

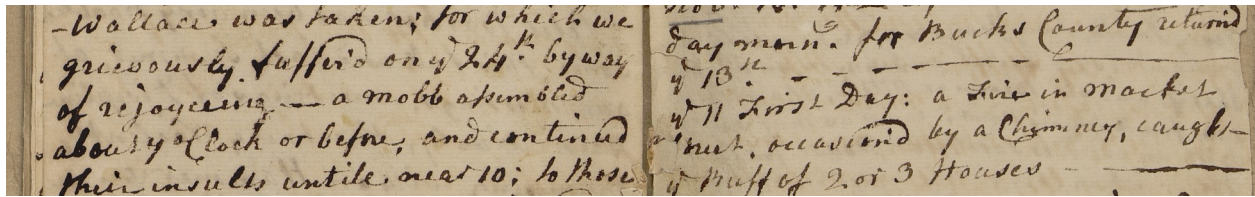
WHEN THE REVOLUTION COMES TO TOWN

Grades 5-8

What was it like to be an ordinary person who lived through the American Revolution?

Elizabeth Drinker was a 41-year-old Quaker woman in Philadelphia when the Revolution began. Her diary records her observations of the events, as well as some sharp opinions.

Selected diary entries highlight her experiences during the war. We recommend students read the diary entries and watch the video in which these entries are read aloud, to assist with understanding the original text. Then choose the lesson plans and activities for the students to follow.



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Elizabeth's Diary: When the Revolution Comes to Town	10-15

To see the video dramatizing the entries in Elizabeth's diary, go to:

<https://youtu.be/PFT8e3V-qoM>

FOR FURTHER READING

The Diary of Elizabeth Drinker: The Life Cycle of an Eighteenth-Century Woman.

Edited and Abridged by Elaine Forman Crane, Northeastern University Press, 1994

Extracts from the Journal of Elizabeth Drinker. Edited by Henry Biddle, 1889

<https://archive.org/details/extractsfromjou00dringoo>

“Elizabeth Sandwith Drinker: Quaker housewife who suffered trying to stay neutral”

<https://www.historyisfun.org/learn/learning-center/elizabeth-sandwith-drinker/>

GAME

Number of Players: 4-6 (divide a larger class into smaller groups)

Time: 10-15 minutes per round

Rules: Similar to “Apples to Apples”

Skills: Reasoning, reading comprehension, logical argument, creativity

The DAR Museum’s collection includes objects from the time when Elizabeth Drinker was alive. [Click on the picture in the document to learn more about each object; they are linked to the museum’s collections database.](#) The situations are all things she mentioned in Elizabeth’s diary, although the cards are written from the point of view of her children.

Print the cards in the accompanying document, 1 copy for each group of players, and cut out.

Hints to make it easier to play, but not necessary:

- Print on thicker paper, or glue to index cards
 - Print the “object cards” on white paper and the “situation cards” on a different color
1. Deal 3 object cards to each player. Players take turns being the “citizen.”
 2. The first citizen draws a Situation card and reads it aloud.
 3. Other players each select 1 card from their hand and give to the citizen. Players argue why their object would be the most helpful in this situation, using the information on the card plus any creative reasoning.
 4. The citizen chooses which object would be most helpful; the winning player keeps the Situation card and the player next to the citizen becomes the new citizen. Players each draw 1 card, bringing the total in their hands back up to 3.
 5. Play continues until all players have had an equal number of times being the citizen. The winner is the player who has collected the most Situation cards. Players may continue for as many rounds as they like, shuffling and re-dealing the cards as needed.

DISCUSSION / WRITING PROMPTS

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

Grade 5: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.5.2, 3, 8, W.5.1, SL.5.1, 2, 4

Grades 6-8: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1, 2, 4, 6, 8

Use any of the following as group discussion questions or writing prompts:

What evidence can you find of Elizabeth's attitudes towards the British and American armies?

Are there any "good guys", from her point of view? If so, who? How do you know?

