

Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center

Teacher Resource Packet



American Revolution: The Battle of Ridgefield

Online Learning Materials
Grades 4-5



Dear Educator,

Thank you for your interest in Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center!

Whether you are a parent, teacher, or caregiver, we are excited to share these lessons with you. This lesson packet provides students with the opportunity to experience history by learning about the Battle of Ridgefield – the only inland battle in Connecticut during the American Revolution - by analyzing artifacts from our collection and participating in hands-on learning. We have also included a suggested unit plan, answer keys, glossary, and recommended readings in the Teacher’s Packet.

Since this unit uses visual thinking strategies (VTS) we ask that students complete the *VTS activity first* as an anticipatory set. Then students can watch the narrated PowerPoint presentation on the history of the Battle of Ridgefield before moving on to the remaining lessons. This packet does include two VTS lessons and an object-based learning activity. The activities can stand alone or work together to build your students’ mastery of the American Revolution. The packet wraps up with a creative writing activity – we would love to see your students finished product!

This *Battle of Ridgefield: Teacher Resource Packet* reflects the Museum’s mission to broaden public understanding of Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center’s unique history by using the events that happened here and people who lived here as a window into the larger themes of United States history.

We look forward to your future visit!

Sincerely,

The Education Department
Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center

Curriculum Connections

The Battle of Ridgefield meets local and national educational standards for the social studies.

National Council for the Social Studies Standards

Students will...

- explore and describe similarities and differences in the ways groups, societies, and cultures address similar human needs and concerns;
- demonstrate an ability to use correct vocabulary associated with time;
- identify and use various sources for reconstructing the past, such as documents, letters, diaries, maps, textbooks, photos, and others;
- demonstrate an understanding that people in different times and places view the world differently;
- describe personal connections to place—especially as associated with immediate surroundings;
- identify and describe ways family, groups, and community influence the individual's daily life and personal choices;
- give examples of the role of institutions in furthering both continuity and change;
- examine the rights and responsibilities of the individual in relation to his or her social group;
- identify and describe examples in which science and technology have changed the lives of people;
- explain and give examples of how language, literature, the arts, architecture, other artifacts, traditions, beliefs, values, and behaviors contribute to the development and transmission of culture.

Connecticut Social Studies Frameworks

4th Grade

- HIST 4.1 Explain connections among historical contexts and people's perspectives at the time;
- HIST 4.2 Explain probable causes and effects of events and developments;
- HIST 4.3 Use evidence to develop a claim about the past;
- ECO 4.2 Identify positive and negative incentives that influence the decisions people make;
- GEO 4.3 Explain how environmental and cultural characteristics influence population distribution in specific places or regions.

5th Grade

- HIST 5.2 Compare life in specific historical periods to life today;
- HIST 5.3 Use information about a historical source to judge the extent to which the source is useful for studying a particular topic;
- HIST 5.10 Use evidence to develop a claim about the past;
- ECO 5.1 Identify positive and negative incentives that influence the decisions people make;
- ECO 5.2 Identify examples of the variety of resources that are used to produce goods and services;
- ECO 5.3 Explain why individuals and business specialize and trade;
- GEO 5.3 Explain how human settlements and movements relate to the locations and use of various natural resources.

Battle of Ridgefield

4-5th Grade Lesson Plans

Please read through all the instructions and activities so you understand the goal of learning for these lessons. If you need some help with Visual Thinking Strategies, we recommend visiting (<https://simusart.org/sites/default/files/files/Understanding%20Basics.pdf>) for a brief introduction. We hope these materials are engaging and help students imagine life in the colonial period at Keeler's Tavern!

Suggested learning plan:

Day 1 – Students complete Activity 1: Be a History Detective! This activity uses visual thinking strategies and asks students to think about what story the image may be telling.

Day 2 – Students watch the video about the Battle of Ridgefield available on our website. This video can be watched in two sittings. The accompanying worksheet (Activity 2) has a total of 10 questions. *If students need a break*, at minute 7:40 you will see a slide about the Declaration of Independence. Pause here and then move on to the remaining questions.

Day 3 – Students complete Activity 3: How Artifacts tell the Story. It asks students to be a “curate for a day” and design an exhibit on the Battle of Ridgefield. *This activity is available through Google Slides – please email education@keelertavernmuseum.org for more information.*

Day 4 – Students complete Activity 4: Be a History Detective! This activity mirrors the first activity but uses the etching that they had the opportunity to use in their exhibit.

