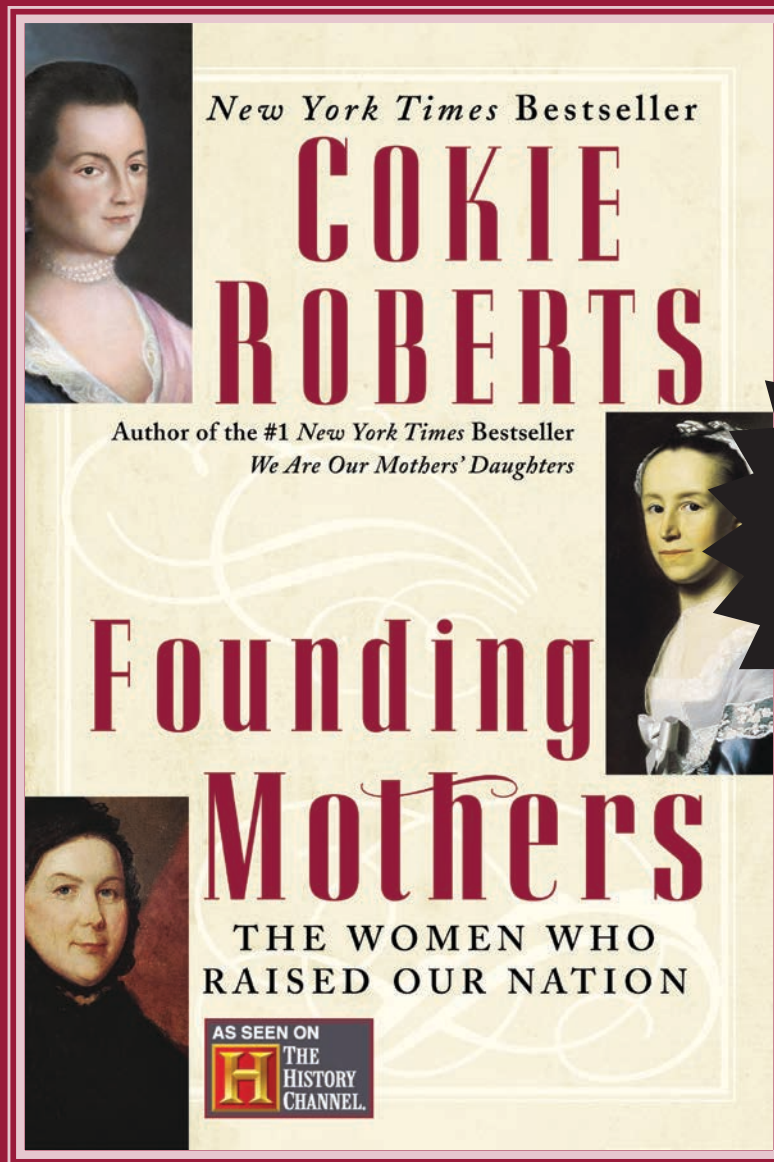


A TEACHER'S GUIDE TO



**ALIGNED
TO THE
COMMON
CORE**

“Roberts offers a much-needed look at the unheralded sacrifices and heroism of colonial women.”

—*Booklist*

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

Founding Mothers tells the story of the fascinating women who influenced the men who helped establish America. From well-known women—like the fiercely intelligent Abigail Adams and our founding First Lady, Martha Washington—to lesser known, but equally compelling women, like the entrepreneurial Eliza Pinckney and Revolutionary writer Mercy Otis Warren, *Founding Mothers* will engage students by giving them a new lens from which to view the story of our nation's birth. *Founding Mothers* meets the standard for **Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity** for all high school grade levels. Schools are encouraged to adopt the text at the grade level where it best fits with ELA and Social Studies curriculum. It is an excellent anchor text for courses in American history and American literature.

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The questions and activities in this teaching guide were written to support standards-based instruction and are directly linked to many of the Common Core State Standards for ELA and Social Studies. The primary areas of connection are in the ELA standards for **Writing and Reading: Informational Texts** for grades 11–12 and in the literacy standards for **Key Ideas and Details** and **Craft and Structure** in **History/Social Studies**. A complete list of the Common Core State Standards can be found at <http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards>.

This Teacher's Guide is divided into two sections. The first, "Guided Reading Questions," will help students with reading comprehension and understanding. The second section, "Research and Writing Topics" will encourage students to engage in significant research and writing projects related to the text.

