Native American Cultures and European Exploration in Georgia

Georgia’s human history begins thousands of years before February 12, 1733, when James Oglethorpe arrived with the first settlers on the banks of the Savannah River. The available sources from this period present a challenge for students of Georgia’s history. How do we study societies without written languages? What can we learn about early Spanish activity in Georgia when there are no remains and few records left behind? What can we trust from early accounts of European explorers? Historians have faced these challenges by integrating archeological research with a careful examination and scrutiny of the written material existing from Georgia’s earliest human history. With a little guidance, students can better understand the history of early Georgia using the same tools and sources of professional archeologists and historians.

Georgia’s First People

Scientists and historians have divided the history of Georgia’s first inhabitants into four main periods (Paleo, Archaic, Woodland, and Mississippian). Much of what we know about human activity from this period comes from their “material culture” in other words the tools, objects, and structures they left behind. Archeologists search for three main types of material culture: 1. Artifacts such as tools, jewelry, pottery, etc, 2. Ecofacts such as seeds, shells, bones, and other natural remains not fashioned by humans, and 3. Features such as burial mounds, fire pits, soil stains, or any manmade areas if human activity.

The Paleo-Indian period began around 10,000 years ago. Archeologists, scientists, and historians have made many guesses about what life was like during this period based on what they know about the climate from the period and the available vegetation and wildlife, but some of the best information comes from the unique long fluted chipped stones projectiles known as “clovis” points. These points were put on heavy spears and used to take down large mammals. When put together, data about the natural world from the period and a close analysis of “clovis” points and other artifacts reveals that the Paleoindian people were a nomadic culture that hunted large game like bison and woolly mammoths.

Sources for the Paleoindian Period
Page two of the primary sources for SS8H1 provides a link to the *The Paleoindian Database* of the Americas. This database offers images of the “clovis” points found in Georgia, maps of the distribution of thee points in the region, and archeological research associated with the points. The National Parks Service site “*Outline of Prehistory and History: Southeastern North America and the Caribbean*” also provides background information and images of artifacts from the Paleoindian period.

The Archaic Period began around 8000 B.C. and lasted until around 1000 BC. Similar to the Paleoindian Period, artifacts provide some of the best information about the culture of the Archaic Indians. Stone tools from this period include spear points, axes, stone knives, darts, soapstone cooking slabs, grinding slabs, and fiber-tempered pottery vessels. Besides their tools, Archaic Period people left another very important clue about their culture, their trash. Shell middens, also known as shell rings, are semicircular deposits of shell, bone, soil and other artifacts. Archaeologists believe these rings were created with the trash or discarded materials of the Archaic Indians. One of the best examples of a shell midden is the Stallings Island Site on the Savannah River near Augusta. The material culture of the Archaic Indians and data concerning the climate of the period suggests that the Archaic Indians were less nomadic than their Paleoindian ancestors, utilized the natural resources of both the forest and coastal areas, and developed more sophisticated methods for preparing food.

Sources for Archaic Period

Page two of the primary sources for SS8H1 provides a link to the The National Parks Service site “*Outline of Prehistory and History: Southeastern North America and the Caribbean*” which provides some images and links to more information on artifacts, shell rings, and mounds from the Archaic Period.

The Woodland Period lasted from approximately 1000 B.C. until approximately 800 A.D. Earthen mounds scattered throughout the Southeast, including some that still remain in Georgia, provide clues to the Woodland Indians and their way of life. Through the excavation of sites like the Kolomoki Mounds in Early County, archeologists discovered that Woodland Indians were saving seeds from plants like sunflowers, squash, and corn to plant in forest areas they cleared. Archeologists also found underground pits used to store nuts and seeds and evidence of bow and arrow use. Artifacts made of copper also suggest that the Woodland Indians in Georgia were involved in trade. Based on the shape and contents of the Woodland mounds, archeologists believe they were used for both burial and ceremonial purposes.

Sources for Woodland Period:

Page two of the primary sources for SS8H1 provides a link to the The Georgia State Park Kolomoki Mounds Historic Park which provides a photo gallery and some background information. The National Parks Service site “*Outline of Prehistory and History: Southeastern North America and the Caribbean*” gives a good background to the archeological discoveries from the time period along with links to other relevant sites.

The Mississippian Period

“It is altogether unknown to us, what could have induced the Indians to raise such a heap of earth in this place...” William Bartram in *Travels through North and South Carolina, Georgia, East and West Florida, the Cherokee Country...* pp. 325
The above quote is taken from naturalist William Bartram’s 1791 account of his travels through the Southeast. William Bartram’s writings not only provide a good source of information about the Native American people inhabiting the Southeast during his travels, but his writings also provide detailed descriptions of Mississippian Period sites, many of which no longer exist. Archeological and textual research has given us more insight into the question that plagued Bartram; “what could have induced the Indians to raise such a heap of earth in this place...” By studying the available Mississippian Period primary sources, students can learn about the culture and society of the Mississippian people and practice their ability to analyze a variety of sources from varying viewpoints. The Mississippian Period lasted from approximately 800 A.D. to 1600 A.D. Unlike the Paleoindian, Archaic, and Woodland periods, historians have access to not only archeological, but also textual sources concerning the Mississippian people. These sources are a result of contact with Spanish, French, and English explorers from the 16th century. Some important Mississippian Period features still remain in Georgia, including the Etowah mounds. The primary source set includes two sources relating to the Mississippian Period which are described below. Page two of SS8H1 includes links to additional resources on the Mississippian period that include primary and secondary sources. For example, the resources include a link to Bartram’s writings on the Documenting the South page.

Sources for Mississippian Period

Moorehead, Warren King. “Exploration of the Etowah site in Georgia.” In Etowah Papers: Exploration of the Etowah site in Georgia. New Haven: Published for Phillips Academy by the Yale University Press, 1932.


[Etowah Papers]

Published in 1932, The Etowah Papers is a collection of articles edited by famous archeologist Warren King Moorehead. This primary source set provides access to the figures in the first article of the book written by Moorehead. The figures provide visual representations of the excavation site, mounds, artifacts discovered, and process of excavation. The artifacts reveal the complex nature of the Mississippian culture and give some insight into what the mounds were used for. Students should be able to deduce that the mounds were used for burial and ceremonial purposes from access to just these few archeological findings. The sources may spark additional questions students will want to investigate.

The figures also provide insight into the field of archeology. If students are looking at the figures as a source for information on the Mississippian Period, then the sketch of the Etowah site, the clay model of the mounds, and the image of the archaeologists digging the grave site should be classified as secondary sources. However, these sources can be considered a primary source if they are analyzed for the purpose of investigating the actual archeological excavation of the Etowah site. These figures can be used to help continue to expand student understanding of the differences between primary and secondary sources. Students can explore more about the Etowah Mounds on the New Georgia Encyclopedia and the Georgia state parks site dedicated to the mounds.

