VM HC HISTORY CONNECTS

I-Spy: Virginia's Hidden History Activity and Instruction Packet

Virginia has played a central role in two of the largest conflicts in the history of the United States – The Revolutionary War and The Civil War.

1. **Who and what do you think about when you think about The Revolutionary War?**

2. **What about The Civil War?**

Some of the people are so well-known that we can't help but think about them – the way that George Washington led the Continental Army to victory in The Revolutionary War, or Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation in The Civil War. But, for as long as there has been history, there has been hidden history. In both wars, people called **spies** worked secretly to pass information to whichever side they believed should win. Today, your mission, should you choose to accept it, is as follows:

- **LEARN:** Read about some of the spies below to understand how their spy skills shaped Virginia's history.
- **PRACTICE:** All spies have to practice passing information. Below you will find a list of training activities to help you develop the skills to turn into Virginia's best spy yet.
- **RESEARCH:** Spies are always learning and doing research to understand their mission. They have to be able to learn a lot of information, and decide what facts are important to share.

What do you need to complete your mission today? Not much – spies have to be able to use what they have around them. Today, you will need a pen or pencil, a piece of paper, and some ingredients to make invisible ink, which are listed later in the packet. If you have a printer, feel free to print out this packet and write on it. No printer? No problem. Just keep it up on the screen and follow along. Happy Spying!

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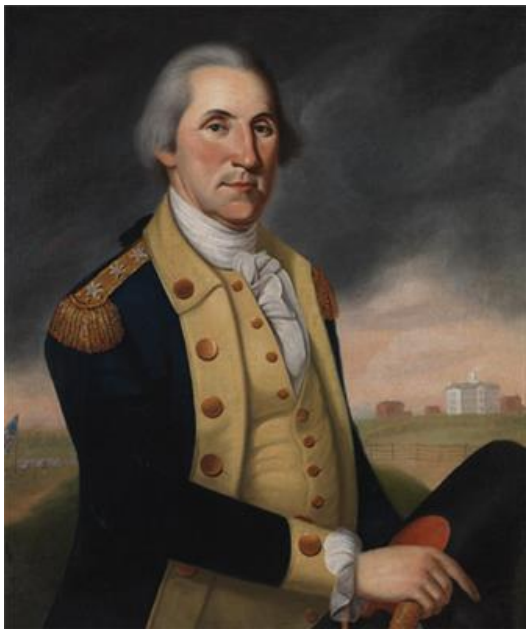
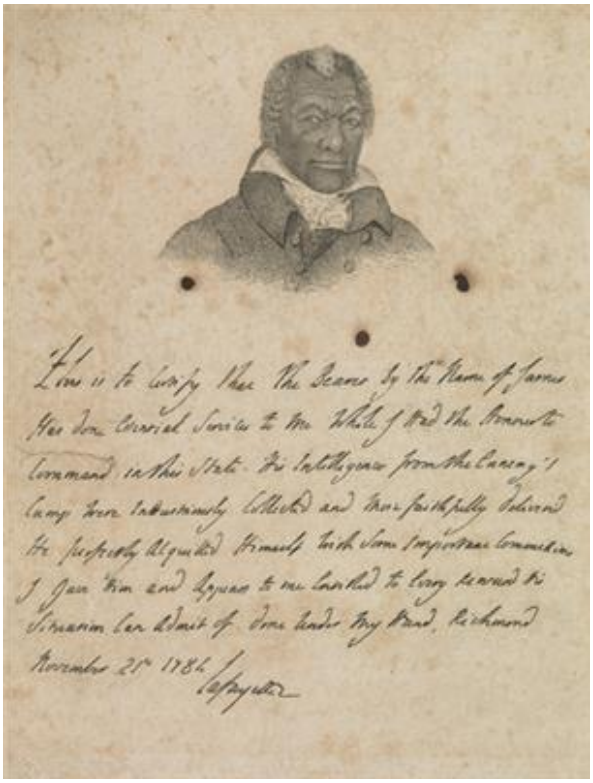
LEARN: Virginia Spies



George Washington

Name something you already know about George Washington. Most people think of General George Washington leading colonial troops in The Revolutionary War, or "Father of our Country" George Washington becoming the first President of the United States of America. But did you know he was also a spymaster? During The Revolutionary War, George Washington saw that the Continental (or, American) army was smaller, weaker, and poorer than the British army. He realized that they needed to outsmart the British in order to win – and so he created a large spy network that was called The Culper Ring. The Culper Ring used fake identities, secret codes, and invisible ink to help win The Revolutionary War.