Day 5 – The suggested creative writing prompt is an opportunity to harness the students' creative and critical thinking about the Battle of Ridgefield. This could be used as an assessment or capstone assignment.

An Introduction to Visual Thinking Strategies

The objective of VTS is to develop the students' powers of observation, creative thinking, communication skills, and critical thinking skills. By spending a solid block of time studying an image we see more than we would in a quick glance. Then students answer three questions that ask them to explain their observations and back them up with evidence from the image. This exercise has even been used by medical schools to improve students' ability to diagnose illnesses!

Process:

- Students look at an image or piece of artwork for up to 2 minutes.
- Students answer the core questions without using their prior knowledge or outside information to explain what they see.
- No observations are marked as wrong if they are supported by things the students see in the image itself. Instructors can repeat back an observation for clarifying the student's ideas but not for correcting.

Core Questions:

1. What is going on in this picture?
2. What do you see that makes you say that?
3. What else can you see?

Students can record their answers to these questions in a variety of ways including Google Slides, Docs, hand-written answers, or through digital chats with their peers.

Activity 1: Be a History Detective!

Objective: After completing this activity, students will:

- Study a historic image of the battle from the collection of KTM&HC
- Use evidence from an image to support their ideas
- Think like a history detective using visual thinking strategies

Answer Key:

All student answers should be within the realm of possibility and directly supported by images within the etching provided. There is no need for outside information or specific details such as names, places, or dates.

Activity 2: An Introduction to the Battle of Ridgefield

Objective: After viewing the PowerPoint and completing the worksheet, students will:

- Have a basic understanding of the events leading up to the Battle of Ridgefield
- Have a basic understanding of the timeline of the Battle of Ridgefield
- Identify the role of Keeler Tavern in the Battle

Answer Key:

1. 1708, Ramapo Indians or Native Americans
2. Answers may include: location on the main roads of travel, travelers need places to stay, good central location for meetings in town
3. Whether to stay loyal to the King or seek independence from England
4. Answers may include: no representation in Parliament, Stamp Act, Tea Act, Boston Massacre, taxes
5. Battle of Bunker Hill was the first battle where the British and the militia engaged on an open field following the rules of war. This battle helped show that the colonists had the ability to face the trained British army.
6. British wanted control of the Hudson River to divide the Colonies in half; Continentals wanted control of the 2nd largest city in the Colonies and to stop the British army.
7. Connecticut was a way to cut through the Colonies; Connecticut had many towns and people still loyal to the King of England.
8. British wanted to destroy store houses for the Continental Army and gain control of Connecticut; they did destroy supplies but did not control Connecticut.
9. Answers may include: British retreated through Ridgefield and they shot with cannons to break a barricade. Keeler Tavern was hit by the British cannonball and set on fire for being a Patriot house.
10. Battle of Ridgefield was the *only* time the British fought in inland Connecticut. They did burn coastal towns later in the war but never again tried to capture the colony.

Activity 3: How Artifacts tell the Story

Objective: After completing this worksheet, students will be able to:

- Understand how museums use objects to illustrate a story
- Identify what artifacts can help tell their story
- Define key museum concepts like artifact

Answer Key:

Students answers will vary. Acceptable answers will make direct connections between the objects and the Battle of Ridgefield. In drawing the diagram students should take into consideration how artifacts are related and how people will move around the room.

**This lesson is available as Google Slides. Please email education@keelertavernmuseum.org to have it sent to you via Google.*

Activity 4: Be a History Detective – again!

Objective: After completing this worksheet, students will be able to:

- Study a historic image of the battle from the collection of KTM&HC
- Use evidence from an image to support their ideas
- Think like a history detective using visual thinking strategies

Answer Key:

All student answers should be within the realm of possibility and directly supported by images within the etching provided. There is no need for outside information or specific details such as names, places, or dates.