What does Elizabeth seem most concerned about?

Find a problem that came up, and how Elizabeth handled it; would you do something similar, or would you respond differently?

Read the Third Amendment to the Constitution (printed on next page).

What did Elizabeth think about soldiers being quartered in her home?

After hearing Elizabeth's experience, what do you think of this amendment?

Do you think it's important enough to be a part of the Constitution?

How would you react to soldiers being quartered in your home?

Elizabeth was still alive when this amendment was ratified. Do you think she agreed with it?

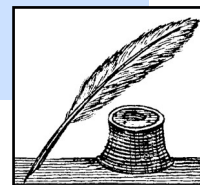
THIRD AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

The United States Constitution is the basic set of laws for the country. It outlines how the government is organized and what it has the power to do.

The states ratified the Constitution in 1790, but it was not a perfect document! Since then there have been many changes, called amendments.

This is the Third Amendment:

No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.



Elizabeth Drinker had both American and British soldiers quartered (living) in her home at different times. After reading Elizabeth's experience, what do you think of this amendment? Do you think it's important enough to be a part of the Constitution? How would you react to soldiers moving into your home?

Elizabeth was still alive when this amendment was ratified. Do you think she agreed with it?

WARSHIP EXPLODES!

COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

Grade 5: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.3, RI.5.3, 6

Grades 6-8: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.6, 7, 8, 9

Whose account do you believe?

The British man-of-war (or warship) *Augusta* exploded during the Battle of Red Bank on October 23, 1777. It was the largest British ship lost during the American Revolution, and Elizabeth Drinker felt the explosion from her location in Philadelphia.

Give students the following 4 pages. After they read the different accounts of this incident and see the different illustrations depicting it, have them follow the prompt to consider a comparison with their own lives. They should consider how varying perspectives might result in a different result; whose account would be the most believable? Even people who witness the same event end up with a different interpretation of it. How might this change their approach in reading about events, both current and historic?

If you are interested in hearing more about the *Augusta*, watch this lecture from the museum's video archives: <https://youtu.be/ORIYYpRXpJA> (36 minutes)

WARSHIP EXPLODES!

The British man-of-war (or warship) *Augusta* exploded during the Battle of Red Bank on October 23, 1777. It was the largest British ship lost during the American Revolution, and Elizabeth Drinker felt the explosion from her home in Philadelphia.



After the ship's explosion, it stayed stuck in the Delaware River for over 100 years until members of the Daughters of the American Revolution had the wood removed and made into part of their office building, which is now a museum.

The wood walls, ceiling, and furniture in this room are all made out of wood from the *Augusta*.



WARSHIP EXPLODES!

Read and look at the 5 ways different people described or showed the ship's explosion, and think about who probably knows the most about what happened.

Then choose something that happened to you, or that you saw happen. Write or draw how you would show or describe it, and then how three other people might show or describe it:

- A close family member or friend
- Someone you don't know who just happened to be there
- Someone from 100 years in the future

Would they get all the facts correct?

Would they try to make it seem better or worse?



WARSHIP EXPLODES!

Journal of Elizabeth Drinker, October 23, 1777:

1

“...the *Augustia* Man of War, of 64 Guns, she took fire, and after burning near 2 hours, blew up. The loss of this fine vessel is accounted for in different ways. Some say she took fire by accident; others that it was occasioned by red hot Bullets from Mud-Island Battery... It was between 11 and 12, near noon, when the *Augusta* blew up—many were not sensible of any shock—others were. It was very plain to those who were at meeting, as this is fifth day, and appeared to some like an earthquake. Oswald Eve and Chalkley James went on the top of our house this morning with a spy-glass, but could discover nothing but smoke...”

