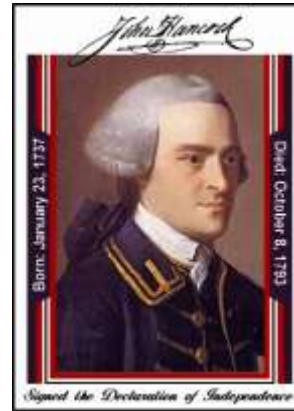




# *My Life as an American Patriot*

Studying the American Revolutionary War  
with Digital Time Travel

4<sup>th</sup> Grade



*December 25, 1776*

*Mr. John Hancock  
Continental Congress  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

*Dear Mister Hancock,*

*I am writing to you from the battlefield at Trenton, New Jersey. As a soldier in General Washington's army we are proud to claim victory over the British forces today. You should be aware of the bravery exhibited by our soldiers, but you should also be aware of the hardships that we are experiencing.*

*Many of our men do not have the proper clothing for the winter weather conditions. We have marched hundreds of miles and many men do not even have shoes! For those of us who do have shoes, they are so worn that our feet are bleeding and we feel the stones of the rough northeastern terrain with every step. We are also suffering from lack of food. We do not have enough provisions and the winter weather gives us few opportunities to*

+ *Informational Essay*



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**4<sup>th</sup> Grade**

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# ★ *My Life as an American Patriot* ★

A comprehensive unit that:

- Aligns with many Common Core Learning Standards
- Encompasses multiple reading and writing opportunities
- Provides valuable hands-on performance-based learning projects
- Stresses the importance of visual learning
- Develops life-long oral and written communication skills
- Offers differentiated learning opportunities
- Engages students in American history



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## Instructor Guidelines

Thank you for purchasing *My Life as an American Patriot* for your 4<sup>th</sup> grade class! We are confident that your students will enjoy learning about the Revolutionary War and that you will love how engaged they will become in history. We want to give you a few suggestions on how to best utilize this kit:

**My Life as an American Patriot.PDF** – This document contains all of the documentation for this comprehensive kit. It is in PDF form to keep it properly formatted and uneditable. Keep an intact copy of this as the reference document for the unit.

**Teacher Materials** – These pages are provided as a Word document so that you can edit them to meet your own requirements. We have designed this unit with the expectations that teachers will revise it somewhat to make it their own and to meet the individual needs of their classes.

- **Vocabulary** – Feel free to add or delete words and to tweak the definitions if desired.
- **Some Useful Resources** – You can add or delete resources from this list and then provide the students with your final resource list if you wish. Since the links are live, you can open the document on your computer with a projector or interactive whiteboard and quickly access the websites for a lesson with the whole class.
- **Essential Questions and Big Ideas** – These are supposed to get the creative juices flowing! Brainstorm with the class to come up with other essential questions and big ideas and then involve the class in great critical thinking opportunities. Remember, it is important for them to see the big picture and understand why they are learning about the American Revolution.
- **Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)** – Isn't it exciting to see how many standards you can cover in one lesson?
- **Instructor Details** – These pages give specific suggestions for the individual projects. Feel free to tailor them to meet your needs.
- **Instructional Essay Rubric** - This rubric has been designed using the same terminology and requirements as the student checklist, which has the same terminology as the Common Core Learning Standards. By using these valuable assessment tools, you are providing your students with the opportunity to assess themselves as they are working and to understand the grade you award them at the end.

**Student Handouts** - This document was compiled with the expectations of you printing and handing these pages out to the students. They are also in Word document format so that you can edit them to meet your needs.

- **Vocabulary without Definitions** – This is for the students to use if you want them to look up the definitions.
- **Performance Task** – You can edit this task to fine tune it with regard to your students and community.
- **Project Details** – We provide basic instructions for the students on these pages with room for you to add more details if desired. Your Instructor Detail Pages provide more detailed project instructions.
- **Student Checklists** – The project checklists are less detailed than the writing checklists. Feel free to add other requirements that you feel are important to the project checklists. The writing assignments have more detailed checklists that use the terminology from the CCLS. The rubric for the Informational Essay uses the same terminology as the CCLS and the checklist, so if you edit any of the writing assessment pieces, be careful to keep them aligned with the appropriate standard.

**Project Templates** – The templates that you will need for the projects are in a separate folder. Before beginning that project, make sure the template is available to the students on their computers or network drive.

**Tutorial Videos** – The tutorial videos are accessible from our website. Use the password that you were given to download this kit to access the links to the project videos. The videos will teach the students step-by-step how to make the projects. Pause the video as needed to allow them to work, contemplate, organize and save their work. Manipulating graphics is a very creative form of self-expression. These projects will prove that the students understand the material they have learned and give them an opportunity to teach back in an effective visual format. Let the students have the time to work, make mistakes, correct their mistakes, and revise their layouts, so that they can complete a project they can show with pride.



