Five criteria may help in selecting resources that will make the Bicentennial celebrations more meaningful and authentic—whether for children, young people, teachers, or other citizens!

"Yankee Doodle keep it up, Yankee Doodle dandy,
Mind the music and the step and with the girls be handy!"

THE children, singing lustily, keeping time with hands and feet, paused breathlessly after ten or a dozen stanzas. At that moment the teacher asked, "Where do you think this song came from? Who was singing it? What was going on?" The pupils speculated and hypothesized; they asked questions of their own. Then they went searching for folksongs and ballads to find out more about the feelings, motivations, and actions that would explain Yankee Doodle and his compatriots.


These children were celebrating the Bicentennial in a very meaningful way—finding out what was important to people, what they valued, and what they did about these feelings. The Bicentennial celebration in the United States offers unprecedented opportunities for educators to encourage inquiry.
and valuing processes that will reveal the true story of America's beginnings. Celebrations in the school will be surface evidence of interest and enthusiasm, but far more significant will be the outcomes in values and action. The curriculum materials that are called into service will play an important role in determining the nature of the birthday observances. What criteria may make the selection of resources for these purposes more discriminating?

Does the resource bring to life persons, events, or periods?

Is it an authentic source of data, accurate and objective?

Is it made available by persons with genuine interest in educational objectives?

Does it lend itself to a variety of inquiries and experiences?

Does it supplement and complement resources already in the school?

If these criteria are operable, then Bicentennial celebrations and study are more likely to be worthy of their high purposes, more likely to enrich the past and encourage valuing and inquiry.

**Did It Really Happen?**

Such criteria may have been in the mind of the teacher who shared with pupils a beautifully illustrated edition of Longfellow's poem about Paul Revere's famous ride (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1963). The children enjoyed the poem's rhythm and its exciting story; then they were confounded by a question: "Did it really happen just the way the poet said it did?"

To discover the answer to that question the children turned first to some primary sources, *Paul Revere's Three Accounts of His Famous Ride* (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1968) and an audiocassette from their library, *Paul Revere's Ride and His Own Story* (Springfield, Virginia: Children's Classics on Tape). They analyzed, compared, and evaluated. Soon they were asking, "Why did he do it?" A variety of secondary sources helped them to draw some conclusions: *America's Paul Revere* by Esther Forbes (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946); *Young Paul Revere's Boston* by Sam and Beryl Epstein (Champaign, Illinois: Garrard Publishing Company, 1966); *And Then What Happened, Paul Revere?* by Jean Fritz (New York: Coward-McCann and Geoghegan, 1973); and the delightful tale told by Paul's horse, Scheherazade, in *Mr. Revere and I* by Robert Lawson (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953). From this point on, these pupils were not likely to be satisfied with a single source of data.

**Is It Authentic?**

During the Bicentennial months, the Declaration of Independence will be the focus of much attention. Young people may be surprised when the teacher inquires, "Do you think the document looked just like the facsimile we have here when Jefferson first wrote it? Do you think the committee that helped him always agreed on the wording? Did everyone in the Continental Congress like it, want the same things, believe in the same ideas? What really went on behind those closed doors in July 1776?" These and other inquiries intrigue children. They relive exciting hours in *Four Days in July* by Cornel Lengyel (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1958); older students like *A Time for Courage: The Story of the Declaration of Independence* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1971) and explore the original documents and letters in *Four Days in Philadelphia 1776* by Mary K. Phelan (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1967). Those who have seen *1776: A New Musical* are encouraged to raise questions about the way in which events were fictionalized and to compare the treatment with the educational film, *The Declaration of Independence* (West Hollywood: Handel Film Corporation) or with the filmstrip, *Declaration of Independence: June, 1776-January, 1777* (Kansas City: RMI Educational Films, Inc.) or with the recorded dramatization of the historic meeting of the Continental Congress, *Philadelphia, July 4, 1776* (New York: Columbia Records)—excellent opportunities to compare data sources.
Are the People Genuine?


A wide range of biography presented in sight and sound encourages further comparison of data sources; for example, on film—Caesar Rodney (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica Films); George Washington: The Courage That Made a Nation (West Hollywood, California: Handel Film Corporation); on filmstrip—Famous Patriots of the American Revolution (Kansas City: RMI Educational Films, Inc.); Benjamin Franklin: Symbol of the American Revolution (New York: Guidance Associates); on tapes—Women in United States History (Lakeland, Florida: Learning Resources Company); and on record—Blacks in the American Revolutionary War (New York: Folkways Records).


What Was Living Like?

When pupils seek to know what it was like to live in the days of the Revolution, general references like The American Heritage History of the Thirteen Colonies (New York: American Heritage Publishing Company, 1967); The American Heritage Book of the Revolution (New York: American Heritage Publishing Company, 1958); and We Americans (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1975) are just the thing. Uncertain Glory: Folklore and the American Revolution by Tristram P. Coffin (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1971) and The Art...


The criteria suggested earlier will be helpful in the selection of materials, and preview privileges should be exercised as freely as possible. If resources are being secured with a view to encouraging inquiry and valuing, it is important to cluster sources
of data around questions children and youth are likely to identify. For example, one group of children who became acquainted with the *Picture Book of the Continental Soldier* by C. Keith Wilbur (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1969) were so intrigued by its detailed sketches that they decided to investigate the soldier’s life through other sources. In *The Story of the Continental Army 1775-1783* by Lynn Montross (Boston: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1967) and in the films, *Soldier of the Revolution* (Los Angeles: Churchill Films) and *Valley Forge: No Food, No Soldier* (New York: New York Times) they found the data they were seeking: What were the soldiers fighting for? What was important to them? How did they feel about what they were doing?

