



*How did the view of North America change as a result of the Revolutionary War?*

# A Perspective on North America

## Background Information

The Waldseemuller Map labels North America as “Terra Incognita” and is the first map ever to include the continent. Thus it is important to understand that this is our geographical history. A question to revisit throughout the course is: Just how long does North America remain “terra incognita?”

The 1732 map reveals that very little exploration had been done at that time and that England truly was not the only Western power in the land. This helps to display the importance of maps in framing world power and gives context to power struggles during early exploration like the French and Indian War. The colonies on different maps have different names and their size and shape are still not precise (although students will find some things familiar).

The 1776 map shows more defined colonies, but the map again is very disproportionate and attempts to downplay the presence of other foreign powers. Labeling on the map reveals the areas that are more known, while relatively blank or open parts of the map reveal a lack of exploration and understanding.

The key similarity is that both the 1732 and 1776 maps are from a British perspective, which could prompt additional insights into colonial exploration and settlement.

## Lesson Description

Students will analyze two maps of North America, one showing the pre-Revolutionary War perspective and the other the mid-Revolution view. Through this exercise, students will gain an understanding of the bias and impact of maps in understanding colonial exploration as well as the development of an early European-North American perspective.

Grade Range: 5th & 8th

Time to complete lesson: 40min

### Resources needed:

- Projector
- Waldseemuller Map 1507
- Student copies of the two Huntington maps
- Student copies of the Library of Congress Primary Source worksheet (two per student)

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By the end of this lesson, students will **know:**

- That maps reveal the limits and biases of human understanding of geography at the time.
- The ways in which the international view on North America shifted as a result of the American Revolution.

By the end of this lesson, students will **be able to:**

- Analyze primary sources and use that knowledge to frame their study of events.

## Supported Standards

**History-Social Science Content Standards 5.2.4:** Locate on maps of North and South America land claimed by Spain, France, England, Portugal, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Russia.

**History-Social Science Content Standards 8.1.3:** Analyze how the American Revolution affected other nations, especially France





# Lesson Plan

## Introduction (5-10min)

1. Teacher uses the Waldseemuller Map 1507 (Material #1) to provide background knowledge about perspectives on the New World.

- What is the center of this map?
- What do they seem to know about? (where there is more writing and detail)
- What do they not know? (Americas, African interior, etc.)
- Are the Americas on this map?
- Any words you recognize? (different language but what can you read?)
  - Ex: “Terra Incognita” = “Land Unknown”

2. Frame student understanding of perspectives on the new world based on this map. Let them know that the “New World” was really unknown and considered such a marginal part of the world for a long time. Let them know that they will continue the analysis of maps at their tables individually and working together.

## Activity: Primary Source Analysis (20-25min)

1. Instruct students to first look at the 1732 map (Material #2) and ask them to use their worksheet to start observing, reflecting, and identifying their questions:

- What are you noticing? (observe)
- What are you thinking? (reflect...reason with evidence the why are they thinking it)
- What are you wondering? (questions)

2. Ask the questions above to the whole group and start to track their thoughts on a whiteboard. Probe their thinking and make sure they provide the reasoning or “why” behind their ideas. *Ex. Why do you say that? What makes you think that? What do you not see?*

3. Instruct students to look at the 1776 map (Material #3) and ask them to use their worksheet to start observing, reflecting, and identifying their questions.

4. Have them share with a partner some of their answers to the questions:

- What are you noticing? (observe)
- What are you thinking? (reflect...reason with evidence the why are you thinking it)
- What are you wondering? (questions)



5. Ask the questions above to the whole group and start to track their thoughts on a whiteboard. Ask:

- What do we not see?
- When do you think these maps were made?
- For whom? By whom?
- Why do you think I put these together

**Conclusion (5-10min)**

1. What do we know now that we have looked at all these maps? Topics to consider in their answers: Geography, Perspectives, Power



# Vocabulary List

| <u>Word</u> | <u>Meaning</u>   | <u>Variations to Use (and Encourage Stu-</u> | <u>Notes</u>                          |
|-------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>Bias</b> | A particular tendency, trend, inclination, feeling, or opinion, especially one that is preconceived or unreasoned. | One perspective/view on events.              | Could be intentional or unintentional |
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|             |  |  |                                       |

Vocabulary List



## Materials

**Material #1: Waldseemuller Map 1507** <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/exploring-the-early-americas/interactives/waldseemuller-maps/worldmap1507/enlarge1507.html>

**Material #2 1732 A new & correct map of the whole world** <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p15150coll4/id/4011/rec/7>

**Material #3 1776 Bowle's New Pocket Map of North America, divided into its Provinces, Colonies** <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p15150coll4/id/10278/rec/11>