James Lafayette

James Lafayette was an enslaved man from New Kent County who worked as a spy for the Continental Army during The Revolutionary War. He gained access to the British Army by pretending to be a runaway slave who wanted to fight for his freedom alongside the British. He worked as a double agent – this means he pretended that he was spying on the Americans for the British so he could go back and forth between the two sides – but he was really spying **for** the Americans the whole time. His information about British battle plans helped George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, a French General who was helping the Americans, win the Battle of Yorktown. This became the last major battle of The Revolutionary War. After the war, the Marquis de Lafayette helped James successfully win his freedom, and James took the last name "Lafayette" in thanks.

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Elizabeth Van Lew

Elizabeth Van Lew lived in Richmond during The Civil War. Though she lived in the capitol of the Confederacy, she was an abolitionist (someone who wanted to get rid of slavery) who supported the Union. Elizabeth Van Lew used different techniques as a spy – she wrote in invisible ink, tore notes into shreds so they could be put together later, developed a secret code, and snuck messages out of Richmond in hollow eggs. She also created a network of spies to share information, including white and black women and men. One of the most famous was a black woman named Mary Richards Bowser, who worked in the White House of the Confederacy for Jefferson Davis and his family in order to gather important information. Unfortunately, because many southerners knew she hadn't supported the Confederacy, Elizabeth was very unpopular in Richmond during and after The Civil War.

Rose O'Neal Greenhow

The Union wasn't the only side to have spies during The Civil War. Rose O'Neal was a spy for the southern forces, or The Confederacy. She lived in Washington, DC, and used her friendships with politicians to learn important information about northern battle plans. Some of this information helped Confederate forces win the First Battle of Bull Run in 1861. During The Civil War, the US Intelligence Service knew she was a spy, and kept her under house arrest, and even in prison, but Rose kept sending secret messages. In 1862, she was sent to Richmond, Virginia, where Jefferson Davis happily greeted her, and sent her on another spy mission to Europe. Rose died before the end of The Civil War, in 1864. She was buried with military honors by the Confederate government.

Why might someone choose to support one side vs. the other in a war?

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PRACTICE: Spy Skills

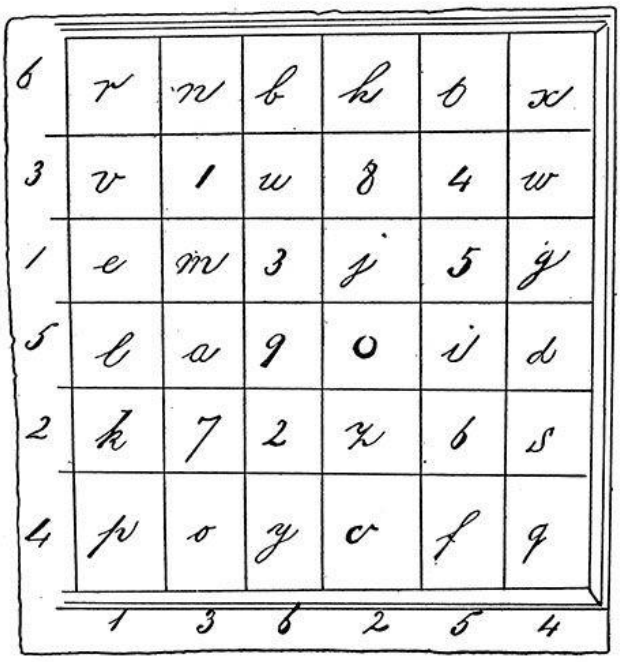
Now that you know a little about some Virginia spies that came before you, it's time to start training! Before you start, choose a code name. George Washington's code name was "Agent 711." Elizabeth Van Lew was "Babock." Code names help to keep your identity a secret.

Code Name:

Now, you're ready to begin…

TRAINING EXERCISE 1: SECRET CODE

- For as long as there have been spies, there have been secret codes. Different spy teams used different codes to keep information safe. We have included Elizabeth Van Lew's code below. Can you break it?



Miss Van Lew's Cipher Code

- In this code, letters and numbers in the grid are represented by the numbers along the left side and bottom. First, you go up. Then, you go over. For example, if you wanted to send one the letter "a" you would write "5-3." Can you decode the word below*?

(6-2) (1-1) (5-1) (5-1) (6-5)

- Can you use this code to create a word or message for someone else to break? What is difficult or easy about using this code?

