

Unit 6/Week 4

Title: Martha Helps the Rebel

Suggested Time: 5 days (45 minutes per day)

Common Core ELA Standards: RL.4.1, RL.4.2, RL.4.3, RL.4.4; RF.4.4;
W.4.2, W.4.4, W.4.9; SL.4.1, SL.4.2; L.4.1, L.4.2, L.4.4

Teacher Instructions

Refer to the Introduction for further details.

Before Teaching

1. Read the Big Ideas and Key Understandings and the Synopsis. Please do **not** read this to the students. This is a description for teachers, about the big ideas and key understanding that students should take away **after** completing this task.

Big Ideas and Key Understandings

Critical thinking skills can be a more useful than weapons

Bravery can come in many forms

Actions speak louder than words

Synopsis

The play, Martha Helps the Rebel, takes place in South Carolina in 1780 during the American Revolution. A mother and her daughter are going about their daily farm chores when they see an American soldier running from the British. The British have already killed two American soldiers and are trying to capture the remaining soldier so he does not disclose their location. The mother and daughter decide to hide the American soldier from the British and help him return to Charleston. Their help allows the American soldier to warn the Continental Army about the British position.

2. Read entire main selection text, keeping in mind the Big Ideas and Key Understandings.
3. Re-read the main selection text while noting the stopping points for the Text Dependent Questions and teaching Vocabulary.

During Teaching

1. Students read the entire main selection text independently.
2. Teacher reads the main selection text aloud with students following along. (Depending on how complex the text is and the amount of support needed by students, the teacher may choose to reverse the order of steps 1 and 2.)
3. Students and teacher reread the text while stopping to respond to and discuss the questions and returning to the text. A variety of methods can be used to structure the reading and discussion (i.e., whole class discussion, think-pair-share, independent written response, group work, etc.)

Text Dependent Questions**Text Dependent Questions****Evidence-Based Answers**

Most plays have two parts: the *lines*, or the exact words spoken by the characters, and the *stage directions*. The stage directions are in parentheses and italics to tell the reader about the scenery and what the actors should be *doing* in the play while they are saying their lines.

Find the parentheses on page 509. What do the words in parentheses tell the reader that cannot be inferred from the lines?

On page 509, you can infer that Martha is on the side of the Americans. Cite a specific quote from the text that helps you infer this.

On page 509, what caused the two American soldiers to tell the 1st American soldier to “quiet down”? What evidence in the text shows you this?

What was the effect of the 1st American soldier being loud? (Pg. 510)

Mother: (*musings*) – The mother is thinking about that Martha gave her about wanting to fight. She thinks it is funny and is laughing a little about it.

(*Three American soldiers walking through the woods, British soldiers in hiding nearby.*) – This tells the reader that there are American soldiers and what they are doing. It also tells the reader that there are British soldiers in the woods that the American soldiers do not see. Also, words in parentheses and italics that are apart from the conversation tell the reader a new scene is occurring and this is what the audience will see on stage.

1st Am. Soldier: (*sings*) – It tells the reader that the line that follows is being sung by the character instead of spoken.

1st Am. Soldier: Come on . . . (*Sings the song*) – This tells the reader that the soldier is singing the song again after he says the line that starts with “Come on” still loud.

(*Woods. 1st Am. soldier whistling the tune from before.*) – The author wrote “Woods” because it is telling the reader where the scene occurs and that the audience will see the soldier in the woods while they are watching this play. It also tells the reader that the soldier is still whistling the same song as before. It also tells the reader that the people in the woods are hearing the whistling.

Martha says, “I wish I were big enough to be able to chase all the British soldiers right back to England. I’d like to be a soldier, ma?”

They are quiet because they don’t want the British to find them. The 3rd Am. Soldier states, “If the British had landed this far south, I’d like to hear them beating their drums. This evidence illustrates that they are not sure if there are soldiers near their location.

The 2nd Am. Soldier is shot and killed by the British. Then the 3rd Am. Soldier is also killed.

On page 509, the soldier's mission was to look for British soldiers in the forest. What does the conversation help you infer? Use evidence from the conversation between the 1st Am. Soldier and the 3rd Am. Soldier to help prove your answer.

3rd Am. Soldier – Come on, quiet down. If you have landed this far south, I'd like to hear the news from us.

1st Am. Soldier – Ah, there aren't any British soldiers out here.

3rd Am. Soldier – Maybe not. That's what we're looking for. Get out.

It can be inferred that their mission was to search for the British Army from the conversation between the 1st American Soldier and the 3rd American Soldier.

