



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative

2014 Volume I: Understanding History and Society through Images, 1776-1914

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## **Perspectives on Life during the Revolutionary War through the Lens of Art and Literature**

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This unit was designed for eighth grade reading and language arts students in the Pittsburgh Public schools. The unit is designed to be taught as a four week instructional period in ninety minute block periods.

This unit focuses on using art as a primary source along with historical fiction depicting the Revolutionary War period. The art and literature will serve as a catalyst for discussion about race, class, and gender during the war. Students will examine works of art and compare them with the historical fiction novel *Forge* by Laurie Halse Anderson. The objective is to judge the validity of the information and determine the historical accuracy by comparing art and literature. Students will also develop significant insights to write from the perspectives of figures of different races, classes and genders depicted in works of art. Culminating this unit students will write an argument essay about whether those ideals are still relevant today and whether or not they have served as a basis for today's society.

Students will engage in rich meaningful discussions, higher level questioning, and the writing process. Inquiry Based Learning is incorporated throughout the unit. Students will be challenged to analyze, interpret, make inferences and draw conclusions. The unit is also designed to be cross curricular for reading, language arts, social studies and art history.

(Developed for Communications 8/English Language Arts, grade 8; recommended for Reading, Social Studies, Art History, and Language Arts, grade 8)

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