Activity 5: Write *your* story of the Battle of Ridgefield

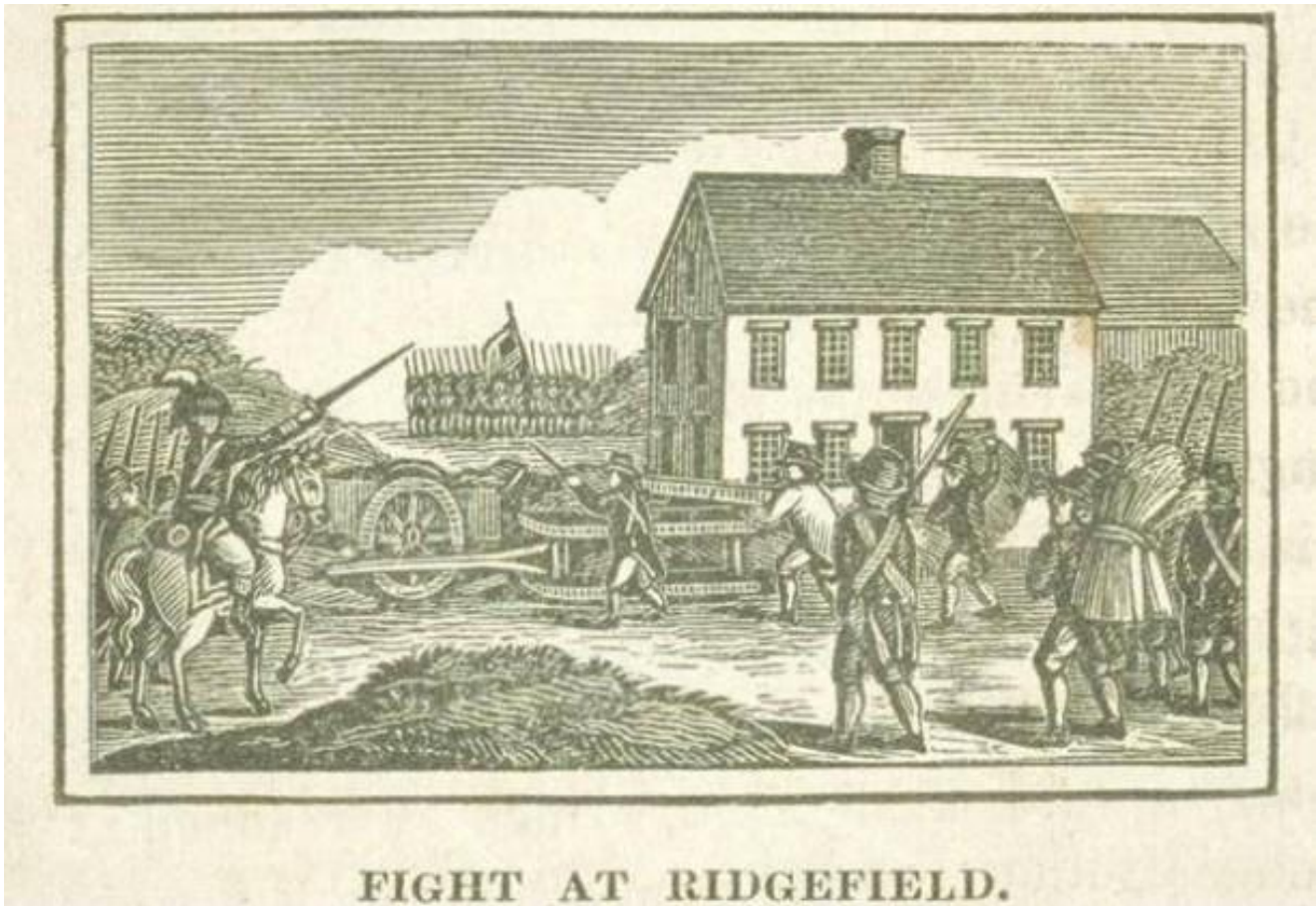
Objective: Have students write a creative perspective writing piece about what they would have experienced if they were in Ridgefield on the day of the battle. Students should use at least one artifact or document that they used in this unit.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity 1: Be a History Detective!

Directions: There are many ways historians or museum professionals can learn about the past. Many times we think **primary sources** are only writings, letters, papers or books. Another way we can learn about the past is from **artifacts** or images. In this activity we are going to ask you to act like a detective – you will have 2 minutes to look at one image and then answer the following three questions. Imagine that this image was left behind with no description so think creatively and build a possible story about what it might be showing us.