[De Orbe Novo: The Eight Decades of Peter Martyr D’Anghera]
Peter Martyr D’Anghera was a priest in the Roman Catholic Church and chronicler for Spain. As chronicler, Peter Martyr was tasked with recording Spain’s endeavors in the New World. In the “Eighth Decade” of his De Orbe Novo, Peter Martyr D’Anghera recounts the experience of Francisco of Chicora, a Native American captured by Lucas Vasquez De Ayllon and brought to Santo Domingo where he met Peter Martyr. Archeologist David G. Anderson argues the account offers “considerable value, as it presents the first detailed description of Southeastern chiefdom societies…” (Anderson, 57). Through this account, students can get a better understanding of the political and cultural make-up of the late Mississippian chiefdoms in the Southeast while practicing their ability to analyze sources for possible bias. This particular source is unique in that the account comes from the perspective of a captured native. Students should be careful to not assume this means everything in the account can be trusted. Both Francisco of Chicora and Peter Martyr, the final author of the text, bring their own perspectives and biases to the description of the native population.

By accessing primary sources like the ones available in this set, students do the work of historians by scrutinizing and analyzing both documentary (textual) and archeological sources to build a better understanding of the inhabitants of Georgia during the Mississippian Period.

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http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-810&sug=y

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“Woodland Period Overview.” *New Georgia Encyclopedia.*
http://www.georgiaencyclopedia.org/nge/Article.jsp?id=h-811

“Mississippian Period: Overview.” *New Georgia Encyclopedia.*
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http://www.nps.gov/history/seac/outline/index.htm

Early European Exploration

The European age of exploration began in earnest in the fifteenth century as rulers sought better access to the Far East where they could trade for spices, silk, tea and other highly valuable goods. In the Southeast, Spain, France, and England all vied for control. In an attempt to find a new route to the Indies, Europeans stumbled upon the “New World.” The native populations of North and South America were forever changed as a result of European exploration and settlement. Many natives perished as a result of exposure to European diseases and weapons. The native populations also underwent political, social, and cultural changes as a result of European influence.

European explorers left behind both physical and textual evidence of their early journeys and exploits in Georgia. Archaeologists have discovered the physical mark left by Spanish missions and early settlements on the landscape. Historians have combed through the narratives, letters and official documents created by the European explorers. As with all primary sources, historians are meticulous about analyzing the sources left behind by European explorers with a careful eye toward their potential inaccuracies and biases. For example, historians do not ignore the value of
narratives given by members of the Hernando de Soto exploration just because the accounts may contradict each other at times. Instead, by comparing and contrasting the accounts, historians can develop new research questions and perhaps uncover new and valuable information about the texts. Maps created during this period also provide an important source of information. European countries used maps to document, celebrate, and assert their accomplishments in the “New World.”

The Spanish were the first to explore the area they called La Florida which included parts of modern-day Georgia. Two hundred and seven years before General James Oglethorpe landed in Savannah, historians believe another European attempted to establish a colony in Georgia. Lucas Vasquez de Ayllon sailed from Hispaniola and landed along the coast of Georgia in 1526 establishing the ill-fated colony San Miguel de Gualdape or Tierra de Ayllon (Land of Ayllon). See the section on the Mississippian Period for a source related to the Ayllon expedition. In 1540, Hernando de Soto journeyed through Georgia as a part of his four-year expedition through the Southeast. Page two of SS8H1 includes a link to a PDF with excerpts from illustrated narrations by members of the De Soto party complied by the National Humanities Center. After successfully establishing St. Augustine in Florida, Spain built Catholic missions and outposts along the Atlantic coast with the goal of converting the native population to Christianity and transforming them into loyal subjects of the King. These Spanish missions remained active until 1686, when, in the face of troubles with England and France, Spain shut down all missions north of St. Marys River.

France’s attempts to settle the Southeast included an attempt by Jean Ribault and a band of 150 Huguenots to settle an area just north of modern-day Savannah. Another group of French Huguenots established Fort Caroline in Spanish Florida. However, the Spanish attacked the fort and executed all French Huguenots unless they pledged allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church. France’s attempts to colonize Florida failed; however, they remained major players in North America, ruling vast territories in Louisiana and Canada. French Huguenot colonists continued to make important contributions in the Georgia and Carolina colonies.

Threatened by the growing strength of Spain and Portugal’s foreign holdings, England entered the bid for control of North America in the 1600s. England did not focus on the Southeast until 1663 when it established the Carolina colony. The English traded with the local Indians for deerskin, furs, and, until 1715, Indian slaves. The English and Spanish continued to come into conflict, especially at the southern border of the Carolina colony. The need for protection against Spanish in the South would eventually provide motivation for the English to approve Oglethorpe’s petition to establish the Georgia colony.

Exposing students to the visual and textual record from the early European explorations offers them an opportunity to gain content knowledge about this pivotal time in Georgia and United States history, and it offers students the opportunity to think like historians as they recognize the bias and perspective evident in the sources. SS8H1 includes three primary sources specifically related to the period of early European exploration. Each source is described below.

Sources for Early European Exploration
Lemoyne de Morgues, Jacques. *Brevis narratio eorum quae in Florida... typis J. Wecheli, sumtibus vero Theodori de Bry (Francofurti ad Moenum).* (Brief Narration of Those Things Which Befell the French in the Province of Florida in America). Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Réserve des livres rares, Rés G-377. [http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k109491c](http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k109491c)
You have likely seen an image from Jacques Le Moyne De Morgues’ *Brevis narratio eorum quae in Florida* (Brief Narration) if you have ever visited a museum in Florida or Georgia. The engravings found in this travel narration are often used to depict the culture and lifestyle of Native Americans just prior to or after European contact. The title’s author Jacques Le Moyne De Morgues sailed with the French to Florida in the 1560s as the official artist. Engraver Theodore de Bry published Le Moyne’s narration of the voyages along with forty-four engravings based on his drawings. The natives featured in the engravings belong to a group called the Timucua Indians. Timucua actually refers to the language spoken by native peoples inhabiting north and central Florida and Southeastern Georgia when Europeans first reached the area known to them as La Florida.