BEFORE YOU READ

Divide the class into small groups and, using chart paper posted around the room, ask them to write descriptions of what they think life was like for a wealthy American woman in the eighteenth century. Guide them to consider a woman's experience regarding education, marriage, social activities, and daily life. What do they think would have been the most difficult thing about being a woman in the eighteenth century? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1**

Guided Reading Questions

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

AUTHOR'S NOTE AND INTRODUCTION

1. According to Cokie Roberts, what was her purpose in writing *Founding Mothers*? What made researching the book particularly challenging? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9
2. Ask students to examine the bibliography of the book. What sources did Roberts use to construct her narrative? Why are these sources appropriate and effective? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6
3. What inspired Roberts to begin examining the lives of the women that influenced the Founding Fathers? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
4. The introduction of the book includes a brief overview of many of the women whose stories will be detailed in later chapters. Of the women Roberts mentions, which one do you find the most intriguing? Why? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

CHAPTER ONE - BEFORE 1775: THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

1. How did Eliza Lucas end up in charge of running three plantations when she was only sixteen years old? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
2. By reading the excerpts from her letters on pages 2-3, what can you infer about Eliza's personality? How did she feel about marriage? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
3. What evidence can you find to support the idea that Eliza Lucas had an entrepreneurial spirit? What was her most successful enterprise? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
4. Who did Eliza end up marrying? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
5. Why did Eliza begin cultivating silkworms? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
6. Explain the political circumstances that led to Eliza and Charles Pinckney moving to England and then returning to South Carolina. How had conditions in the colony changed during their absence? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3
7. Eliza Pinckney initially considered herself a loyal British subject, and her sons Charles and Thomas were educated in England. What caused the family to begin considering the need for Independence? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3
8. Describe Eliza Pinckney's position regarding slavery. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
9. What "advantages" might have allowed Eliza Pinckney to accomplish more than many other eighteenth century women? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2
10. How did marriage impact the lives of women in terms of their legal rights and physical health? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
11. Explain the concept of the "domestic sphere" (pg. 14). CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.4
12. Describe Esther Burr's childhood. What role did her father play in the Great Awakening? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
13. How did marriage and motherhood affect Esther Burr? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
14. Describe the friendship between Esther and Annis Boudinor. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1

15. Research the life of Esther's son, Aaron Burr. Why is he infamous? Do you think his adult life would have been markedly different if his mother had lived to raise him? Explain your answer. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2
16. Describe Deborah Read's relationship with Benjamin Franklin. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
17. Who was Jane Franklin Mecom? Describe her relationship with Benjamin Franklin.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
18. Describe Sally Franklin's relationship with her father. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
19. What was life in England like for Benjamin Franklin during the passage of the Stamp Act? Contrast his experience with the experience of his wife and daughter. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2**
20. Who did Sally Franklin marry? How did her father react to her engagement and marriage?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
21. Why did Benjamin Franklin eventually return to America? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1

CHAPTER TWO – 1775-76 INDEPENDENCE

1. Pick one of the Acts mentioned on pages 37-38 and read the primary source. Why would the Act have angered the colonists? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5**
2. What role did women play in protesting "taxation without representation?" **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
3. What activities did the Daughters of Liberty organize? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
4. Summarize the key events that lead to the establishment of the Continental Congress. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
5. Who was Mary Katherine Goddard (p. 45)? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
6. What role did Mercy Otis Warren play during the American Revolution? What did she believe about the role of women?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
7. Who was Catherine Macaulay? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
8. Describe the friendships between Catherine Macaulay, Abigail Adams, Hannah Winthrop, and Mercy Otis Warren. What did the women agree about? What topics did they have differing opinions about? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2**
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3
9. Who was Phillis Wheatley? What characteristics do her writings share with the works of Mercy Otis Warren?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3**
10. Describe Mercy Otis Warren's influence on the men she corresponded with. How did she influence her husband's involvement in the Revolutionary War? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3**
11. Describe the early years of John and Abigail Adams's relationship. What details suggest that Abigail was a lively match for John? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
12. What events led to Abigail becoming interested in politics? Describe the extent of her political involvement.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3 **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3**
13. How did Abigail demonstrate that she possessed bravery? What praise did her husband give her as a result of her "fortitude?" (p. 68)? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
14. Describe Abigail Adams's position regarding slavery. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1** **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
15. Describe Abigail Adams's position regarding the emancipation and education of women. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1**
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