A letter from Commodore John Hazelwood to George Washington, October 23, 1777:

2

“This will acquaint Your Excellency that early this morning we carried all our Galleys to Action, & after a long & heavy firing we drove the enemys Ships down the River except a 64 Gun Ship [the *Augusta*] & a small Frigate [the *Merlin*], which we obliged them to quit as they go ton Shore & by accidence the 64 Gun Ship blew up & the Frigate they set on fire themselves, took the people all out & quitted them...”

Court-Martial Testimony of Captain Francis Reynolds, November 26, 1777:

3

Reynolds: “...about eleven o’Clock, as I was on the Quarter deck with the Master & his Nephew Mr. Reid, I thought I heard an odd Crackling kind of Noise, I sent Mr. Reid into the Cabin to see what it was, he returned and told me, the Ship was on fire, I found the Sides, afterpart of the Ship, and above the Cabin all in flames, every means were then used to put it out but without any Effect; The fire becoming more general, my attention was then to save the people.”

Court: “Can you tell what was the occasion of the Fire?”

Reynolds: “No.”

WARSHIP EXPLODES!

4



Painting by Gasgil, an artist and naval officer, a few years after the event

In the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

5



“The Attack of the Augusta & Merlin”

Stained and painted glass window in the DAR Museum, made 1923.

WHEN THE REVOLUTION COMES TO TOWN

The Scene: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Time: 1777

The Characters (*and age at the start of the story in January 1777*):



Elizabeth Drinker

(age 42, born 1735)

Henry Drinker

(age 43, born 1734)



Their children:

Sarah “Sally” (15, born October 1761)

Ann (13, born January 1764)

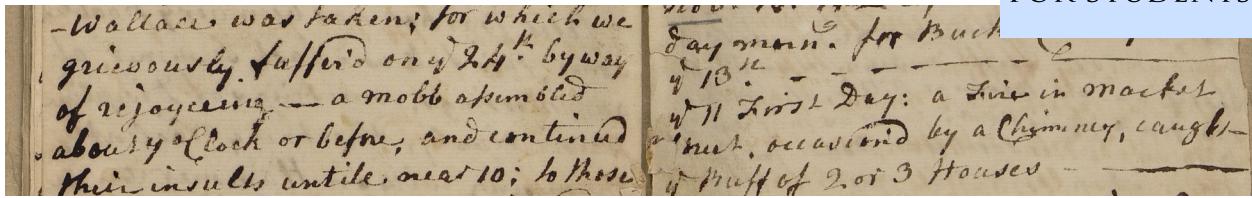
William “Billy” (10, born January 1767)

Henry (6, born October 1770)

Mary “Molly” (2, born March 1774)

The capitalization and punctuation are exactly as Elizabeth wrote in her diary.

We changed her spelling to the modern way, to make it easier to read.



1777

January 25, 1777. We had 5 American Soldiers quartered upon us by order of the Counsel of Safety – the Soldiers named Adam Wise, Henry Feating, these two stayed 2 or 3 days with us, the rest went off in an hour or two after they came.

June 5. an Officer with 2 Constables called on us for Blankets, went away without any – as others had done 3 or 4 times before.

July 4. – the Town Illuminated and a great number of Windows Broke on the Anniversary of Independence and Freedom.

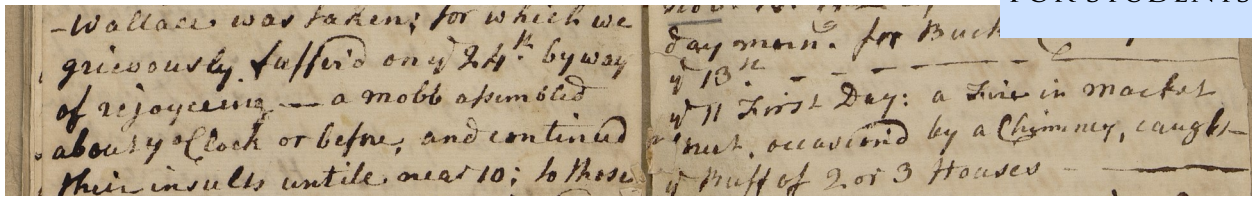
September 2. third Day – Henry having been, and continuing to be unwell, stayed from meeting this morning. he went towards Noon into the front Parlor to copy the Monthly meeting minutes – the Book on the Desk – and the Desk unlocked, when William Bradford; one [Bluser] and Ervin, entered, offering a Parole for him to sign – which was refused. they then seized on the Book and took several papers out of the Desk and carried them off; intimating their design of calling the next morning at 9 o'clock; and desiring Henry to stay at home for that time, which as he was unwell, was necessary; they according called the 4th, in the morning and took my Henry to the [Mason's] lodge – in an illegal, unprecedented manner – where are several, other Friends with some of other persuasions, made prisoners...