The images and text in this source offer a glimpse into the Timucuan world just before disease and war resulting from European contact left the culture virtually extinct. These sources also provide an important lesson in sourcing. For example, Le Moyne De Morgues’ status as a Frenchman proves important in analyzing the way he depicts the Spanish in his writings and illustrations. How would you expect one of the only survivors of the Spanish attack on Ft. Caroline to portray the Spanish treatment of the natives? More generally, European accounts like that of Le Moyne De Morgues must be carefully scrutinized for bias. Comparing the archeological evidence to the narrative evidence helps researchers build reliable guesses on the culture and history of the Timucua Indians. Linked to this primary source is an illustrated selected transcription from *Brief Account* created by the National Humanities Center. This resource allows students to interact with the textual and visual aspects of the source. Page two of SS8H1 offers links to several supplemental materials on the relationship between the explorers and Europeans. The Library of Congress exhibit *Exploring the Early Americas* offers free access to quality secondary and primary sources from this period.

The two maps included in the primary sources for SS8H1 are very different. Diego Ribero’s world map was created in 1529 to celebrate Spain’s conquests abroad. The map of Spanish missions in Georgia was created hundreds of years later in 1935 to show the locations of Georgia’s Spanish missions and provide a pleasing illustration for a book on the history of Spanish missions in Georgia. Students should understand that the locations of Spanish missions in Georgia and Florida are still contested by historians and archeologists. This map provides only one person’s guess at the mission locations. It might be a useful exercise to ask students what information and primary sources the creator of the map most likely accessed to create their own map. This map also provides a good visual representation of the extent of the Spanish influence in the region. By deciphering what information this map can and cannot tell them about the time period, students will increase their knowledge of the Spanish missions in Georgia and also how historians have attempted to tell the story of the Spanish missions. In this case, the 1935 historian John Tate
Landing chose to create a decorative map representing the location of the missions. Current research may dispute the information on the map. Encourage students to investigate how the understanding of Spanish missions has changed since this map was created in 1935.

Diego Ribero was Portuguese by birth, but spent most of his career working for Spain. Ribero was commissioned by Spain to update the official map of the world to include the new territories discovered by Spanish exploration. Students should be warned that every European power would have their own version of the world map. Students can investigate the map for geographic information and political and culture information. For example, what do the illustrations and symbols included in the map reveal? How does the map portray Spain? How different would a map of the world look if it were created by the natives of the Americas, the French, or the Chinese? The Library of Congress Map Division includes searchable maps from their “Age of Discovery” collection that would provide a good comparison to the Ribero map. The second page of PSS1 also provides a link to the Library of Congress’s Zoom into Maps which offers activities and tools on interpreting maps in the classroom. The primary source set offers a PDF crop of the map showing the Southeastern coast. A link to the entire world map on the Library of Congress site is available as well.

Selected Bibliography


**The Colonial Period of Georgia History**

Teaching Georgia’s colonial history using primary sources offers an excellent opportunity to demonstrate what sources historians use to study and write about colonial history. Students could be asked how we know about General Oglethorpe and the early settlers of Georgia. Students could wonder who is in charge of preserving records related to this period and how they are preserved for future study. Students also have access to a large amount of colonial records through the online collections of the Georgia Historical Society, Georgia Archives, and other institutions.

These primary sources offer students a chance to learn about life during colonial Georgia from the people living in it. Just as with the narrations and accounts of the early explorers of Georgia, students should be aware that every document created in the colonial period must be read
in the light of the purpose and bias of the sources author. The primary sources presented in this
set allow students to compare and contrast differing accounts of colonial Georgia.

Brief introduction to colonial sources

Historians look to both official and personal papers and records to help build a picture of
the life in a certain period. The account of preserving Georgia’s colonial history is almost as
interesting as the history of Georgia’s colonial period. During the America Revolution, most of the
official records pertaining to colonial Georgia were destroyed. Several attempts were made to
collect copies of colonial records from London but none were successful until 1837 when the
legislature paid for Reverend Charles Wallace Howard to travel to London and collect Georgia’s
colonial records. When Howard returned from London, the newly acquired manuscripts did not
find a permanent home, rather were loaned out to various individuals and institutions. In 1891 the
records were destroyed in a fire at the home of an Emory College professor who was using them in
his research. Records published in the Collections of the Georgia Historical Society in the 1840s
did survive and are now freely accessible online through the Internet Archive (http://archive.org/).

In 1902, the legislature again provided funding for Allen D. Candler to go to London and
copy the records pertaining to Georgia which he later published in the Colonial Records of
Georgia. Several volumes of this publication are also freely available on the Internet Archive.
Students might be surprised by the amount of effort and commitment former Georgians put into
collecting and securing letters, ledgers, accounts, and other documents related to Georgia’s
colonial history. All of these documents are available to the public through archive and library
holdings like those at the Georgia Historical Society, and increasingly, these records are being
digitized and made available online. This primary source set offers links and PDFs of a selected
number of primary sources from Georgia’s colonial period.

Trustee Georgia

Conflict with the Indians and the British in their Carolina colony forced the Spanish to
retreat southward in the late 1600s, leaving the territory between the Charlestown and St.
Augustine as contested territory. In 1732, the British crown granted the Georgia Trustees a charter
to establish the colony of Georgia in this debated territory between British Carolina and Spanish
Florida. The colony would be ruled by a board of men called the Trustees from 1732-1752.
Founder James Oglethorpe had philanthropic motives for establishing a colony where the “worthy
poor” could have a second chance at success. Primary sources from the period will help students
compare the initial goals and purposes of the colony to the realities of colonial life in Georgia. For
example, historians have concluded from the record that there were no actual debtors among the
first settlers to Georgia. On February 12, 1733, Oglethorpe and the first settlers climbed up the
bluff from the Savannah River, officially establishing the colony of Georgia. Life in colonial
Georgia was hard and not everyone was pleased with the decisions passed down by the Trustees.
For example, not all colonists were happy with the ban on slavery and rum. Others found fault
with the rules regarding land ownership. Students should be able to detect these differences by
reading some of the sources in this set.

The primary sources from the period include letters between James Oglethorpe and the
Trustees, accounts from malcontents like Patrick Telfair, maps showing the progress of the colony,
along with land grants, wills, lists of supplies, journals, etc... The primary sources for SS8H2
include five related directly to the Trustee period. Each document is described below.
On October 2, 1965 the state of South Carolina presented Georgia with a very special gift, the only surviving 18th century copy of Georgia’s Royal Charter existing outside of Europe. This copy was made in Charlestown in 1735 using the version carried by James Oglethorpe. The Royal Charter is now housed at the Georgia Archives. Teachers, students, and anyone with internet access can view the charter on Georgia Archives’ Virtual Vault. The charter contains important information concerning the purposes, goals, and government of the Georgia colony. Students should be careful to note that while the charter was meant to outline the way the colony would run, it does not necessarily reflect the reality of life and governance in the colony. For example, the charter specifically prohibited Jewish settlers to the colony; however, Jewish settlers arrived in 1733 and became influential members of the colony.