16. What did Abigail Adams mean when she wrote to her husband and asked him to “remember the ladies?”
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

CHAPTER THREE – 1776-1778: WAR AND A NASCENT NATION

1. This chapter begins with the stories of two “women warriors” who fought on the battlefield. Provide a brief synopsis of the contributions that Molly Pitcher (or Mary Hays) and Margaret Corbin made to the revolutionary effort.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2
2. Explain the role that women played on the battlefield. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
3. Describe the role that female spies played during the Revolutionary War. What tactics did they use to aid the troops?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
4. Who was Deborah Sampson? What aspects of her story did you find the most remarkable?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
5. Describe the courtship of George and Martha Washington. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
6. Explain the circumstances that led to Martha’s decision to join her husband on the battlefield.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
7. Who were Lucy Knox and Catharine Greene? How did they end up forging a close friendship with Martha Washington?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
8. Explain the story of Betsy Ross and the sewing of the first American flag. Although historians have questioned the story’s veracity, what facts suggest that elements of the story may be true? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8
9. Describe Martha Washington’s attitude towards slavery. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
10. What services did Martha Washington and the officers’ wives provide for the troops? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
11. Explain the circumstances that caused John and Abigail Adams to be physically separated for long periods of their marriage. What trials did Abigail have to face on her own? How did she manage in John’s absence?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
12. How did her friends Mercy Otis Warren and Hannah Storer respond to Abigail’s distress over her husband’s appointment as commissioner to France? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
13. Explain how Mary Bartlett’s story illustrates the “crucial role that women played” while their husbands “fought battles and formed the laws of a new nation” (p.105). CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
14. Describe the challenges and dangers that women such as Margaret Livingston, Annis Boudinot Stockton, and Sarah and Susan Jay faced at the hands of invading British troops. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2

CHAPTER FOUR - 1778-1782: STILL MORE WAR AND HOME-FRONT ACTIVISM

1. Describe Eliza Pinckney’s relationships with her grown children: Harriott, Thomas, and Charles.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3
2. What service did Eliza’s daughter, Harriott, provide to the revolutionary hero Francis Marion (the “Swamp Fox”)?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
3. What happened to Eliza Pinckney’s home and finances as a result of the war? Why would this sort of devastating loss be even more difficult for a woman to recover from? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

4. Describe life at camp for the officers' wives. What challenges did they face? What diversions did they enjoy? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
5. How did the Women of America plan to demonstrate their patriotism? What tactics did they use to spread information about their movement? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
6. Describe Esther DeBerdt Reed's family and girlhood. How did she end up living in America and advocating for patriotic causes? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3**
7. What was the purpose of the document "Sentiments of an American Woman?" What were the goals of this first "women's movement?" How successful were the women? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3**
8. Explain the disagreement that Esther DeBerdt Reed and George Washington had over how the funds raised by the American women would be spent. How was the disagreement resolved? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
9. Summarize the story of Peggy and Benedict Arnold. What crime was Benedict Arnold accused of committing? What role did his wife play in the plot? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
10. As the war continued to drag on, what personal challenges did Martha Washington and Kitty Greene face as they struggled to balance their family responsibilities with the demands of being with their husbands at camp? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**

CHAPTER FIVE – 1782-1787: PEACE AND DIPLOMACY

1. Where was Benjamin Franklin during much of the Revolutionary period? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
2. Explain the connection between the Greene and Franklin families. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
3. Contrast the life that Benjamin Franklin enjoyed with the life his sister and daughter lived in his absence. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
4. What subjects caused tension between John and Abigail Adams during his sojourn in France? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
5. What impact did the Massachusetts constitution have on the slave Elizabeth "Mumbet" Freeman? What important precedent was set as a result of her lawsuit? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3**
6. How did Abigail Adams demonstrate her skill at business during her husband's extended appointment to Europe? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
7. Describe the reasons behind the tension between Benjamin Franklin and John Adams. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
8. Who was Martha Laurens? What were her accomplishments? What challenges did she face as she struggled to navigate her family's expectations with her desire to control her own life? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
9. Why did John and Sally Jay travel to Spain? What evidence suggests that Sally Jay had an optimistic spirit and sense of adventure? How did she respond to the challenges she faced? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
10. Describe the series of legislation that led to the declaration of peace between the United States and Great Britain. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2**
11. Explain the reasons that John and Abigail had for hesitating to reunite in Europe. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3**
12. How did Abigail respond to her journey overseas? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**

