

American Revolution Readers Theatre Script
 Developed by Dr. Rosalind M. Flynn with students at
 Sweet Apple Elementary School Roswell, GA

Introduction

1	Okay everyone! Where do we live?	1	Revolution!
All	The United States of America. [sound effect]	All	Revolution!
2	Fifty Great States! Always were! Always will be!	2	It begins as a disagreement,
All	Fifty Great States! Always were!	All	[sound effect]
3	Hold everything!	3	Argument,
All	[grumble in confusion.]	All	[sound effect]
3	The United States were not always united.	4	Conflict--
4	And they didn't start out as 50 states.	5	Usually with some authority.
5	They began as 13 colonies--remember?	6	Authority?
All	Oh yes! The 13 original colonies!	7	Yes--someone or something that enforces laws or rules,
6	Uh, what's a colony?	8	Takes charge.
All	A colony is a settlement ruled by a leader in another country far away.	6	You mean like a boss?
7	Who ruled the 13 original colonies back in the 1700s?	All	Right, but not a good boss--an unjust authority! [gesture]
All	King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella!	9	And what happens next?
8	No!	Evens	Fights [sound effect, gesture]
All	[Stop. Think. Remember!] King George the III of England!	Odds	War! [musical sound effect--dun duh duh dahn!]
8	Much better.	Evens	Charge! [gesture]
9	Who lived in the colonies?	1	Revolution!
All	[a rap]	All	Revolution! People over throw one government [sound effect]
	<u>Colonists</u> did the colony thing. They worked the farms from Spring to Spring. They worked the mills like anything! But they had to obey a faraway king!	9	Kick it out?
10	King George III!	All	Totally [gesture].
All	His majesty! [gesture]	9	Then what?
10	Ruler of the 13 original colonies until.....	All	They replace the old government [gesture] with a new one.
		1	Revolution!
		All	Revolution!
		10	It's what the American colonists did back in the 1700s.
		All	The American Revolution!
			R-Rebellion. E-England. V-Violence. O-Orders. L-Liberty. U-United States. T-Taxation without Representation. I-Independence. O-Overthrow of the British. N-New Nation!
			Revolution!

Part 2

- 1 Why didn't the colonists like the old government?
- 2 They didn't like being ruled by a monarch.
- 3 A monarch butterfly?
- 4 Butterflies can't rule people!
- All [sound effect—"Duh-uh!"] Not that kind of monarch! The king or queen kind of monarch!
- 3,4 Oh.
- 5 In this case,
- All King George III! [sound effect]
- 6 What was so bad about King George III? [sound effect]
- 7 Well, for one thing, he lived in England
- All over 3000 miles away from the colonies
- 8 and he was making laws and ruling the land.
- 6 Fair laws?
- All No! And the colonists protested!
- 9 Listen here King George! We have our own laws!
- 10 and we don't want yours!
- 11 Why should we have to pay any tariffs?
- 12 We pay enough taxes already!
- 13 The Stamp Act is unfair!
- 14 Leave us alone!
- 15 Stand up to old King George!
- 16 Boycott British tea!
- 17 If you think we accept your Sugar Act, then you can eat sugar!
- 18 The King and the British don't even know what life is like here!
- 19 Mr. King! How can someone on another continent rule us without giving us a say at all?
- 20 We refuse to obey your laws and pay your taxes without representation in your government!
- 21 We agree with Mercy Otis Warren and James Otis!
- All No taxation without representation!
- 22 Some British disagreed:
- 23 Why should we pay for the soldiers we've sent to protect the colonies across the ocean?
- 24 The colonies were set up for the good of England—not for the good of the colonists!
- 25 We will not let all those colonies make whatever rules they want!
- 1 English authority must be obeyed wherever the English flag flies!
- 2 But what did the colonists want?
- All Self-government! [sound effect]
- 3 We want the right to make our own decisions!
- 4 We are responsible enough to make the right choices!
- 5 We will make our own fair, respectful, and reasonable laws!
- 6 We want
- All Democracy! [sound effect]
- 10 Democracy--government by the people!
- 11 Democracy--a government in which people elect their leaders!
- 12 Democracy—freedom and justice to make our own laws!
- 13 Democracy—it's what the people want!
- All Democracy! Now! [gesture]