While reading the Royal Charter, students can think about the unique position of colonies. Students should ask themselves what it might be like to be a British citizen living thousands of miles away from your seat of government. The Royal Charter may raise questions in students’ minds about the role of the Trustees. Why would anyone volunteer their time and influence to govern such a venture without the promise of monetary gain? Page two of SS8H2 offers links to articles and other secondary sources that shed more light on the role of the Trustees. These secondary sources are great resources to investigate questions that will likely arise after reading the Royal Charter

[“A New and Accurate Account”]

“A New and Accurate Account of the Provinces of South-Carolina and Georgia…” was part of a promotional campaign led by the Trustees to encourage emigrants to sign-up for the new colony and to solicit charitable contributions for the venture. This particular tract was published without attribution to a specific author. Historians have debated the authorship of this and other promotional tracts, but it is sure that James Oglethorpe and other supporters of the colony supervised the writing, editing, and publishing of these promotional tracts. Similar to the endless promotional materials students interact with today through television commercials, billboards, the
internet etc..., these promotional materials were created to help increase sales. In this case, the materials hoped to sell the citizens of England the idea of the Georgia colony.

Reading the promotional literature associated with the founding of Georgia’s colony offers students a great opportunity to not only better understand the reasoning and philosophy of the founders, but it also offers an important opportunity to practice the analysis of promotional materials. Students could benefit from imagining the tracts as a commercial. This may be an opportune time to introduce the idea of “propaganda” as students will continue to come in contact with propaganda in their study of history. Students could be asked if they think these materials are an example of “propaganda.” It is also important for students to recognize that this particular tract was written before Oglethorpe arrived in Savannah. Students may wonder where Oglethorpe got his information about the colony or how his description might be different after enduring the realities of a hot Savannah summer. Students can compare and contrast this document to the two other accounts in the primary sources set for SS8H2 or other accounts available through the links on page two of SS8H2.

["An Impartial Enquiry"]

Benjamin Martyn was employed by the Georgia Trustees to be their official secretary. It was Martyn’s job to keep the official records for the Georgia Colony. Benjamin Martyn also created, wrote, or contributed to publications relating to the progress of the Georgia Colony. In 1741, Martyn’s “An Impartial Enquiry into the State and Utility of the Province of Georgia” was published. The document was created for the express purpose of addressing critics of the colony. In the document, Martyn lays out the complaints one by one and argues against their validity. Although this source was created by an employee of the Trustees, it offers students an introduction to the complaints of the “malcontents.” The malcontents were a group of Georgia colonists who openly disagreed and complained about the policies of the Georgia Trustees. Analyzing this primary source also offers students a chance to discuss the rhetorical merits of Martyn’s writings. Did Martyn do a good job in arguing the viability of the Georgia colony? What rhetorical strategies did Martyn use to help convince his reader of his arguments?

["A True and Historical Narrative"]

Patrick Telfair was one of the most outspoken critics of the Georgia trustees. Telfair worked with Thomas Stephens, son of the secretary to the Georgia Trustees William Stephens, to organize the unhappy colonists or “malcontents” in an official campaign against the Trustees. Telfair was the primary author of the tract “A True and Historical Narrative of the Colony of Georgia in America.” Telfair wrote the tract as a reaction to William Stephens’s “A State of the Province of Georgia” which argued that there was wide support for the Trustees and their policies among the colonists in Georgia. Telfair’s arguments were presented before the Trustees but did not result in immediate change; however, many of the policies despised by Telfair, such as the ban on slavery, would later be revoked. Students will find this narrative to be much different than the narratives of Martyn and Oglethorpe. It might be worthwhile for students to compare and contrast these narratives. Additional narratives concerning the Georgia colony are available online through the Collections of the Georgia Historical Society and the Colonial Records of Georgia. The second page of SS8H2 provides links to some of these sources. Secondary materials linked on the second page may also help students investigate why this rift between the malcontents and the Trustees existed.

[View of Savannah,1734]
Peter Gordon’s 1734 “View of Savannah” provides a visual representation of the early settlement on the banks of the Savannah River. Peter Gordon, one of the colony’s original settlers, sketched the city of Savannah and later presented it to the Trustees in London as a descriptive map. The map shows Oglethorpe’s unique design for the city. The plan was based on a system of town wards, each containing building lots, trust lots, and a central square. Students can use this source to compare and contrast Savannah in 1734 to the Savannah we know today. What elements of Oglethorpe’s plan still exist in historic Savannah? Based on this map, what do you think were some of the difficulties of colonial life? Students can also compare this visual representation of Savannah to the written description in the various narratives of early colonists. Students should be warned that visual materials require careful analysis just like textual sources. Students may be used to approaching historical images like any illustration in a book, something nice to look at. If students are to act like real historians, they will see visual sources as clues to understanding the past.

Royal Georgia

In 1752, the Georgia Trustees gave over control of the colony to the British government. By this time, the original philanthropic goals of the Trustees had given way under the weight of the reality of the conditions in the Colony. The colonists were not producing the silk, spices, and subtropical goods the Trustees first imagined. Instead, the colonists had fallen into line with South Carolina’s economic plan with production of rice, lumber, naval stores and indigo. This type of agriculture was supported by the lifting of the ban on slavery in the colony of Georgia in 1750 and the easing of land policies. The Trustees were disenchanted with their colony; General Oglethorpe did not even bother to attend meetings anymore. So, one year before their charter expired, the Trustees agreed to hand over the colony to the crown. Under the British royal colony system, the colonists were ruled directly by the king through a royal governor, Council, and other appointed officials. The colonists also had some legislative governance through the Commons House of Assembly and the Upper House. The colony had three royal governors until 1776, when the colonies declared their independence from royal government. During this period, the colony underwent many changes in its social, political, and cultural make-up as the primary sources from the period reveal.

Similar to the Trustee Period, historians have access to official records pertaining to the colony of Georgia along with some journals and accounts from colonists, maps, wills, deeds, etc. This period also offers a new source of information, newspapers. In 1763, the Georgia Gazette became the colony’s first newspaper. The primary source for SS8H2 includes three specifically related to the Royal Georgia period. Each source is described below. Page two of SS8H2 offers additional links to primary and secondary sources related to the period.

