



*Cultures of Independence:
Perspectives on Independence Hall and the Meaning of Freedom*

Workshop Projects

One of the goals of the Landmarks in American History Workshops is for teachers to return to their classrooms with new knowledge and resources to improve their teaching of history, either as a stand-alone subject or integrated with other subjects. To that end, teachers participating in "Cultures of Independence" are expected to create a lesson plan that draws upon the ideas and sources of the workshop. Completed plans will be due on July 24 (for those teachers in the June workshop) and August 28 (for those in the July workshop) and are a necessary component for teachers requesting continuing education credit. In addition, plans will be posted in the [Education portion](#) of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) website.

Overview

The lesson plans will integrate a historical landmark into the curriculum in such a way that the topic advances a teacher's own educational goals and meets all necessary state and district education standards. We suggest that teachers especially consider how a local landmark may be used to discuss national events and trends. If appropriate, teachers may use Independence Hall or another Philadelphia landmark.

The plan will follow a template developed by HSP's Teacher Advisors that emphasizes how to use primary sources in the teaching of a topic. The plan outlines instructional procedures, vocabulary, assessment, and standards as well as background material for both teachers and students.

While plans written around local landmarks may seem to be limited geographically in their scope, we believe that they will stand as models for other teachers trying to use the physical world and primary sources as a way of developing project-based and discovery-oriented curriculum.



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Process

Before the workshop, teachers should think about for what local landmark or historical era they would like to develop a lesson. If possible, they may build off of their workshop application where they identified an area that they thought needed to be bolstered in their curriculum and /or their teaching practice.

Because of the nature of the workshop, lesson plan writing during the workshop will focus on how to integrate landmarks into their curriculum and how to use primary sources effectively in teaching. In addition, resources provided by the other workshop participants as well as staff will allow for development of lesson plans within a socially supportive setting.

In the afternoon of Day 2 of the workshop, each teacher will choose a research topic related to a workshop theme that is also related to his or her curriculum needs identified in the step above. On Day 3 and 4, there will be time to conduct primary source research on the topic at HSP. In addition, the various lectures and visits to Philadelphia landmarks will provide additional substance. Realizing that there may not be primary sources for every topic within archives located in the Philadelphia region, staff will work with teachers to help them learn how to identify primary sources in their own locale or online to forward their projects.

To assist teachers in this project, Master Teachers will meet with participants at the conclusion of each day's activities, Monday through Thursday, to discuss how to apply new knowledge to classroom teaching. These discussions will address practice as well as content, drawing upon the experiences of the workshop participants and the Master Teachers. In addition, the schedule allows for one-on-one time on Thursday afternoon when participants may discuss their projects with either the Master Teachers or a Co-director.

On Day 6, each participant will briefly share with the group the focus of his/her lesson and how the workshop has advanced his or her understanding of teaching about landmarks. Lastly, teachers will write a lesson plan on their own using the common template; workshop staff as well as workshop participants will be available virtually for conversation. After the deadline, workshop staff will review the lessons to prepare them for uploading to the HSP website and to approve continuing education credit, if requested.



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