Answer these questions after spending 2 minutes look at the image. There are no wrong answers – but every answer must be supported by what you SEE in the image.

1. What is going on in this picture?
2. What do you SEE that makes you say that?
3. What else do you see? (Take a second look and add to your detective work!)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity 2: An Introduction to the Battle of Ridgefield

Directions: Read the following questions before listening to the presentation on the Battle of Ridgefield – it will help you know what to listen for! You can answer the questions as you listen or come back to answer them when the presentation is done.

1. When was Ridgefield established? Who was living in the area before the English colonists?
2. Why was Lott 2, the house of Benjamin Hoytt and later Timothy Keeler, a good place to establish a tavern?
3. What important issues were being discussed in towns and taverns in the 1770s?
4. List some of the reasons why colonists were upset with England.
5. What made the Battle of Bunker Hill a formal battle? What made this battle important for the colonists?

(If you need a break, at minute 7:40 you will see a slide about the Declaration of Independence. Pause here and then you can move on to the remaining questions.)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity 3: How Artifacts tell the Story

An **artifact** is an object that was made, modified, or used by humans in the past. When you visit Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center you will see many artifacts. You will also see **reproductions** of artifacts. A reproduction is a present-day copy of an original artifact. Artifacts are used to help teach visitors about the history of the museum, the people who lived there, and the events that happened in Ridgefield. Museums use a variety of ways to communicate information in an exhibit, such as labels on the walls or through tour guides.

Directions: In this activity we are asking YOU to be the **curator** and decide what objects should be on display in the museum to help tell the story of the Battle of Ridgefield. Look through the artifacts Keeler Tavern Museum has that might help illustrate the story of the battle and then use the exhibit planning sheet below to help you!

Artifacts from the Collection at Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center

1. Etching of the Battle of Ridgefield: Printed in England in 1780, this **etching** shows an illustrator's idea of what the battle looked like. The illustrator would have used newspapers and military reports to give him an idea of what happened.



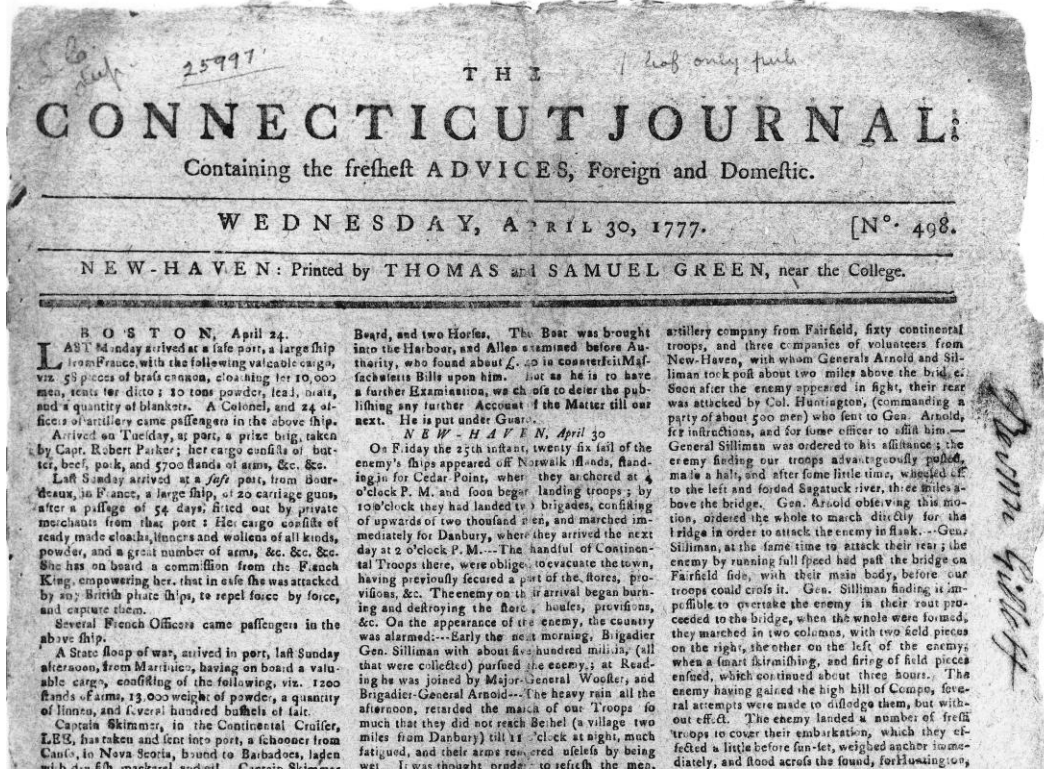
2. Musket Balls: The most frequently used gun during the American Revolution was called a musket – which the English nicknamed “Brown Bess”. A musket uses lead balls as ammunition.