Sources for Royal Georgia
Olaudah Equiano. The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Norwich: The Author, 1794. Library of Congress Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Digital ID: rbemisc ody0201
Runaway Slave Notice. “Georgia Gazette”, November 16, 1774 Page3 C2. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society
A Proclamation by James Wright Issued March 28, 1774. James Wright Papers, MS 884. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society

[The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano]
One of the major differences between Trustee and Royal Georgia was the reliance on slave labor. The slave population in Georgia exploded between 1750 and 1775 and the slave codes became less restrictive from the original code laid down by the trustees in 1750. Oladah Equiano published one of the earliest slave narratives in 1789. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African*, chronicles Equiano’s life as an enslaved person. In his account, Equiano twice describes visits Savannah. This source offers students a view into the life of slaves in the American colonies. Equiano purchased his freedom in 1766 and moved to London to become involved in the abolitionist movement. Supported by abolitionists in London, Equiano published his narrative and his description of slavery played an important role in strengthening the movement.

As with any primary source, students should consider the perspective and purposes of the writer. With autobiographies, it is also important to keep in mind the amount of time elapsed between the events described in the book and when the author wrote about them. Despite the obvious biases and potential problems with autobiographies, accounts like this one help students build a picture of life in colonial Georgia.

[Runaway Slave Notice]

The runaway slave notice available in this set appeared in the November 16, 1774, edition of the Georgia Gazette. This notice is interesting because the slaves have run away from the plantation of Georgia’s Royal Governor James Wright. Students should be asked how this notice reveals the changes that have occurred in Georgia since its founding in 1733. Would James Oglethorpe ever own slaves? The slave notice also gives some clues into plantation life in colonial Georgia. With the help of good leading questions, students can pull important information from the notice. What can we learn about the role of slaves in colonial Savannah from this notice? What does this notice reveal about the economic importance of slaves in colonial Savannah? What does this notice reveal about the administration of plantations in colonial Savannah? How can this notice help us understand the methods used by slaves to attempt escape to freedom?

Unfortunately, there is no digital database of the *Georgia Gazette* articles now housed on microfilm at institutions like the *Georgia Historical Society*. This primary source set along with other online exhibits does provide some access to the Gazette.

[A Proclamation by James Wright]

As the head executive leader in the Royal Colony of Georgia, James Wright had many responsibilities, one of which was maintaining peaceful relations with the native population. The March 28, 1774 proclamation given by James Wright offers a glimpse into the office of Royal Governor, the daily life issues of the colony, and the situation in Georgia just before the American Revolution. James Wright was the last Royal Governor of Georgia and arguably the most efficient. Some historians argue that the citizens of Georgia were satisfied with Wright’s governorship up until the Stamp Act of 1765. After the Stamp Act troubles, Wright increasingly struggled with the Commons House and supporters of liberty. In 1773, Wright enjoyed some return to favor by securing new lands in the south and west of Georgia once belonging to the Indians. While this brought him popularity with his White citizenry, it created increased tensions and problems with the Creek and Cherokee Indians. This proclamation, dated 1774, reflects this increased tension with the Indians.

It may be useful for students to begin an analysis of this proclamation by trying to decipher exactly what the proclamation is asking the citizens to do. What tone does Wright take in the proclamation? What reaction do the students think citizens might have to the proclamation? After investigating the meaning of the proclamation, students could be asked what this proclamation
reveals about the period in which it was published. What can we learn about relations with the Indian population from this proclamation? What can we learn about the role of Royal Governors from this proclamation? Page two of SS8H2 provides some links to secondary sources on the period of Royal Georgia and James Wright. Students may want to consult some of these sources to fill in their understanding after reading the proclamation.

Selected Bibliography

GEORGIA IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Georgia has a complex and interesting story in the American Revolution. Georgia had experienced growth and prosperity as a royal colony and its citizens were deeply divided over issues of independence. Even the Whigs who supported independence from Great Britain had internal struggle between the radical and conservative leaders. Relations with the Creek and Cherokee population on the Western frontiers added another layer of complexity to Revolutionary War Georgia. Primary sources from this period offer students an opportunity to gain a richer more varied understanding of this time period. Students can read letters, official documents, journals and newspaper articles. Students can also analyze visual materials such as military maps and official portraits. The primary source set for SS8H3 offers a selection of eight primary sources that directly relate to the Georgia during the American Revolution. Each document is described below.

Sources for the Georgia in the American Revolution
“Plan of the Siege of Savannah, with the joint attack of the French and Americans on the 9th October 1779 In which they were defeated by his Majesty’s Forces under the Command of Major Genl. Augustine Prevost. From a survey by an Officer. Engraved for Stedman’s

Abigail Minis Petition for Certificates, 14 January 1780, Minis Colonial Papers, MS 568. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society.

List of Loyalists Whose Lands Were Confiscated, 1780s. Loyalist Papers, MS 506. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society.


[Georgia Gazette Articles]

As discussed in the section on Royal Georgia, anti-British sentiments began to rise in Georgia after the passing of the Stamp Act in 1765. The two *Georgia Gazette* articles featured in the primary source set offer a unique window into Savannah during the Stamp Act troubles. Understanding the bias and perspective of the *Georgia Gazette* is no small task. Students might be quick to jump to the conclusion that the Gazette was pro-patriot because of the contents of these two isolated articles; however, they should be cautioned that the Gazette has been accused of being a pro-loyalist paper, a neutral paper and by a few scholars a pro-patriot paper. The editor of the Gazette, James Johnston, was given his job by official appointment from the British crown. It is not a far stretch to label him a loyalist. After all, James Johnston was forced out of Georgia and his lands and property confiscated when the Revolutionary legislature of Georgia passed the Confiscation and Banishment Act.

The fact that James Johnston, an apparent loyalist, allowed anti-stamp act publications in his newspaper brings to light the complicated nature of Georgia’s Revolutionary period. Even those who disliked some of England’s policies did not support revolution and independence. Advanced students could further investigate this historical topic by reading the *Georgia Historical Quarterly* Article “The Georgia Stamp Act and the Georgia Gazette: a Reconsideration,” by S.F. Roach. In this article Roach argues that during the Stamp Act controversy the *Georgia Gazette* was a pro-patriot paper. This article offers great insight into the Stamp Act period in Georgia and offers students an opportunity to see how historians debate and discuss through scholarly work.

The November 14, 1765, article included in the set offers a good mix of articles for students to investigate. The newspaper reports on reactions and protests in other colonies related to the Stamp Act and includes two proclamations by Gov. James Wright. The first proclamation includes examples of letters from Whigs threatening whoever takes office as stamp act master for Georgia. The second proclamation warns against rioting and protests in the colony. The November 21, 1765, edition of the *Gazette* is particularly interesting because it was the last edition to be published until the repeal of the stamp act. This fact is noted in the margins of the paper. The article itself is a reprint of speech given in the Massachusetts General Assembly in response to a speech given by their royal governor. There is a link available to the governor’s speech to enhance student understanding of that exchange. Johnston’s decision to publish this speech offers an interesting clue to the situation in Georgia as the Stamp Act was being put into place. The text of the speech itself offers a wonderful introduction to the general grievances of the colonists against the British crown. Together, these two articles offer a rich source for understanding Georgia in the lead up to the American Revolution. The second page of SS8H3 offers additional secondary and primary sources on the Stamp Act and Georgia on the eve of the Revolution.