Elizabeth Drinker and her family were Quakers, or as they called themselves, the Religious Society of Friends. They used a different system to refer to the days of the week, calling them by their number: First Day (Sunday) through Seventh Day (Saturday).

Quaker religious beliefs included not fighting in wars or swearing oaths, which would include the document Henry is being asked to sign.

September 9. ...My self Sally and little Molly went this Afternoon to the Lodge, during my stay there, word was brought from the Council that their Banishment was concluded to be on the Morrow, the Wagons were preparing to carry them off – I came home in great distress...

Several Quaker men are arrested under suspicion of British sympathies, and later sent to Winchester, Virginia, when they would not swear allegiance to America.



September 12. ...this has been a day of Great Confusion to many in this City; which I have in great measure been kept out of by my constant attention on my sick Child. part of Washington's Army has been routed, and have been seen coming into Town in Great Numbers; the particulars of the Battle, I have not attended to, the slain is said to be very numerous. – hundreds of their muskets laying in the road, which those that made off have thrown down... the Wounded have been brought in this Afternoon, to what amount I have not learnt...

September 15. ...last night I heard of several Friends having lost their Horses, taken from the Stables, – for which reason I ordered our Horse, and Cow to be put into the Washhouse, where they at present remain...

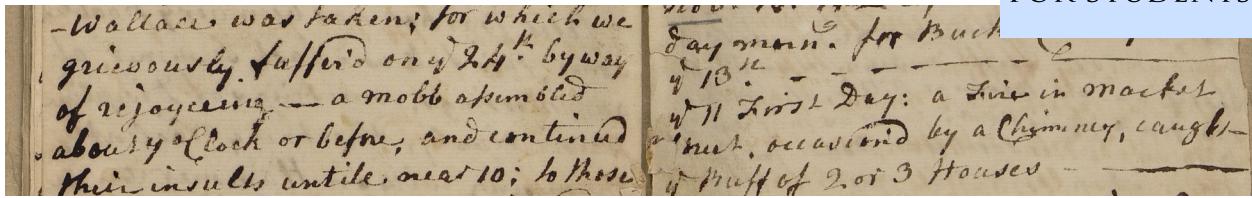
September 21. ... this Evening our little sick Son received a letter from his dear Father, which is well worth the store he sits by it, he has ordered it to be put in his Pocket-Book While he learns to read writing...

September 26. Well, here are the English in earnest, about 2 or 3000, came in, through second street, without opposition or interruption, no plundering on the one side or the other, what a satisfaction would it be to our dear Absent Friends, could they but be informed of it...

October 23. this day will be remembered by many; the 2500 Hessians who crossed the River the day before yesterday, were last Night driven back 2 or 3 times, in

Hessians = German mercenary soldiers employed by the British

endeavoring to Storm the fort on Red Bank, 200 slain and great Numbers wounded the firing this Morning seemed to be incessant, from the Battery, the Gondelows, and the Augustia Man of War, of 64 Guns, she took fire, and after burning near 2 hours, blew up. The loss of this fine vessel is accounted for in different ways. Some say she took fire by accident; others that it was occasioned by red hot Bullets from Mud-Island Battery... It was between 11 and 12, near noon, when the Augusta blew up – many were not sensible of any shock – others were. It was very plain to those who were at meeting, as this is fifth day, and appeared to some like an earthquake. Oswald Eve and Chalkley James went on the top of our house this morning with a spy-glass, but could discover nothing but smoke. The Hessians and other of the British Troops are encamped in the Jerseys, this Night, we can see their fires for a considerable distance along the shore...