**answer located on the bottom of final sheet in packet*

TRAINING EXERCISE 2: INVISIBLE INK

- What if you don't know the spy code, or are writing to someone else who might not know the spy code? Invisible ink was also used to pass along secret messages. Below, you will find three different ways to make invisible ink, depending on what you have in your house.
    1. Method 1 – Mix lemon juice and a few drops of water in a bowl. Use your cotton swab or paintbrush to dip into the liquid and write a message or draw a picture. Let the paper dry. After the paper is dry, hold it over your chosen heat source. Be careful not to burn the paper or yourself! As the paper heats up, your message or picture should reappear.
        - Need: Lemon Juice, Water, Bowl, Cotton Swab or Paintbrush, Paper, Heat Source (candle, lightbulb, hairdryer, etc.)

    2. Method 2 – Mix water and baking soda in a bowl. Use your cotton swab or paintbrush to dip into the liquid and write a message or draw a picture. Let the paper dry. After the paper is dry, use a clean cotton swab or paintbrush to dip into a dark juice. Gently cover the paper with the juice – your message should stay white underneath, making the words or picture reappear!
        - Need: ¼ Cup Water, ¼ Cup Baking Soda, Two Bowls, Two Cotton Swabs or Paintbrushes, Paper, Dark Juice (ex: grape or prune)

    3. Method 3 – Elizabeth Van Lew used an invisible ink made of milk! Pour a little milk into a bowl and dip your cotton swab or paintbrush into the liquid. Write a message or draw a picture. After the paper is dry, gently iron the paper. The heat should cause the words or images to reappear.
        - Need: Milk, Bowl, Cotton Swab or Paintbrush, Paper, Iron

- If you were able to try more than one method, which one worked best? If you can only try one, experiment with different types of paper, different methods of heat, or different writing utensils. What do you find?

TRAINING EXERCISE 3: MEMORY GAMES

- Spies need to have good memories and great powers of observation in case they can't write down what they see and hear around them. Use these games to test your memory and observation skills.
    1. Game 1: Have an adult fill a container with ten objects. They will set the timer for one minute. Use this time to memorize what objects are in the container. When the time is up, move the container of objects out of sight. Can you name all ten objects? You can make this game harder or easier by changing the amount of time or the number of objects.
        - Need: Pen or Pencil, Paper, Ten Objects, Container, Timer (I use my phone!)

    2. Game 2: Find a room in your house. Have an adult set the timer for three minutes and look all around the room. Observe every detail. What is in the room? Where is it located? What color are things? When time is up, close your eyes. Have the adult ask you questions to see if you can remember details of the room with your eyes closed. You can make this harder by having to wait thirty minutes before answering any questions. How much do you start to forget as time passes?
        - Need: Just a Timer!

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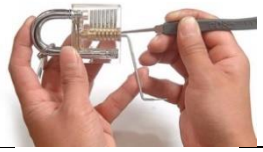
TRAINING EXERCISE 4: SPY DESIGN

- Some spies would use tools or gadgets to help make their jobs easier. They might sew important paper inside clothes, or roll them up to hide inside everyday items, like shoes with fake heels or boxes with fake bottoms. Gadgets like binoculars can help see things without getting too close. Can you match the gadget with the problem it can solve below? Draw a line from the picture to the problem.

	Oh No! The door is locked and you don't have the key – what tools can help you?
	You run into someone you know – how will you keep them from recognizing you?
	**You need to record a conversation, but don't want anyone to know – how can you do that?**
	You need proof that two people have met – what will make other people believe you?

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Use the steps below to help invent a tool to help solve a spy problem!

1. **What problem do you think a spy might have?**
2. **How does your gadget solve that problem?**
3. **What is the name of your gadget?**
4. **Draw your invention below!**

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RESEARCH: Go Further

TRAINING EXERCISE 5: LEARN MORE

- Most importantly, spies are always learning and doing research to understand their mission. They have to be able to learn a lot of information, and decide what facts are important to share. Can you research a little more about spying to share with your friends and family? We have some questions to help you get started.

    1. What did you already learn about spies in Virginia?

    2. What do you have questions about?

- You can use research to answer one of your questions, learn more about spy gadgets, OR discover a new spy all on your own. The Civil War wasn't the last war that Virginia, or The United States fought – which means there have been many spies since then. Once you finish your research, can you write down what three facts are MOST important to share with your family and friends?

MISSION COMPLETED

P.S. You can share with us too! Tag us in a picture at any step of the process and share with our social media @VMHCeducation on Instagram, Twitter, or Facebook. We'd love to share what you are doing at home, but remember – include your code name!

**secret code answer: hello*