3. Wax Stamp: Stamps were used for a variety of reasons. The Stamp Act was a tax on paper goods. In order to show you paid your tax, the paper you bought was stamped. Wax seal stamps were also used to seal closed letters and military reports.



- Connecticut newspaper telling about the battle from an American perspective: The local newspapers were able to report on the battle quickly after it happened and mentioned the ability of the militia to chase the British to the coast.



- Cannonball: This cannonball was found in Ridgefield. The cannonball that is stuck in the side of the Keeler Tavern is smaller but similar in how it was made and used.



6. Timothy Keeler's corner chair: The Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center has a few artifacts that belonged to the families that lived in the house. One is this unique corner chair – owned by Timothy Keeler himself!



7. London newspaper telling about the battle from a British perspective. It published the military reports of British troops and listed all of the items they were able to destroy in Danbury. If you look closely, it also has a tax stamp in the bottom corner!

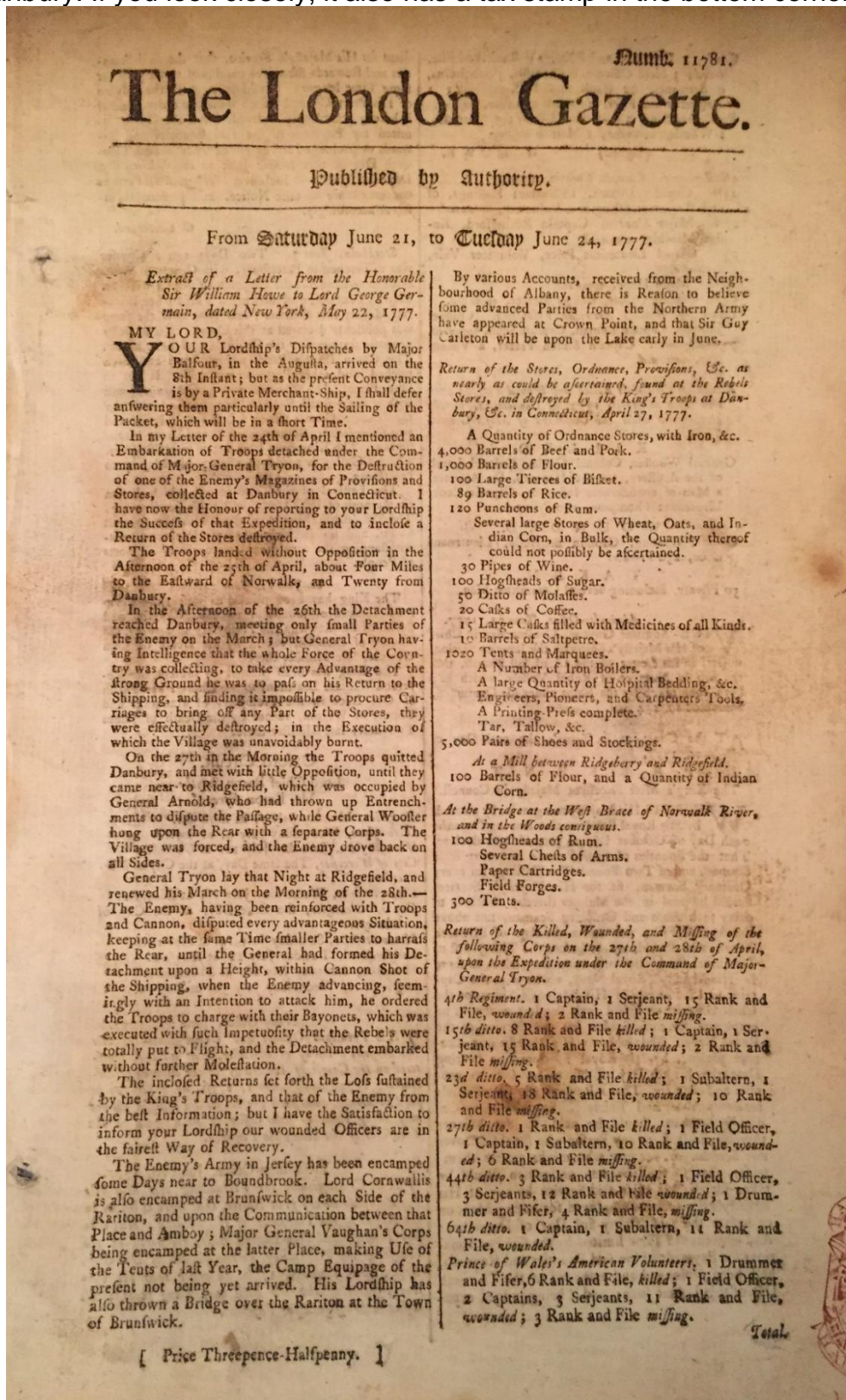


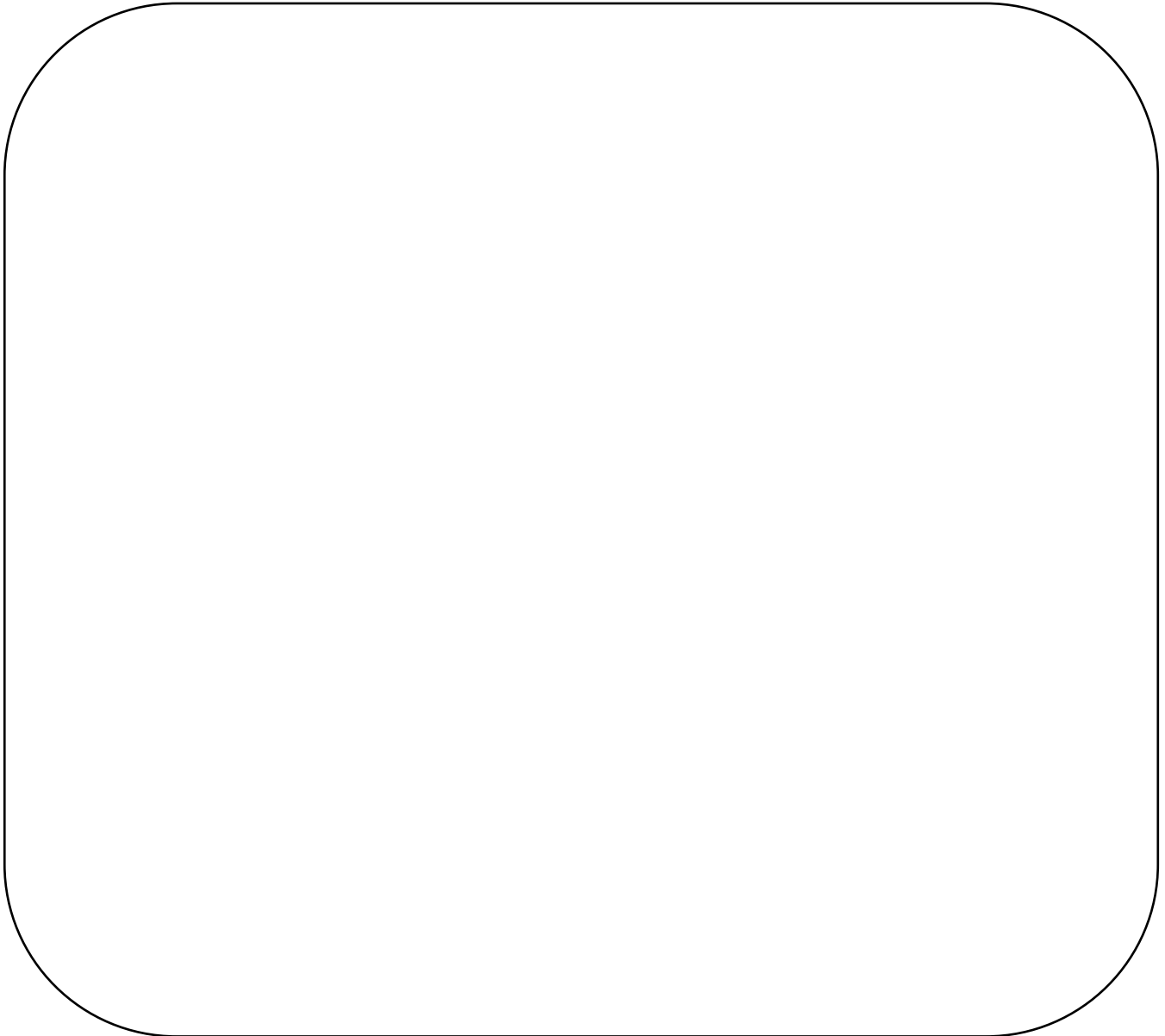
Exhibit Planning Worksheet

Title of your exhibit: _____

Subject of your exhibit: The Battle of Ridgefield

List at least 3 objects you want to use and describe why they are helpful in telling the story:

Draw a diagram of how you want the exhibit to look:



Name: _____

Date: _____

Activity 4: Be a History Detective - again!