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## Introduction

*My Life as an American Patriot* is a comprehensive project-based learning unit that has been designed to draw students into the story of the American Revolution. Studying history is an essential way for us to better understand ourselves and the world around us today. The good and the evil that has emerged since the beginning of man have been chronicled in our history books. When we learn from the successes and failures of our ancestors, we can improve our lives and society as a whole. As adults, we have lived long enough to recognize the patterns as they repeat throughout the decades and centuries, but how relevant do most children think that history is to their lives?

Children tend to detach from history while many adults are fascinated with learning about differences in culture, geography, lifestyle, and traditions. Our children have been born into a world with computers, electric appliances, telephones, internet, airplanes, and so much more. It is hard for them to relate to a society that did not have electricity, motorized vehicles, or even indoor plumbing. It can also be hard to imagine the challenges of living in the desert when someone was born and raised on the rocky seacoast of Maine, or be able to connect with the trials of living in the remote mountains of West Virginia or growing up in urban Chicago.

We believe that the best way to make connections with history is to visit! Until reliable time-travel is developed, students can utilize our current technology to travel anywhere by placing photographs of themselves into scenes from anywhere in the world, at any point in time. History becomes relevant as they look at themselves in the scene and start to make connections with the people and the environment they have joined.

We hope that you and your students learn as much from using this unit as we did from developing it! Please contact us with your feedback. We are continuing to expand our library of Common Core Learning Units, and we are interested in your comments on this kit and your suggestions for future topics. Happy learning!

Sincerely,

Lynda Holler

Director  
Great Software Tools, LLC  
Lynda@greatsoftwaretools.com



## Summary / Purpose

The projects selected for *My Life as an American Patriot* were chosen carefully to provide a thorough and exciting opportunity for 4<sup>th</sup> graders to learn about this important time period of American history. The hands-on projects allow them to go back in time and carefully reflect upon what it would have been like to live during that tumultuous period. Although the topic is 18<sup>th</sup> century, the projects are solidly 21<sup>st</sup> century. The students incorporate relevant technology and learn to present their perspectives in formats that will be valuable for future classes and adult careers. We have included a variety of writing opportunities: journaling, postcard, biographical, persuasive letter and informational essay. An oral presentation is included too.

Take advantage of these great student projects to compile dynamic visuals for hall bulletin boards. It is a great way to showcase the student's work, show parents, administrators, and colleagues how effective a teacher you are, and inspire other students to learn more about the Revolutionary War!

Overall, all the entire **Common Core English Language Arts Standards for Grade 4: Reading Informational Text, Writing and Speaking & Listening and most of the Language standards** are covered in this unit. As you engage your students in learning, you can be confident that you are aligning your curriculum with the standards that are expected of all 4<sup>th</sup> graders across our nation.

## Expectations

Your students can read about America's fight for independence from a vast selection of reliable resources. They can play American history board, computer, and video games to help engage them in the topic, but as contemporary educators, we aren't just looking for them to regurgitate historical dates and facts. We need to develop a generation of critical thinkers. Teaching students about the American Revolution is a rich opportunity to stimulate class conversation about the essential questions and big ideas that this unit relates to. Once the unit is completed, you can encourage the students to reflect, not only on what they learned about the American Revolution, but also about how that deeper understanding relates to other periods of history and humanity overall.

By integrating *My Life as an American Patriot* into your curriculum, you are adding rigor into project-based education. You are raising the bar on what you expect from your students and preparing them to be competitive in our highly visual world. The hands-on projects will help the students learn the material on a deeper level, and they will be able to express their own personal creativity in the execution of those projects. You are also helping them to learn to assess their level of knowledge and performance by using the checklists and rubrics that are included with the unit. Also, by giving them the opportunity to learn the material in a more intimate and thorough way, you are helping them achieve 4's on those rubrics!



