Lesson: The Philadelphia Gazette

Objectives:

Students will identify various perspectives in regards to the events that led the Revolutionary War.

Students will examine and study examples of *The Philadelphia Gazette*, and garner a sense of colonial life and communication.

Using the format and style of *The Philadelphia Gazette*, students will create their own colonial newspaper, with special emphasis put on a persuasive piece written in response to one of the events that led to the Revolutionary War or a specific act of colonial rebellion.

Procedure

Using the Internet, students will research and examine various copies of The Philadelphia Gazette, published by Ben Franklin. One resource can be found at [http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/past/past.html](http://www.earlyamerica.com/earlyamerica/past/past.html)

Students need to generate a list of possibilities for “their” colonial newspaper. Some of these may include editorials, want ads, for sale ads, notices of public interest, etc.

Students select an event that led to the Revolutionary War or an act of colonial rebellion. Students then create an editorial in response to that event. It will help students to develop an editorial voice if they use biased language. They need to adopt either a British or Patriot voice in their editorial. In the true fashion of Ben Franklin, they will create a pen name to use in signing their letter.
The following elements must be included in the content of the paper

- a name of the newspaper
- an editorial responding to a colonial event including
  - a headline or title
  - a summary of the event
  - a statement of criticism or support followed by the reasoning
  - a section, which acknowledges the opposing points of view explaining the flaws in this reasoning

- a want ad, a for sale ad, and a public notice

**Evaluation/debrief**

Student work will be assessed on completion and inclusion of the mentioned elements. The basic tenets of the event should be historically plausible if not correct. Students may enjoy sharing their work using a soap box format (have kids stand on a soapbox proclaiming their point or view...those in agreement shout “hizzah.”)