[Letters from Governor Sir James Wright]
The letters between Governor Wright and the Secretaries of State for America between 1774 and February 1789 detail the goings on of the Georgia colony from the perspective of its royal governor. Not only is Wright’s perspective as royal governor unique, but the destination of the letters is also unique. Students could be asked how Wright’s letters may be impacted by the fact that he is writing them to his boss. Do you suspect Wright would discuss the efforts of the patriots in Georgia the same way Elijah Clarke would? Just because we understand the potential bias of Wright’s letters, that does not mean we do not look to them to establish an understanding of the important events and issues in the colony during the revolution. This is a lengthy source and it may be necessary for teachers to pick and choose letters for students to analyze. Students could also be asked to look at sets of the letters in groups and share their research with the class. For advanced students, these letters could be the basis for a project or paper.

[Declaration of Independence.]

The next primary source needs no introduction. The Declaration of Independence offers obvious insight into the American Revolution. Students will interact with this document multiple times in the course of their education. This copy of the Declaration of Independence is special because it is Georgia’s official copy. Introducing Georgia’s copy of the Declaration of Independence to students offers a perfect opportunity to discuss the process of Georgia shifting from royal to rebel control. In 1775, partially in reaction to the news of Lexington and Concord, leaders of the patriot supporters in Georgia took action by establishing a provisional congress, Council of Safety, and electing delegates to the Continental Congress. The Georgia colony was slow to commit to the cause of the Revolution, but their full commitment was signaled in July of 1776 when George Walton, Button Gwinnett, and Lyman Hall signed the Declaration of Independence. Students should be exposed not only to the content of the Declaration of Independence, but also to the story of Georgia’s involvement in the document. Students could be asked how they think the Declaration of Independence changed the situation in all of the colonies, including Georgia.

[“Plan of the Siege of Savannah”]

Georgia did not see any major military events until 1778. In December 1778, the British army recaptured Savannah and by 1779 Sunbury and Augusta were both in British hands as well. Fighting moved to the backcountry. “The Plan of the Siege of Savannah” map shows the attempt of French Naval General Henri d’Estaing and American forces to recapture Savannah in 1779. The map, created by the British, depicts the failed siege. Using the map’s symbols and references, students should be able to gain a basic understanding of the battle’s movements. It might be a good exercise to ask students who they believed had the advantage based on this map and the secondary information they have. After students make their guesses you could give them the additional information that the French and American forces delayed their attack by two days giving the British time to get reinforcements from Beaufort, SC. These visual primary sources work best when partnered with other primary and secondary sources.

[Abigail Minis Petition]

On January 14, 1780, Abigail Minis wrote to her friend Mordecai Sheftall, who was then in Philadelphia, requesting his help in gaining reimbursement for the assistance she provided the Continental Army during the Siege of Savannah a few months earlier. Abigail Minis (c.1701-1794) was one of the earliest settlers of the Georgia colony having landed in the new colony with her husband and children in July 1733. Her husband, Abraham Minis, became a successful merchant and land owner in Savannah. After his death in 1757, Abigail took over the management of the
family’s mercantile firm and tavern and oversaw more than 1,000 acres of land in and around the
city of Savannah. During the American Revolution, the Minis family supported the Patriots.
During the October 1779 Siege of Savannah, Abigail provided the American and French forces
trying to capture the city from the British with provisions.

This primary source is unique because it comes from a female patriot living in Georgia.
Understanding the uniqueness of this source may help students pull out important insights and
develop good questions. What can this source tell us about the life of women during the American
Revolution? What does this source reveal about the way the American forces administered the war?
How well does Abigail Minis do at supporting her request for funds?

[Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist]

Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston’s book *Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist* also offers a
female perspective on the American Revolution in Georgia. Similar to Abigail Minis, Elizabeth
Johnston also hailed from Savannah, Georgia. Unlike Abigail Minis, Johnston was a loyalist. When
British forces evacuated Savannah in 1782, Johnston’s family left never to return. After fleeing
Savannah, Johnston’s family lived in South Carolina, Florida, Scotland, Jamaica and finally Nova
Scotia. With the help of her grandson, Elizabeth Johnston wrote down her memories of Georgia
during the Revolution at the age of 72. This unique primary source offers students a glimpse into
the complicated and tumultuous history of the American Revolution. Not only is Johnston’s
writing unique because she gives a loyalist’s perspective on the revolution, but her writing is also
unique because it provides a detailed view of daily life for women during the war. The copy of
Johnston’s *Recollections* provided in the primary source set includes a final chapter with copies of
letters between members of her family during the American Revolution.

Using this source in the classroom offers another opportunity to discuss the pros and cons
of using personal narratives to study history. Students should understand that this source is not a
journal or diary, Johnston composed the narrative many years after the events she details. Students
should also be aware that Johnston’s intended audience was her children and grandchildren. It
may help students relate to the source if they are given the opportunity to discuss how their
grandparents have passed on family history through storytelling, writings, genealogical research,
etc… What can we learn about Georgia during the American Revolution from this source? If
Abigail Minis wrote a similar narrative, how would it compare to Johnston’s book? What can we
learn about the lives of women in the eighteenth century from this source?

[List of Loyalists Whose Lands Were Confiscated]

On May 4, 1782, the Georgia legislature passed the Confiscation and Banishment Act. This
act declared 277 loyalists guilty of treason and allowed for the confiscation of their property.
Loyalists who left the state, like Elizabeth Johnston, had their property seized. The inscription on
the list provides details on the act. After reading the list and inscriptions, students should be able
to explain what happened to loyalists and their property. Students should also be able to explain
what loyalists had to do if they wanted to stay in Georgia and retain their property. This list may
bring up questions and debates in the classroom. Do students think the act is fair? What does the
list reveal about the tough consequences of war? How do students guess the proceeds from the
confiscated lands were used?

Selected Bibliography

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The Treaty of Paris, signed on September 3, 1783, brought the Revolutionary War to an official end. Two years earlier the thirteen newly formed states passed the Articles of Confederation. The Articles created a weak central government with more power in the individual states. In 1787 a new constitutional convention was formed to revise the articles. Instead of offering revision, the members of the delegation threw out the Articles of Confederation and replaced them with a new government under the United States Constitution.