13. Why did Thomas Jefferson refuse to travel to Paris? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
14. What details suggest that Jefferson was deeply devoted to his wife Martha? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
15. Describe the education that Jefferson dictated for his daughter Patsy. What details suggest that he was a devoted father? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
16. Describe the friendship between Abigail Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Why do you think they enjoyed writing to each other? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
17. What aspect of Catherine Macaulay's personal life caused a scandal? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
18. What subjects were a source of disagreement between Thomas Jefferson and Abigail Adams? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
19. Explain the differing opinions that John and Abigail Adams held regarding the structure of the American government. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.13 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3

CHAPTER SIX – 1787-1789: CONSTITUTION AND THE FIRST ELECTION

1. What was life at Mount Vernon like for George and Martha Washington? Explain the challenges that public life posed for Martha. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
2. What details suggest that George Washington had a strained relationship with his mother? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
3. What was the purpose of the Constitutional Convention? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
4. Who were Elizabeth Schuyler's parents? What brave act was her mother, Catherine, known for? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
5. How did Alexander Hamilton meet Elizabeth Schuyler? What qualities was he looking for in a future wife? In your opinion, did Elizabeth meet his "qualifications"? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
6. Describe Benjamin Franklin's relationship with his grown daughter. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
7. Why do you think the Founding Fathers felt that they needed to conduct their deliberations at the Convention in secret? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
8. What details suggest that Molly Morris was interested in politics? What did her husband, Robert Morris, do to help establish America's independence? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
9. Who was Anne Bingham? What did she believe about the engagement of women in political discourse? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
10. Who did Dolley Payne marry? How did she meet her husband? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
11. Why was the name of the Randolph plantation ("Bizarre") an ironically appropriate name? Provide a summary of the scandal that involved Nancy Randolph. Who did she end up marrying? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
12. Explain the role that women played in the ratification of the Constitution. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
13. Why was Mercy Otis Warren critical of the Constitution? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

14. How did Martha Washington respond to her husband's election as the first president of the United States?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1

CHAPTER SEVEN – AFTER 1789: RAISING A NATION

1. Describe the inaugural festivities celebrating the election of George Washington. How do they compare to modern-day inaugurations? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
2. Examine the potential titles for George Washington (p. 229). What are the connotations of each name? Why do you think the Founding Fathers decided that "President of the United States" was the most appropriate title?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.4
3. As First Lady, what two ideals was Martha Washington expected to embody (p. 230)?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
4. Why was it symbolically important for George and Martha Washington to wear "homespun" clothes rather than European fashions? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
5. Why did Abigail Adams dislike James Madison? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
6. As First Lady, what were Martha Washington's primary responsibilities? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
7. Describe the relationship between Martha Washington and Abigail Adams. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
8. What role did Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, Henry Knox and John Jay play in the newly established federal government? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2
9. Explain how the United States capital ended up moving from New York to Philadelphia. CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
10. Why did Washington decide to tour the southern states? What did he discover on his tour?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
11. Explain the circumstances that led to George Washington visiting Eliza Pinckney and Kitty Greene.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
12. Why did Kitty Greene petition Congress? What was the result of her petition? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
13. What role did Kitty Greene play in the invention of the cotton gin? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
14. After the revolution, what cause did the Founding Mothers begin to advocate for? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
15. Why would it have been significant that Mercy Otis Warren finally published a book under her own name? What does this suggest about the role that women might play in the newly founded United States of America?
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3
16. Which European book greatly influenced American women? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
17. Which state was the first to grant women the right to vote? CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
18. Explain the role that Maria Reynolds played in the political scandal that damaged the reputation of Alexander Hamilton.
CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.3 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3

19. What rhetorical tactics did Eliza Powel use to try to convince George Washington to continue his role as President (p. 262)? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6**
20. Which men ran for President after George Washington? What was the outcome of the election? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**
21. What praise did George Washington offer the women of America? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.1 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1**

Research and Writing Topics

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5

ARGUMENTATION PROMPTS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.1a-e Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