Part 3

- 1 The colonists who wanted to be independent from the rule of Great Britain began to call themselves Patriots! [sound effect-- "Oh, say can you see?"]
- 2 Patriots—People who love their country!
- 3 Patriots—People who fight for their country!
- 4 Patriots—People who are willing to die for their country! [sound effect/gesture]
- 5 The Patriots in America in the 1700s worked to create a nation where there is freedom
- 1-5 peace
- 1-10 honor
- 1-15 justice
- 1-22 liberty [sound effect-- "Sweet land of liberty!"]
- 6 Just like what we say every day—
- All "One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."
- 7 Indivisible! What's that mean?
- 8 It means that no one can divide you. [sound effect]
- 9 The Patriots stood together as a group!
- 10 Did anyone stand against them?
- 11 Yes. Some colonists remained loyal to England.
- 12 Loyal—meaning firm in supporting a country or a cause, [sound effect]
- 13 Loyal—meaning faithful. [sound effect]
- 14 Like dogs are loyal to their owners?
- 15 Well, sort of...
- 16 Like students are loyal to their teachers?
- 17 That's more like it!
- 18 Colonists who were loyal to England were called
- All Loyalists. [sound effect-- "God Save the King" (same tune as "My country tis of thee...")]
- 20 Colonists who wanted an independent new nation were called
- All Patriots [sound effect-- "Oh, say..."]
- 21 One more time!
- All Loyalists [sound effect-- "My country tis of thee..."]
- All --loyal to England!
- All Patriots [sound effect-- "Oh, say..."]
- All --an independent new nation!
- 1 I hope the Patriots had some good leaders.
- 20 They had a leader who went to Britain to ask for representation.
- 21 They had a leader who was a scientist and inventor.
- 22 They had a leader who believed that all the colonies should work together, not separately.
- 1 They had a leader who became a writer of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the Continental Congress.
- 2
- 3
- 4 They had a leader who helped organize the first American Army and appointed George Washington as Commander-in Chief.
- 14
- 19 Wow--that's a lot of good leaders!
- All That was all one person!
- 19 One person? Who?
- All Benjamin Franklin!
- 1-10 What a guy!"
- All Benjamin Franklin: A Talented Man with a Great Big Plan!
- 5 [sound effect] We interrupt this program for a special report.
- 6 Today, March 5, 1770, some angry colonists in Boston began shouting insults at the British soldiers:
- 4-9 Go ahead and shoot, Redcoats! [gesture]
- 10-16 Bring death to those bloody backs! [gesture]
- 1-22 Instead of tea, have a snowball!
- All Snowballs and stones will break your bones!
- 7 The colonists threw rocks and snowballs at the soldiers. [gesture]
- 8 The British fired back with their guns [sound effect]
- 9 Five colonists were killed including
- All Crispus Attucks.
- 10 Crispus Attucks--a runaway slave, an African American.
- 11 Crispus Attucks--the first American to be killed fighting for American independence
- 12 in an event that was a massacre--
- 13 A massacre--the killing of a number of people who cannot defend themselves--
- All The Boston Massacre. March 5, 1770.

Part 4

1	It sounds like Boston was a real hot spot in the American Revolution.	All	moved!
2	The scene of a very famous party!	1	The British burned any weapons they did find
All	The Boston Tea Party! [sound effect]	2	causing the Minutemen to come down from a hill where they had been waiting.
3	The year was 1773. Boston colonists were mad as could be.	Odds	The Minutemen met
All	“We should not have to pay a tax on tea!”	Evens	the British
4	Disguised as Indians, on board the British ship they found chests of tea that they could tip	3	at the North Bridge
5	into the harbor, into the sea...cause	4	and fired what came to be known as
All	“We should not have to pay a tax on tea!”	All	“the shot heard round the world.”
6	Deep into the water the tea sank down.	5	Out of the 4,000 Minutemen in Lexington and Concord, only 93 were killed or wounded.
All	The best tea party ever in Boston town! [sound effect]	6	When the British marched back to Boston, hidden Minutemen shot at them.
7	Shhhhhhh. Listen my students and you shall hear.....	7	The total British losses were 73 killed and 174 wounded.
8	Listen to what?	8	The battles at Lexington and Concord marked the beginning of
7	of the midnight ride of Paul Revere!	All	The American Revolution!
9	Who is Paul Revere?	9	Has anybody ever heard of Patrick Henry?
7	He was a Patriot who had a job as a secret agent and messenger.	10	He was a colonist who lived in Virginia.
8	He had to find out the English battle plans.	11	He told the Virginia House of Burgesses that they alone
10	When did Paul Revere ride at midnight?	12	NOT England
11	In 1775, just before the battle in Lexington, Massachusetts.	13	should decide what taxes were placed.
12	On a clear moonlit night in April	14	Some Loyalist lawmakers shouted,
13	He told his friend William Dawes, a Boston tanner, to watch for lanterns in a church steeple	All	Treason! Treason!”
All	One if by land; two if by sea!	15	Treason! (pause) What does Treason mean?
14	He rode his horse Brown Beauty, through the countryside, shouting,	16	It means working against the government.
All	The British are coming! The British are coming!	17	And Patrick Henry said,
15	Oh, I know what happened next! Paul Revere alerted Minutemen in Lexington.	All	“If this be treason, make the most of it!”
16	They came racing from their homes with muskets, bayonets, and hatchets.	18	But I think Patrick Henry is even more famous for something else he said:
17	The British arrived in Lexington.	All	“Give me liberty or give me death!”
18	Shots were fired by each side.	19	Patrick Henry and the Second Continental Congress chose someone we’ve all heard of to lead the new Continental Army--
19	The Minutemen retreated	All	George Washington!
20	and the Redcoats marched on to Concord	20	Born in 1732 in Westmoreland, Virginia.
21	where they expected to find the Patriots’ weapons, but they had been	21	Took 14,500 disorganized soldiers and created an army that became the proud Continentals!
		22	George Washington--
		All	our first Commander-in-Chief!