## *Unit Projects*

1. Digital Time Travel Personal Scrapbook
2. Digital Time Travel Postcard
3. Famous Patriot Oral Presentation
4. Famous Patriot Trading Cards
5. Persuasive Letter to Continental Congress
6. Informational Essay

## *Required Software*

- Graphics-Toolbox
- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft PowerPoint

## *Suggested Materials*

1. Personalized Scrapbook
  - Color Printer
  - Photo quality card stock paper – a recommended quality is: Staples Matte Photo Supreme, Ink Jet, 61 lb, Item #19895
2. Postcard
  - Print at professional photo lab  
or
  - Color Printer & Glossy Photo Quality Paper – a recommended quality is: Costco's Kirkland Signature Professional Glossy Inkjet Photo Paper, 69 lb, Item #503626
3. Trading Cards
  - Color Printer
  - Photo quality card stock paper – a recommended quality is: Staples Matte Photo Supreme, Ink Jet, 61 lb, Item #19895





## *Provided Templates*

- 8" Scrapbook Page
- Trading Card: Front and Back

## *Available Videos*

- Making a Digital Time Travel Personal Scrapbook
  - Making a Digital Time Travel Postcard
- Making a Famous Patriot PowerPoint Presentation
- Making a Famous Patriot Trading Card: Front and Back



## Common Core State Standards<sup>1</sup> Covered in *My Life as an American Patriot*

### English Language Arts Standards » Reading: Informational Text » Grade 4

#### Key Ideas and Details

**RI.4.1.** Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

**RI.4.2.** Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

**RI.4.3.** Explain events, procedures, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text, including what happened and why, based on specific information in the text.

#### Craft and Structure

**RI.4.4.** Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words or phrases in a text relevant to a grade 4 topic or subject area.

**RI.4.5.** Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, cause/effect, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.

**RI.4.6.** Compare and contrast a firsthand and secondhand account of the same event or topic; describe the differences in focus and the information provided.

#### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

**RI.4.7.** Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

**RI.4.8.** Explain how an author uses reasons and evidence to support particular points in a text.

**RI.4.9.** Integrate information from two texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.



## English Language Arts Standards » Writing » Grade 4

### Text Types and Purposes

**W.4.1.** Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

- Introduce a topic or text clearly, state an opinion, and create an organizational structure in which related ideas are grouped to support the writer’s purpose.
- Provide reasons that are supported by facts and details.
- Link opinion and reasons using words and phrases (e.g., for instance, in order to, in addition).
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the opinion presented.

**W.4.2.** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., another, for example, also, because).
- Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

**W.4.3.** Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

- Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
- Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations.
- Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
- Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
- Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.

### Production and Distribution of Writing

**W.4.4.** Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.)

**W.4.5.** With guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, and editing.



**W.4.6.** With some guidance and support from adults, use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing as well as to interact and collaborate with others; demonstrate sufficient command of keyboarding skills to type a minimum of one page in a single sitting.

### Research to Build and Present Knowledge

**W.4.7.** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge through investigation of different aspects of a topic.

**W.4.8.** Recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources; take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources.

**W.4.9.** Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

### Range of Writing

**W.4.10.** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

## English Language Arts Standards » Speaking & Listening » Grade 4

### Comprehension and Collaboration

**SL.4.1.** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 4 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

- Come to discussions prepared, having read or studied required material; explicitly draw on that preparation and other information known about the topic to explore ideas under discussion.
- Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.
- Pose and respond to specific questions to clarify or follow up on information, and make comments that contribute to the discussion and link to the remarks of others.
- Review the key ideas expressed and explain their own ideas and understanding in light of the discussion.

**SL.4.2.** Paraphrase portions of a text read aloud or information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

**SL.4.3.** Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.



### Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

**SL.4.4.** Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience in an organized manner, using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.

**SL.4.5.** Add audio recordings and visual displays to presentations when appropriate to enhance the development of main ideas or themes.

**SL.4.6.** Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion); use formal English when appropriate to task and situation.

## English Language Arts Standards » Language » Grade 4

### Conventions of Standard English

**L.4.1.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- Use relative pronouns (who, whose, whom, which, that) and relative adverbs (where, when, why).
- Form and use the progressive (e.g., I was walking; I am walking; I will be walking) verb tenses.
- Use modal auxiliaries (e.g., can, may, must) to convey various conditions.
- Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).
- Form and use prepositional phrases.
- Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.\*
- Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., to, too, two; there, their).\*

**L.4.2.** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- Use correct capitalization.
- Use commas and quotation marks to mark direct speech and quotations from a text.
- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence.
- Spell grade-appropriate words correctly, consulting references as needed.

### Knowledge of Language

**L.4.3.** Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

- Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.\*
- Choose punctuation for effect.\*
- Differentiate between contexts that call for formal English (e.g., presenting ideas) and situations where informal discourse is appropriate (e.g., small-group discussion).



### **Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**

**L.4.4.** Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 4 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- Use context (e.g., definitions, examples, or restatements in text) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation and determine or clarify the precise meaning of key words and phrases.

**L.4.6.** Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal precise actions, emotions, or states of being (e.g., quizzed, whined, stammered) and that are basic to a particular topic (e.g., wildlife, conservation, and endangered when discussing animal preservation).

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