October 25. ...An Officer called to Day to know if General Grant could have quarters with us; I told him as my Husband was from me, and a Number of Young Children round me, I should be glad to be excused – he replied, as I desired it, it should be so...

November 5. ...A Soldier came to demand Blankets, which I did not in any wise agree to, notwithstanding my refusal he went up stairs and took one, and with seeming good Nature begged I would excuse his borrowing it, as it was General Howe's orders...

December 13. ... John Gillingham was lately stopped in the Street, after Night, and his Watch taken from him. we daily hear of enormities of one kind or other, being committed by those from whom, we ought to find protection.

December 18. ... An Officer who calls himself Major Carmon or Carmant, called this Afternoon, to look for Quarters for some Officer of distinction, I plead off, he would have persuaded me that it was a necessary protection at these times to have one in the House; said I must consider of it, that he would call in a day or two, I desired to be excused, and after some more talk we parted, he behaved with much politeness, which has not been the case at many other places; they have been very rude and impudent at some houses, – I wish I may come off so; but at same time fear we must have some with us, as many Friends have them, and it seems likely to be a general thing. This has been a trying day to my Spirits.... I have just finished a Letter to my dearest tis now past 12 o'clock, and Watch has put me in a flutter, by his violent barking, as if some one was in the Alley, which I believe was the case...

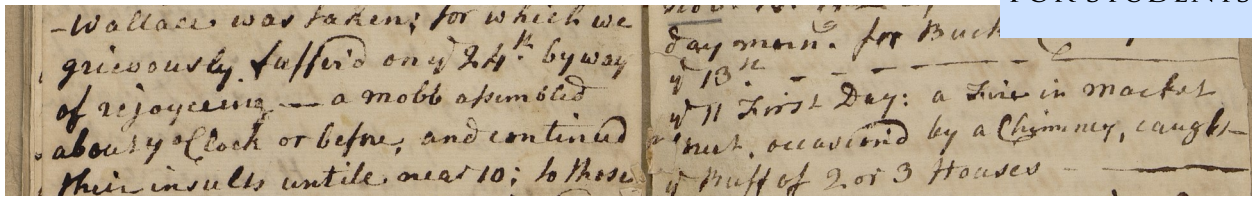
December 29. very clear and cold, Cramond here this morning, we have at last agreed on his coming to take up his abode with us, I hope it will be no great inconvenience, though I have many fears...

Major James Cramond is a British officer quartered (living) in Elizabeth's house.

December 31. James Cramond who is now become one of our Family, appears to be a thoughtful sober young man, his Servant also sober and orderly; which is a great favor to us...

1778

January 19, 1778. This Morning our officer moved his lodgings from the blue Chamber to the little front parlor, so that he has the two front Parlors, a Chamber up two pair of stairs for his baggage, and the Stable wholly to himself, besides the use of the Kitchen...



February 7. ... it is now between 11 and 12 o'clock, and our Officer has company at Supper with him; the late hours he keeps is the greatest inconvenience we have as yet suffered by having him in the House.

February 17. ... our major had 8 or 10 to dine with him, they broke up in good time, but he's gone off with them and when he'll return I know not, I gave him some hints 2 or 3 days ago, and he has behaved better since...

April 6. ...requested an audience with the General – set with his Wife, (a sociable pretty kind of Woman)... it was not long before George Washington came and discoursed with us freely, but not so long as we could have wished, as dinner was served in, to which he had invited us, there was 15 of the Officers besides the General and his Wife... we had an elegant dinner, which was soon over; when we went out with the General's Wife up to her Chamber, and saw no more of him, – he told us, he could do nothing in our business further than granting us a pass to Lancaster, which he did...