The states also used constitutional conventions to draft and ratify their own state constitutions. Georgia held its first constitutional convention in 1777. The United States Constitution was ratified by this same constitutional convention on January 2, 1788. On November 4, 1788, Georgia formed a new constitution which underwent changes before being ratified on May 6, 1789. Yet another new Georgia constitution was put in place in 1798.

The decisions and debates of this time period impact citizens of the United States everyday as they interact with their national, state and local governments. The United States Constitution and Bill of Rights remain the law of the land in the United States. The debates surrounding these important documents still echo in the halls of Congress. Although Georgia’s constitution has undergone several revisions since 1777, studying Georgia’s early form of government still provides insight into government in modern Georgia. Thankfully, teachers and students can access these founding documents. This primary source set includes three sources related directly to the ratification of the US Constitution and Bill of Rights. Page two of SS8H4 has links to additional primary and secondary sources.

Sources for the ratification of the US Constitution and Bill of Rights
http://cdm.sos.state.ga.us/u/?adhoc,1777
Georgia Constitution, 1777. MS 1704. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society
[Baldwin Constitution]
Abraham Baldwin was one of four delegates to attend the constitutional convention of 1787, and one of only two men from Georgia to sign the Constitution. Baldwin’s decision to change his vote on the issue of equal representation of states in the senate was instrumental in guaranteeing the “Great Compromise. Abraham Baldwin’s draft copy of the United States Constitution.
Constitution is one of the Georgia Historical Society’s most valuable treasures. The copy has been fully digitized and a transcript made of Baldwin’s notes. This digitized version of Baldwin’s copy of the US Constitution is a great tool for teaching not only the content of the Constitution, but also for teaching about the process of creating and editing important documents. Students may be interested to know that just as they are asked to edit their papers, the delegates of the Constitutional Convention checked the fundamental document of our government for grammatical errors and style. Unlike term papers, the edits and changes to the Constitution potentially changed the nature of America’s government.

[Georgia Convention to Ratify]

On January 3, 1789, Georgia became the fourth state to ratify the United States Constitution. The state constitutional conventions were tasked with voting on ratification. Nine out of thirteen states were required to ratify the Constitution before it became the new law of the land. Delegates to Georgia’s constitutional convention unanimously voted to ratify the constitution. This short journal provides a summary of the daily events of the convention along with the names of delegates in attendance. The brevity of this document gives readers a clue to Georgia’s eagerness to ratify the constitution. This eagerness was likely due to Georgia's desire for help defending their vulnerable frontiers from Native American attack.

[Georgia Constitution, 1777.]

The earliest copy of Georgia’s first constitution appears in the Georgia Gazette. The constitution was completed in February of 1777, not long after Georgia accepted the Declaration of Independence. The constitution provided a framework to help Georgia go from colony to state. The constitution gave most power to a state legislature and limited executive power. From this primary source set, students can read a PDF scan of the constitution as it appeared in the Georgia Gazette or read a transcription of the constitution on GeorgiaInfo. It may be beneficial for students to summarize the type of government they think this constitution established after reading the constitution as a whole. Students can also compare and contrast the Constitution of 1777 to the United States Articles of Confederation. Similarly, Georgia’s 1788 constitution can be compared and contrasted to the United States Constitution adopted in 1789. How do the changes in Georgia constitution from 1777 to 1789 compare to the changes made to America’s government in the change from the Articles of Confederation to the United States Constitution?

Selected Bibliography


Growth in Georgia and the US between 1789 & 1840
Georgia's early years as a state were marked by expansion and growth. Georgia's population grew after the post-war period and the white population looked west for more elbow room. Although Georgia actually lost a large portion of its western territory between the Chattahoochee and Mississippi Rivers during this period, Georgia gained greater control of its western frontier from the Native American populations. New technologies like the cotton gin and steam-powered rail led to expansion and growth of Georgia's economy. It was in this period that cotton became king of the South, Georgia being no exception. Several defining historic events occurred during this period including, the Yazoo land frauds, the founding of the University of Georgia, the discovery of gold in North Georgia, the spread of Baptist and Methodist churches, the creation of a Cherokee syllabary, and the Trail of Tears.

Students and teachers have access to a good selection of primary sources from this time period. There are a large number of sources available related particularly to the relationship between the government and the Native American population including, Supreme Court decisions, letters between white and native leaders and the Cherokee Nation's newspaper the Cherokee Phoenix. Maps provide a good visual representation of the dramatic shifts in geography and population experienced in Georgia during this period. Using these sources, students can put together a picture of what Georgia was like between 1789 and 1840. Rather than just hearing about the important events and changes in Georgia during this period, analyzing primary sources offers students a chance to make their own conclusions and theories about the period. There are six primary sources related to SS8H5. Page two of SS8H5 offers links to additional primary and secondary sources for this period of Georgia's history.

Sources for Growth in Georgia and the US between 1789 & 1840
Mulberry Grove Plantation Drawing. Georgia Historical Society Collection of Photographs, 1361PH. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society
“Opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, at January term, 1832: delivered by Mr. Chief Justice Marshall, in the case of Samuel A. Worcester, plaintiff in error, versus the state of Georgia; with a statement of the case extracted from the records of the Supreme Court of the United States.” Rare Pamphlet Collection, E99.C5.U553 1832a. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society
A map of the Indian Nations in the Southern Department 1766. Map Collection, 1361MP 325. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society
Elisha Strickland land grant, MS 769. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society

[Mulberry Grove Plantation Drawing]
An unknown artist created this print of Mulberry Grove plantation, 1794. The details of this image offer a view of the key elements of plantation life in antebellum Georgia. Georgia gave Revolutionary War general Nathanael Greene Mulberry Grove Plantation to thank him for his service during the war. Nathanael Greene died of sunstroke in 1786. Green's widow Catherine invited Eli Whitney to stay at Mulberry Grove as a tutor in 1793. During his stay, Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. The cotton gin made cotton production more efficient and profitable
contributing to the creation of Georgia’s “Cotton Kingdom.” Although the artist and exact date of this work’s creation is unknown, it is clear that the artist wanted to depict Mulberry Grove’s connection to the cotton gin.

Using historic paintings, prints, and photographs in the classroom allows students to practice their skills in analyzing visual information, a skill needed in today’s world. 21st-century students encounter a steady stream of visual information. Before making conclusions based on this print, students should understand that there is no record of who created it, or exactly when it was created. All we know from the title is that the image is meant to depict Mulberry Grove in 1794. This image comes from the photograph collection of the Georgia Historical Society, meaning someone took a photograph of the original print. It may be useful for students to brainstorm the possible circumstances this print was created. Perhaps the print was created on an anniversary of the cotton gin. Perhaps this image is from a rare book. Maybe it is even a postcard.