Part 5

- 1 George Washington and the other colonists wanted to rule themselves.
- 2 They wanted
- All Independence! [sound effect]
- 3 It means being alone
- 4 Or solo.
- 5 Doing something all by yourself
- 6 Hello! Does the word “freedom” ring a bell? [sound effect]
- Odds Our country has freedom.
- Evens Our country has independence.
- 7 It all started with the colonists
- 8 who fought so they could do whatever they wanted.
- 9 Hey wait! Even when you’re independent, that doesn’t mean you can do whatever you want!
- 10 In order for independence to work, the colonists knew
- All And we know
- 11 People must follow laws,
- 12 And respect their country and its citizens.
- 13 Are kids independent?
- Odds Yes!
- Evens No!
- 14 Well, which one is it, yes or no?
- 15 Actually the answer is
- All Both!
- We help make plans and we have a choice.
- Our parents and our teachers give us a voice.
- But we’re still kids and we still depend On a mother or a father or a teacher or a friend!
- 16 So--independence is the freedom to govern one’s own self.
- 17 Thanks to Thomas Paine’s ideas in Common Sense:
- 18 “King George is an unfair bully!”
- 19 “Why should one person rule us?”
- 20 The colonists felt they should cut their ties with Britain! [sound effect and gesture]
- 21 Congress formed a committee to write a declaration.
- 6 A declaration is an important statement.
- 7 “Well, I do declare!”
- 8 The committee member who did most of the writing was
- All Thomas Jefferson!
- 9 --Leader of the Patriots! [sound effect]
- 10 --Only 33 years old when he wrote the Declaration of Independence!
- 11 Which took him 17 days to write!
- Boys (sigh-awww) 17 whole days!
- Girls Amazing! Only 17 days!
- 12 The Declaration was written in three parts.
- 13 Part One: Why independence was needed.
- 14 Part Two: The colonists’ main ideas about government:
- All “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal That they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, That among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”
- 15 Part 3: Jefferson listed the colonists’ grievances.
- 16 What in the world are grievances?
- 17 Complaints!
- 1-5 “The king doesn’t listen to us!” [stamp foot]
- 6-10 “The king taxes us unfairly!” [stamp foot]
- 11-15 “And we do not appreciate those British soldiers invading us and living in our territory either!” [stamp foot]
- 16-20 And as for the Intolerable Acts....! They’re, they’re...
- All Intolerable! [sound effect]
- 18 In the very last part of the Declaration, Jefferson said that the 13 colonies were
- All No longer part of Britain! [sound effect]
- 19 The Declaration of Independence was signed on
- All July 4, 1776!
- 20 That’s why we celebrate the Fourth of July!
- All Independence Day! [sound effect]

Part 6

18 What about the women?
Boys Did any women take part in the Revolutionary War?
Girls Of course they did! [gesture]
1 Mary Ludwig Hays was also known as “Molly Pitcher”
2 Because she carried water to thirsty soldiers in the Battle of Monmouth.
3 And there were other women who were important to the Revolution, too.
4 Mary Slocumb rode through the night
5 To help the Patriots win their fight.
6 Phyllis Wheatley wrote poems
7 Mercy Otis Warren, a play
8 To help the colonists save the day!
1-5 Valley Forge, Pennsylvania—The cold winter of 1777! [sound effect and gesture]
All Our feet are freezing!
Boys We’re tired and cold!
Girls We’re scared of dying!
All (We want to grow old.)
1-5 Von Stueben is pushing us harder each day.
6-10 We must be good soldiers—we’ll learn it his way!
All Valley Forge—a snowy and cruel winter camp. [sound effect and gesture]
Girls But we stay
Boys And learn
Girls And suffer
Boys For General George Washington
All And for our country. [gesture]
11 The Battle of Yorktown!
12 Cornwallis surrenders!
13 The British and Hessian soldiers lay down their arms.
Odds Their arms?
Evens We mean their weapons, of course!
Odds Oh!
14 But how did this happen?
15 The Redcoats were surrounded by Continental troops
16 And under siege for two weeks by land and sea.
Girls What’s a siege?
Boys A siege is an attack that lasts a long time!

All Anyway, the British gave up! [gesture]
That’s the important part!
17 Now they needed a treaty.
18 Right—a signed agreement between the fighting countries.
11 Ben Franklin gave the British representative the American terms.
Girls Which were?
13 One [gesture]
Boys Accept American independence.
14 Two [gesture]
Girls Remove British soldiers from American land.
15 Three [gesture]
All Pay Americans for damage they did to cities and towns! [sound effect and gesture]
16 So the Treaty of Paris was signed by both countries in France in 1783.
All A new country was born. [gesture]
Girls Revolution! [gesture]
Boys War! [gesture]
Girls Courage.
Boys Determination.
Girls Hard work.
Boys Persistence.
Girls Vision.
Boys Collaboration.
All The United States of America!
The U.S.A.! [Bow]

[The End]