Reread the first scene on page 511. The stage directions (in parentheses) state the 2nd British Soldier is "panting heavily," and the 3rd British Soldier is "also panting".

The stage direction at the top of the page states "A British soldier enters, running through low brush. A group of British soldiers pursue." The British soldiers would be panting from running or they would not be able to pursue the American soldier.

Using evidence from the scene, define the word *panting*. What is causing the soldiers to pant?

The 2nd Br. Soldier says, "I can hardly run with these packs." This illustrates that he was running and that it was harder to run, and that was why he was panting.

The 3rd British Soldier says, "Hey, just a minute. Listen, he can outrun us easily. We're wearing heavy coats and carrying packs. All the American has to do is wait. This illustrates that he is behind 2nd Br. Soldier. He speaks in short sentences which would lead the reader to think that it was hard to breathe. After the play, the character stops talking and the reader can see that the character has to take a breath after each short sentence.

This conversation between 2nd British Soldier and 3rd British Soldier gives the reader evidence as to why the American soldier is running in front of the British soldiers. The American soldier has heavy packs yet he only has a musket, and the British soldiers have heavy winter uniforms that must have been heavy.

On page 511 the text states, "But we have to stop him before he reaches Charleston. The American Army must not know our position and strength." Why is it important for the British soldiers to catch the American soldier?

The quote explains that the British are worried about the American telling the rest of the American Army where they are located (position) and the number of soldiers they must capture the American.

On page 511-512 Martha and her mother help the American soldier in different ways. Describe in depth some of the ways that Martha and her mother help the soldier, supporting your answer with reasons from the text.

Martha:

- Takes the family horse to the soldier and rides along the stream bed so that no one will see
- Rides the family horse around the pasture so soldiers will not suspect that the horse had gone helping the American soldier hide or escape

Mother:

- Tells her daughter to help the soldier and suggest the soldier hidden from the British.
- Hides the soldier in the rafters above the quilt

Motivation is the reason a character does or says something.

Mother: "Soldier, if you want to live, you'd better hide in the rafters, and fast!" She wants him to hurry so the British don't find him because if they do, they will kill him to save his life.

Reread page 513. What does the mother tell the American soldier that explains her motivation for helping him? Cite your evidence and explain how these lines show her motivation.

Mother: "It's all right. My husband is a soldier in the Continental Army too. Maybe someone will help you. She is thinking about her husband and hopes that in a position someone would help him.

When the British soldiers come to the house, one says, "You have nothing to be afraid of ma'am, (*threateningly*) unless we find an American soldier here." Why does the author put *threateningly* in the middle of the sentence? What can be inferred about what will happen if the soldiers discover Martha and her mother are hiding the American soldier? (Pg. 514)

The word *threateningly* is included to show that the British soldiers were spoken to scare Martha and her mother. This adds drama or sense of climax in the play because the mother and soldier are risking their own safety by helping the American soldier. There is no evidence about what the British soldiers did to American sympathizers in this play; however, the British soldiers did shoot two of the three American soldiers introduced at the beginning of the play on page 514.

What in the text helps the reader understand that Martha is thrilled about a possible attack? (Pg. 514)

The stage directions in parentheses state that Martha is excited while she says, "I'll bet there are thousands of British soldiers on the hill, ready to attack Charleston!" The excitement of the British soldiers leads the reader to conclude that Martha is excited about fighting in the war.

Reread the last 2 lines on 514, page 515, and the first line on 516. How did Martha help the American soldier think differently about the British plan for attack? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Martha suggested that the British would not be attacking from the sea twice. She said that they might be tricking the British plan for attack by attacking from a different direction.

While spying on the British at night, what did the American soldier discover about the position of the British soldiers? (Pgs. 514-515)

The American soldier spied on the British at night and discovered they were planning to "march on Charleston" and fight the battle on the coast.

On page 516, the American soldier states, "If the British attack from the south, they will meet almost no resistance." What does he mean by *resistance*?

He means that there won't be many Americans in Charleston to fight back when the British attack.

Reread page 516. Explain the plan to get the American soldier safely to Charleston. Use details from the text to support your answer.

The soldier wears the clothes from Martha's father and pretends to be an old farmer. Martha, her mother, and the British hope that the old farmer will be seen as harmless and will be allowed to pass through guarded roads to Charleston.

On page 516, who is "Farmer"? Why does the author put this name in quotes?

The farmer is really the American soldier in disguise. The authors put quotations around words to show that they should not be taken literally.