Directions: There are many ways historians or museum professionals can learn about the past. Many times we think **primary sources** are only writings, letters, papers or books. Another way we can learn about the past is from **artifacts** or images. In this activity we are going to ask you to act like a detective – you will have 2 minutes to look at one image and then answer the following three questions. Imagine that this image was left behind with no description so think creatively and build a possible story about what it might be showing us.



Glossary

Vocabulary in Activities

Artifact: an object made, modified, or used by humans in the past

Reproduction: a present-day copy of an original artifact

Etching: a drawing made by carving into a plate then applying ink to print onto a paper

Exhibit: a public display of items from a collection

Curator: one who has the care of a museum; a keeper or custodian of a collection

Vocabulary in Presentation

Minister – a Christian member of the clergy, similar to a priest or pastor

Lottery – a game of gambling in which a prize is given to the person with the matching digits drawn from a pool of numbers; can also be used to make randomized decisions

Tavern: a place that sold beer and other drinks to be consumed there, sometimes also serving food

Parliament – a governing body in Great Britain similar to Congress in the United States

Representative – one acting in the place of another; in government it is someone who represents an area or group of people in the government's decision making

Propaganda – an effort to spread a particular opinion

Volley – a barrage, a bombardment, or a continuous attack with ammunition

Skirmish – a brief and usually unplanned fight during a war

Self-government – government of a country by its own people, especially after having been a colony

Militia – a military force that is made up of volunteers from a community

Rebel – someone who fights against the leadership of a government