1. In the introduction to *Founding Mothers*, Roberts explains the effect that hearing the story of her male ancestor, William Claiborne, had on her: "It was a story I loved to hear. It made me feel connected to the very beginnings of our government. But for me to feel truly connected, I needed to know something more. I needed to know what the women in his life were doing while Claiborne embarked on his many adventures." Do you agree with the thesis that in order to feel connected to history, we need to be able learn about the experiences of people that share our identity in some way (ex. gender, race, religion)? What does this suggest about the way history should be taught? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9**
2. The lives of the Founding Mothers were dictated in large part by their inability to make choices regarding family planning. Research the path towards reproductive rights for women. When were women first given access to medical information about preventing pregnancy? Who had access to this information? When were women given access to methods of contraception? How did the advent and accessibility of reliable methods of birth control impact the women's movement? Why does this issue continue to be a topic of debate? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8**
3. The subject of educating women was important to many of the Founding Mothers, including Abigail Adams. Research the history of education in America. How were girls educated in the eighteenth century? Who were some of the early pioneers in women's education? Are girls now given equal educational opportunities? You may want to examine the current debate about the lack of women in STEM fields. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8**
4. To explain her silence regarding her reunion with her husband John, Abigail Adams noted: "Poets and painters wisely draw a veil over those scenes which surpass the pen of the one and the pencil of the other" (p. 176). Consider her statement as a reference point for a close reading of Tim O'Brien's "[How to Tell a True War Story](#)". Compose an argument that examines whether or not poets and painters can ever convey the "emotional truth" of an event. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9**
5. Read at least one selection from [The Federalist Papers](#) written by each of the document's three male authors and compose an argument that examines the influence that Sarah Livingston Jay, Dolley Payne Todd Madison, and Elizabeth Schuyler Hamilton may have had on their husbands' political discourse. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9b CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.8 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5**
6. Compare Judith Murray's 1790 essay "[On Equality of the Sexes](#)" (p.252) with Virginia Woolf's 1929 essay "[A Room of One's Own](#)". Analyze each author's use of rhetorical strategies. What are the similarities in the documents? What does the fact that the two essays were written almost 140 years apart suggest about the struggle for equal rights? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.8 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5**
7. The extramarital affair between Maria Reynolds and Alexander Hamilton damaged Hamilton's reputation (p. 259). Re-

search the role that sexual scandals have played in politics. How have the women that participated in the affairs been portrayed? How have the men's careers been impacted by the scandals? Why do you think sexual scandals continue to engage the public's interest? Is marital fidelity a necessary quality for a leader? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8

8. Read Mercy Otis Warren's play *The Group* and analyze Warren's use of satire as a rhetorical strategy. What made this play an effective piece of political propaganda? Compare her play to a modern example of political satire. Why does satire related to politics remain a popular rhetorical device? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9a CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6**
9. Research Shays' Rebellion. Why was this a critical and divisive moment in American history? Consider the differing opinions that Abigail Adams and Thomas Jefferson held regarding the rebellion (p. 183). Can you see any similarities between Shays' Rebellion and modern political protest movements? Hold a class debate over whether or not Shays' Rebellion was justified. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.1a-d**
10. Martha Washington once observed that "the greater part of our happiness or misery depends upon our dispositions, and not upon our circumstances" (p.238). Compose an argumentative essay that agrees or disagrees with her statement. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9**

INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY PROMPTS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.2a-e Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

1. Several of the Founding Mothers participated in the dangerous smallpox inoculation. Research the development of the smallpox vaccine and compose a thoroughly documented and correctly cited paper that examines the development of the vaccine and its impact on public health. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8**
2. Compare the way that Cokie Roberts depicts the marriage of John and Abigail Adams with the portrayal of their marriage in the 2008 miniseries *John Adams*. Compose a thoughtful analysis of the miniseries. What aspects of John and Abigail did the actors and director "get right"? What did they embellish or omit? What was the overall effect of the dramatic interpretation? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9**
3. Read and analyze Esther DeBerdt Reed's influential broadside, "[The Sentiments of an American Woman](#)." What rhetorical strategies did Reed use to appeal to her audience? What was her call to action? Using Reed's broadside as your guide, create your own public awareness campaign about an issue that interests you. Include both a written component (a broadside, letter to the editor, or persuasive speech) and a multimedia component (a poster, webpage, or public service announcement). **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.6 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5**
4. Many of the homes of the Founding Mothers (and Founding Fathers) have been maintained as museums. Research one of these historical locations and create a travel video that promotes visiting the historical site. Your video must include a virtual tour of the home and an explanation of its historical significance. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5**
5. *Founding Mothers* details the stories of a wide variety of women who did remarkable things during the Revolutionary period of American history. Choose one of the women mentioned in the book to research. Using your research, create a graphic novel or children's book about the woman you selected. (As a reference, look at Laurie Halse Anderson's picture book, *Thank You Sarah: The Woman Who Saved Thanksgiving*). Be sure to include a bibliography of sources. As a culminating activity, you may choose to read your book to an elementary school via Skype or in person. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5**