Martha helps the American soldier by playing a trick on the British soldiers, what does she do? Explain how this helps the American soldier. (Pgs. 516-517)

Martha explains that she needs the old man to go to the next town, "Because I'm afraid to go by myself. I've never seen so many soldiers around here. I.. I.. The British feel sorry for Marta and allow the "Farmer" to pass.

The play begins and ends with the same song, "Come all you brave soldiers, Both valiant and free, It's for independence, We all now agree." What is the meaning of the words in the song?

At the beginning of the play, the soldier is singing to all soldiers a song that describes the American soldiers as "valiant, free", the reason for the war "independence", and that everyone agrees with the fighting "all". It reminds the reader of the important Martha and her mother's efforts to help the soldier during the war.

At the end of the story he is singing it again to show that the war efforts are still happening and the British are still trying to conquer. Even though all the negative events have happened, the soldier, he is still going to fight for American independence.

What is the author's purpose in including the song at the beginning and the end of the text?

The author uses this song as a circular ending to the theme of the story. "All" people (civilians and soldiers) are "valiant and free", and they fight for "independence".

Vocabulary

	KEY WORDS ESSENTIAL TO UNDERSTANDING	WORDS WORTH KNOWING General teaching suggestions are provided
<p>TEACHER PROVIDES DEFINITION not enough contextual clues provided in the text</p>	<p>Page 509 - independence</p>	<p>Page 509 - valiant Page 510 - crouched Page 511 - haggard Page 513 - indignant</p>
<p>STUDENTS FIGURE OUT THE MEANING sufficient context clues are provided in the text</p>	<p>Page 511 - panting Page 512 - rafters Page 514 - threateningly Page 516 - resistance</p>	<p>Page 510 - abruptly Page 511 - pursue Page 512 - pasture Page 514 - defiant Page 516 - accompanied</p>

Culminating Task

- Re-Read, Think, Discuss, Write
- *Martha and her mother helped the American soldier in many ways. Write a paragraph, citing at least two examples of how Martha and her mother used cleverness to help the American soldier and support the Americans' fight against the British. How did these actions trick the British and demonstrate Martha's and her mother's intelligence?*

Answer:

Horse: Martha uses the horse to help the American soldier get to her house quickly. Since the horse was out of breath from rescuing the American soldier, the mother told Martha to exercise the horse so that it was not standing in front of the house winded. The British soldiers were tricked, believing that either she had been exercising the horse or had helped the American soldier hide away from the house.

Rafters: The mother told the American soldier to hide in the rafters behind the quilting frame. The rafters were well-hidden and up high, so the British didn't think to search that part of the house.

British Plan: Martha suggested that the American (Continental) Army may have been tricked by the British. She gave the American soldier the idea to spy on the British to see where they were located.

Going to Charleston: Martha helped the disguised soldier pass by the British guards. Martha had the idea to give the soldier some of her father's clothes to disguise him as an old farmer. She then went with the soldier to provide a reason (selling the cow) for the farmer to travel to the next town. Finally, she acted scared when the British questioned why she could not go by herself. This convinced the British soldiers to let Martha and the farmer/American soldier pass.

Additional Tasks

- *Martha took several risks to help the American soldier and the American War against the British. Take a stance: Should Martha's mother have allowed her daughter to take these risks? Write a paragraph expressing your opinion with at least 2 reasons supported by details from the play.*

Answer:

Yes: Martha stated that she wanted to be a soldier in the American (Continental) Army. Martha expressed excitement over the idea that the British were preparing to battle the Americans in Charleston. Martha's father was in the army and may have also relied on

families such as Martha and her mother to help him survive the war.

No: In the beginning of the play we learn that Martha is only 10 years old. She is too young to risk her life for an adult soldier. Also, the British soldiers killed two American soldiers in the beginning of the play, showing that they were dangerous. Finally, a British soldier used a threatening voice to warn her mother that she shouldn't be hiding an American soldier.

- *Write a journal entry from the perspective of Martha or the American soldier.*

Answer: Answers may vary.

- Break the class into groups and have them act out the play to another class.

Note to Teacher

- The **American Revolution** refers to the period during the last half of the 18th century in which the Thirteen Colonies that became the United States of America gained independence from the British Empire. In this period, the Colonies rebelled against the British Empire and entered into the American Revolutionary War between 1775 and 1783. This culminated in an American Declaration of Independence in 1776, and victory on the battlefield in 1781.

Name _____

Date _____

“Martha Helps the Rebel”

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9. Motivation is the reason a character does or says something. Reread page 513. What does the mother tell the American soldier that explains her motivation for helping him? Cite your evidence and explain how these lines show her motivation.
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