplies and could not handle the constant raids by Patriots and attacks by American Indians. The Spanish left Florida in 1819 and Florida became part of the United States in 1821.

#### 2. It Signaled the Decline of Spain as a World Power

Before the 1800's Spain was one of the most powerful countries in the world. However, the Spanish government soon became corrupt and their military became weak. The Napoleonic Wars reached Spain and the country was in crisis. Spain did not have the money to support colonies in Florida. As a result, the Florida colonies were poorly supplied and could not hold out against Patriot attacks. The loss of a small colony like Florida signified the loss of power for Spain.

#### 3. It Showed that the United States was Increasing in Power

Before the 1800s, the United States was a new country and was not strong. It relied on negotiations and buying new land from other countries to gain territory. The attack on Florida during the Patriot War shows that the United States was growing more confident. The Patriot War marked the beginning of a new phase in American history called Manifest Destiny. During this phase, the United States would rely more on military power and force than diplomatic negotiations.

#### 4. It was an Early Example of Southern Independence

After President Madison withdrew support from the Patriot Army, they continued the fight. The fight was led and supported mainly by rich Georgians. This was not unusual at the time. During the War of 1812, much of the fighting that occurred in the south was directed by southern Governors and local Generals who built their own militias. These groups operated semi-independently from the U.S. Government. Southerners grew accustomed to this type of independence and developed a strong sense of southern nationality. The southern independence displayed during the Patriot War foreshadowed the fight for southern independence during the Civil War.

## **Attachments for Step 4**

### **Puzzle**

Begin at the first ship labeled START. Take the last letter of this word (T) and find a word in the same column or row (up and down or straight across) to which the letter T can be added to form a new word.

For example, you may add T to WINE, which forms the word TWINE. Only one route will get you to the end. Check off each ship as you come to it.

Once you've reached the final ship (marked LATE), there will be 7 unmarked ships remaining. Rearrange the first letter of these 7 ships to form Clue #5. Hint: The word means one who loves and defends his or her own country.

### **Puzzle Answer Sheet**

## **Attachments for Step 5**

### **Quiz**

Quiz includes four types of questions:

Multiple Choice

True/False

Short Answer/Fill in the Blank

Short Essay

### **Quiz Answer Sheet**