6. On page 209, Roberts discusses the difficulty that Anne Randolph Morris's husband, Gouverneur, had choosing the exact wording of the Constitution. Examine the syntax and diction of the [Constitution](#). Compose a thorough analysis of the Constitution, including a thoughtful examination of the connotative and denotative meanings of Morris's language. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.9**
7. Writing about the demands of the role of First Lady, Martha Washington observed: "They call me First Lady in the land and think I must be extremely happy. They might more properly call me Chief State Prisoner" (p.235). Research the demands and expectations of being the First Lady of the United States. What are the expectations of the role? How much freedom and/or independence does the First Lady enjoy? What are the written and unwritten rules governing her behavior and appearance? How has the role of First Lady changed over time? **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8**
8. Select a First Lady (from Martha Washington through Michelle Obama) and research her life, looking for details about her childhood, education, and marriage. What challenges did she face once her husband became President? What causes did she advocate? How does (or will) history remember her? Prepare an informative speech about the woman that you selected and share your findings with the class. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.9 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.4 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.8**

NARRATIVE PROMPTS

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.3a-e Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

1. One of the first Founding Mothers was the spirited Eliza Pinckney. After becoming a mother, she composed a list of "resolutions" that she hoped to attain. Examine Eliza's list of resolutions on page 7 and compose a personal essay that explains your own list of "resolutions" for self-improvement in response to Pinckney's list. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4**
2. Abigail Adams wrote to her husband, "My pen is always freer than my tongue, I have written many things to you that I suppose I never could have talked" (p. 61). Write a letter to someone (a relative, friend, romantic partner, or even yourself) where you express how much you appreciate or care about him or her in ways that you "never could have talked". **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4**
3. Much of what historians know about the relationship between John and Abigail Adams comes from the extensive collection of their letters. Examine the [public archive of their correspondence](#). Using the Adams's letters as inspiration, compose a work of narrative fiction or drama that tells the story of a relationship through a series of letters. For reference, you may wish to look at A.R. Gurney's award winning play *Love Letters*. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7**
4. One of the most intriguing stories in Roberts's book involves Anne Randolph Morris (p. 209-217). What do you think really happened on the Randolph plantation? Compose a narrative piece of short fiction that describes the events at Bizarre from the point of view of Anne, Judith, Richard, John, or Theodorick. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.4 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.7**
5. Interview your family members to learn the stories of some of your own "founding mothers." Who are the women that shaped your family? What trials or obstacles did they face? What did they accomplish? Create a multimedia presentation about the remarkable women in your own family tree. **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.11-12.6 CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.11-12.5**

The Works of Cokie Roberts

Founding Mothers: The Women Who Raised Our Nation

From This Day Forward with Steven Roberts

Ladies of Liberty: The Women Who Shaped Our Nation

We Are Our Mothers' Daughters: Revised and Expanded Edition

Other Books of Interest

Abigail and John: Portrait of a Marriage by Edith Gelles

American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchison, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans by Eve LaPlante

American Tapestry: The Story of the Black, White, and Multiracial Ancestors of Michelle Obama by Rachel L. Swarns

Pocahontas: Medicine Woman, Spy, Entrepreneur, Diplomat by Paula Gunn Allen

A Widow's War: A Novel by Sally Gunning

The Women Jefferson Loved by Virginia Scharff

About This Guide's Author

Amy Jurskis is the author of a number of teaching guides, including *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* by Rebecca Skloot and *American Tapestry* by Rachel Swarns. She holds a B.A. in English from the University of Georgia and a MAT from Agnes Scott College. A former department chair for language arts in a title one public school in Atlanta, she currently serves as a chairperson of curriculum and English teacher at Oxbridge Academy of the Palm Beaches.

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