Reinforcements – military actions meant to strengthen a position, can be extra people or a strengthening structure or material

Barricade – an obstruction or means of defense, a barrier

Inland – away from the shore or coast

Pounds (£) – a form of money in Great Britain and other places

Key People

General David Wooster – general of the Connecticut State Militia

General Benedict Arnold – general of the Continental Army at the time of the Battle of Ridgefield

Colonel Ludington – colonel or military leader of the local militia in New York

Sybil Ludington – daughter of Col. Ludington

General Tryon – former governor of New York State, general in the British Army

General Sir William Howe – Commander-in-Chief of the British Army's land forces during the American Revolution

Timothy Keeler – owner of Keeler Tavern in Ridgefield Connecticut

Recommended Reading

Picture Books: George vs. George: The American Revolution as seen from Both Sides by Rosalyn Schanzer, Sybil's Night Ride by Karen B. Winnick

Non-Fiction: Everybody's Revolution by Thomas Fleming, Women Heroes of the American Revolution: 20 Stories of Espionage, Sabotage, Defiance, and Rescue by Susan Casey, Magic Treehouse Fact Tracker: American Revolution by Mary Pope Osborne, The American Revolution for Kids: A History with 21 Activities by Janis Herbert

Fiction: I Survived the American Revolution by Lauren Tarshis, Nathan Hale's Hazardous Tales: One Dead Spy by Nathan Hale, Sophia's War by Avi, Time Enough for Drums by Ann Rinaldi, The American Seeds Trilogy by Laurie Halse Anderson, Sybil Ludington: Revolutionary War Rider by E.F. Abbott, Magic Tree House: Revolutionary War on Wednesday by Mary Pope Osborne

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