**The Flag; the Historic Sites**

Another group developed a high interest in the origins of the flag. Two basic references provided answers to most of their questions: *The Stars and Stripes* by Boleslaw and Marie D’Ortrand Mastai (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1973) and *Flags of the United States* by David Eggenberger (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1964). Around these two there was available a cluster of supportive resources: four color sound filmstrips, *The American Flag in Music, Word, and Deed* (Holyoke, Massachusetts: Scott Education Division); a multimedia program, *So Proudly We Hailed* (Niles, Illinois: Knowledge Aid Filmstrip House); and a juvenile book of episodes about flags Americans have lived and died for, *Your Flag and Mine* by Alice Curtis Desmond (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960). Unless pupils have access to multiple resources centered on the questions they wish to investigate, their efforts will be fruitless and frustrating.

Among the most significant sources of primary data are the historic sites to which pupils have access. While not all young people live in close proximity to places important in the Revolution, every community has beginnings to explore. Pupils and teachers inquire, “What was going on in our part of the country during the fight for freedom? Was our community here then? How did our town begin? How near are we to a place which was important in the war?” Field trips are exciting sources of data. Where will pupils go? In this Bicentennial period these resources are indispensable: *1776, National Park Service Guide to the Historic Places of the American Revolution* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1974); *America’s Historyland: Touring Our Landmarks of Liberty* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic Society, 1967); *The American Heritage Book of Great Historic Places* (New York: American Heritage Publishing Company, 1957); and *Landmarks of the American Revolution* by Mark Mayo Boatner (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1973). *Bicentennial City: Walking Tours of Historic Philadelphia* by John Frances Marion (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1974) will be invaluable to the thousands who visit the birthplace of liberty. The stay-at-homes will find the new film, *City Out of the Wilderness: Washington* (Wilmette, Illinois: Films Incorporated) a notable contribution to the Bicentennial. Detailed information about special celebrations at historic sites across the nation is available from the American Bicentennial Administration, Washington, D.C.

**Journals, Games, and Other Resources**

Educators and students will find many resources among current journals and newspapers and on radio and television. An outstanding example from the press is the Special 1776 Issue of *Time*, written as it might have appeared during the week when the Declaration of Independence was signed; this well-researched commemorative edition has all sorts of leads to further inquiry and investigation. Another excellent contribution is the series of *Great Moments in United States History* appearing from time to time in *Reader’s Digest*. Professional journals are making their participation felt through special issues such as the February 1974 issue of *Social Education*—“Teaching About the American Revolution.” *These Historic Min-
utes, brief accounts of events exactly 200 years ago and presented almost daily via television, are great curiosity-arousers. The Today programs honoring each of the 50 states, appearing on television every Friday morning until July 1976, are also excellent opportunities to gather data about America in this special year. The American Issues Forum, developed by the National Endowment for the Humanities with the cosponsorship of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, is a broad program to encourage discussion of fundamental issues on a nationwide basis through television, radio, and in the press. These many opportunities may be used to stimulate inquiry and valuing and to provide data for which children and youth may be searching.

Some new games, constructed especially to celebrate the Bicentennial, are becoming available. Designed to teach the facts of the Revolution, The Bicentennial Games, "Boston—Birth of a Nation," "The Years of Crisis," and "Winning a War" (Chicago: Coach House Game Sales and Promotions, Inc.) make up a set boxed together, attractive in format, and educational in intent; others are coming from the same publisher. The American Bicentennial Historical Playing Card Deck (New York: U.S. Games Systems, Inc.) features famous Americans from four historical periods with directions for playing a number of early American card games and a booklet of biographies. The deck itself can be used to encourage the invention of new games, perhaps emphasizing historical data more than do the directions included in the packet.

As the Bicentennial celebration gains momentum and as young people become more involved in their country's history, they are sure to ask, "What can we do to celebrate?" Children and youth who have followed their inquiries to successful resolution are well prepared to share with others, to help friends and family know what has been discovered, and to make their own plans. These celebrations will be among the most significant for they will be original and based on the pupils' own understanding and accomplishments.

For groups who seek outside assistance in their planning, there are many possibilities. Local and state commissions will respond quite readily to requests for help. State departments of education are likely sources of ideas. The Virginia State Department of Education, for example, has published a booklet of more than 50 worthwhile community and school commemorative activities. The Indiana State Department of Public Instruction has developed an elaborate inquiry based study of George Rogers Clark, hero of the Old Northwest. There are also several publications designed to assist community groups in planning such as Bicentennial USA: Pathways to Celebration by Robert G. Hartje (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1973), which uses successful centennial celebrations as case studies; How To Plan and Conduct a Bicentennial Celebration by Adele Nathan (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Stackpole Books, 1971); and America's Birthday by the Peoples Bicentennial Commission (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1974).

It would be impossible in this description of curriculum materials for the Bicentennial to include all the resources, old and new, that are currently available or on the way or that can be found by inquiring teachers and pupils. Once under way, the search will extend far beyond the walls of the school, involving school patrons and other community persons in the treasure hunt for original documents, artifacts, and historic sites, perhaps long forgotten. One Indiana community, for example, is cooperating with the local chapter of the Association for Childhood Education International in the restoration of old Honey Creek School, celebrating the Bicentennial by providing a learning laboratory in which children may discover their educational and pioneer heritage and explore their native environment. The Bicentennial can lead other schools, and their communities, to equally creative activities, their effort motivated by their investigation of the past, their understanding of the values on which the nation was built, and their desire to keep the celebration alive for years to come.
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