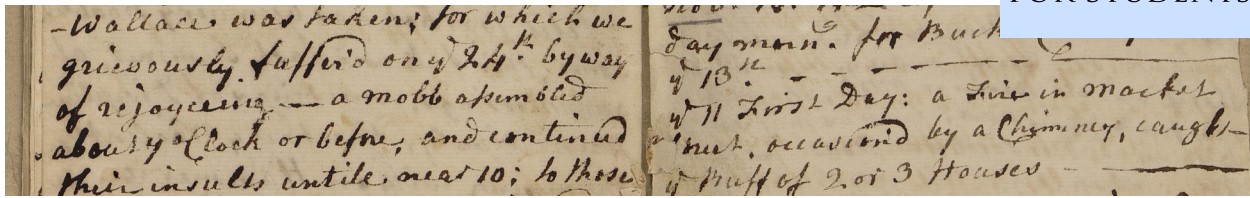
Elizabeth and a group of women travel to southeastern Pennsylvania to convince the Continental Congress to let their husbands go free. She hopes George Washington can help their case.

April 30. ...we arrived about 11 o'clock, and found our dear Families all well, for which favor and Blessing and the restoration of my dear Husband, may I ever be thankful...

After 7 months, Henry Drinker is released and allowed to return home. He and the other banished Quakers were never charged with a crime.

May 30. Henry better, Molly still poorly – tis reported that the British Army are giving the remainder of their Stores of Wood and Hay, to the poor, which seems to prove they intend ere long to leave us...

June 18. last night it was said there was 9000 of the British Troops left in Town 11,000 in the Jerseys: this Morning when we arose, there was not one Red-Coat to be seen in Town; and the encampment, in the Jerseys vanished – Colonel Gordon and some others, had not been gone a quarter of an hour before the American Light-Horse entered the City, not many of them, they were in and out all day A Bell-Man went about this evening by order of one Colonel Morgan, to desire the Inhabitants, to stay within doors after Night, that if any were found in the street by the Patrol, they should be punished – the few that came in today, had drawn Swords in their Hands, Galloped about the Streets in a great hurry, many were much frightened at their appearance...



July 4. ... A great fuss this evening it being the Anniversary of Independence, firing of Guns, Sky Rockets &c – Candles were too scarce and dear, for Illuminations, which perhaps saved some of our Windows... moderate weather.

1779

June 15, 1779. ... George Pickering came this Afternoon for the Nonassosiation fine ... he took a Looking-Glass ... 6 new Fashioned Pewter Plates and a 3 qt. pewter Basin, little or nothing the worse for the wear...

The “Association” was the group of people who started the Pennsylvania militia, and they charged a fine to anyone who refused to serve in the militia.

1780

June 10, 1780. James Pickering a Captain at the Corner of race street – and 6 or 8 others with Bayonets fixed – came and demanded our Horses – after some talk they went and broke open the Stable took a fine Horse bought some time ago of William Smith for 16 half Joes – and a Mare belonging to J Drinker – they took Horses from many others. – they now act under a Martial Law – lately proclaimed...

Half Joe = a Portuguese gold coin

1781

October 28, 1781. ... the 17th. of this month October General Cornwallace was taken; for which we grievously suffered on the 24th. by way of rejoicing – a mob assembled about 7 o'clock or before, and continued their insults until near 10; to those whose Houses were not illuminated scarcely one Friend's House escaped we had near 70 panes of Glass broken the sash lights and two panels of the front parlor broke in pieces – the Door cracked and Violently burst open, when they threw Stones into the House for some time but did not enter – some fared better and some worse – some Houses after breaking the door they entered, and destroyed the furniture etc. – many women and Children were frightened into fits, and 'tis a mercy no lives were lost.

The surrender of General Cornwallace at the Battle of Yorktown ends the American Revolutionary War.

Sash lights = glass window panes