Next, students should analyze the elements of the photograph. What is in the foreground? What images are in the background? What activities are depicted? Who do they think the various people in the image are? Finally, students can come to some conclusions about the image and the historical period it represents. Do students think this image is a realistic depiction of plantation life or a romanticized view of plantation life? What can we learn about the methods of agriculture in this period from this image? What can students conclude about the cotton gin based on this image? How does the image depict slave life? What does the image reveal about technology used on plantations?

[“Map of the Indian Nations in the Southern Department, 1766,”]

In 1766, John William Gerard De Braham’s “Map of the Indian Nations in the Southern Department, 1766,” was published. The map shows the Indian territories in the southern region of the United States from the coast to the Mississippi River. The map shows the main areas under Native American control, rivers, forts, and mountain ranges. The map is important because it shows the make-up of the region before the American Revolution and the forced removal of the Creek and Cherokee Indians to the west. De Braham, the map-maker, has a strong Georgia connection. De Braham migrated from Germany to Ebenezer, Georgia in 1751. De Braham was appointed surveyor general of Georgia because of his skills in cartography. De Braham later became a strong critic of imperialism because of his experiences with the Native Americans.

This map helps set the stage for the conflicts occurring between the state of Georgia and the Native Americans after the American Revolution. Given this map, and the knowledge that after the American Revolution, Georgia experienced an influx of new settlers, students should be able to conclude the potential for conflict over the western and northern regions of Georgia. If students are given additional information about the discovery of gold in the northern region, they will begin to better understand the events that will unfold in this period and the rest of the primary sources in this set.

[Cherokee Phoenix]

Cherokee Indians hoped to avoid the fate of the Creek who ceded the last of their land to Georgia in 1825. By the end of the Revolutionary War, the Cherokee had already surrendered much of their original territory to state and federal governments. In an attempt to stop further loss of territory, many Cherokee sought to adapt to the culture of white settlers. The Cherokee adopted a written language and a republican form of government, started a newspaper, and established New Echota as their capital. It was in New Echota that the Cherokee, with the help of missionary Samuel Worcester, established a printing office to publish the Cherokee Phoenix. Edited by Cherokee Elias Boudinot, the Phoenix was printed in the Cherokee language and English. The goal of the
newspaper was to gain public support for the Cherokee nation at a time when they were under increased pressure to give up their sovereignty or move west. The newspaper was published until 1835 when their printing press was confiscated by the Georgia Guard.

Thankfully, issues of the Cherokee Phoenix have been preserved online through the Digital Library of Georgia. The database of Georgia Historic Newspapers on the Digital Library of Georgia is searchable and open to anyone without an account or password. The first edition of the Cherokee Phoenix, provided in this primary source set, includes a full copy of the Cherokee Constitution. Students will find many commonalities between the United States Constitution and the constitution of the Cherokee nation. The Cherokee Constitution also clearly states the Cherokee desire to remain a sovereign nation inside the borders of the United States. This edition also includes a detailed description of the Cherokee Alphabet.

[Letter written from George Gilmer to Samuel Worchester]

On May 16th, 1831, Georgia governor George Gilmer wrote to missionary Samuel Worcester warning him that he must leave Cherokee territory or face arrest. Gilmer references a law passed by the Georgia government that banned “white persons” from living with the Cherokees without special permission from the state. Worcester and several other missionaries refused to leave and challenged the law. Worcester attempted to avoid arrest by insisting that his role as postmaster general required him to be in the Cherokee territory as a duty to the federal government. Gilmer had Worcester’s appointment revoked before sending this letter. While reading this letter, students should consider tone. What tone does Gilmer take with Worcester? What is Gilmer’s goal in writing this letter? Students should consider why Georgia leaders passed a law banning “white persons” from the Cherokee territory. Does it impact your analysis to know that Worcester was assisting the Cherokee nation in their effort to retain their sovereignty? The second page of SS8H5 offers several secondary sources for further investigation of Samuel Worcester and the Cherokee Nation. This letter is a part of the Southeastern Native American Documents, 1730-1842 database hosted on the Digital Library of Georgia.

[Worcester v. Georgia opinion]

Samuel Worcester was eventually arrested and sentenced to four years hard labor in September of 1831. The Cherokee Nation hired lawyers to represent the arrested missionaries and their case was heard before the Supreme Court. The case was titled Worcester v. Georgia. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the missionaries, and Chief Justice John Marshall’s majority opinion supported the idea that the Cherokee Nation was sovereign and retained its own laws. Without knowing the rest of the story, students might guess that this means the Cherokee Nation would remain in Georgia as a sovereign nation. However, President Andrew Jackson did not enforce the Supreme Court’s decision, and Georgia refused to release the missionaries from prison. Three years later, a faction of the Cherokees signed a removal treaty, and in 1838 the Cherokee were forcibly moved to present day Oklahoma.

Not only does this primary source offer students an opportunity to increase their understanding of America’s system of government, but it also provides an opportunity to read an excellent piece of persuasive writing. This is one example of how primary source analysis provides both content and literacy. John Marshall lays out the court’s opinion then goes on to support the decision with evidence from the case and other relevant cases. Students can determine how well they think Marshall supports the court’s opinion. Students who are interested in the Supreme Court can be directed to sites like the Oyez project or Cornell’s Legal Information Institute which offer full access to Supreme Court opinions.
As Georgia began to gain more land in the interior as the native population was pushed out, a lottery system was established to sell the land. The land grant provided in this primary source set is from one of the eight lotteries Georgia held between 1805 and 1832. This system allowed small yeomen farmers the opportunity to purchase their own land for a small price. The average price paid for these plots was seven cents an acre. There were two lotteries held in 1832, both of which involved the sale of Cherokee lands. This grant is signed by Georgia Governor Wilson Lumpkin. Wilson Lumpkin grew up in Wilkes County, a site of much conflict between Whites and Indians. Lumpkin’s upbringing amidst this conflict shaped his views on Indian policy. Lumpkin supported removal of the Indian population to modern-day Oklahoma and disputed the idea of Cherokee sovereignty.

This source provides a fitting cap to this set. The land lottery system reflects population growth and desire for land existing in Georgia after the American Revolution. The land lottery also reflects the removal of Native Americans from Georgia’s frontier and the movement of small yeomen farmers to the area. Students should reflect on how the land lottery system impacted the course of Georgia history. Students should also be given supplemental secondary source materials explaining the shift in emphasis in Georgia politics from the wealthy planter to the small farmer who participated in the land lotteries. The second page of SS8H5 offers links for more information on the impact of the land lottery system on Georgia.

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Suggested online tools for classroom implementation

*Link to the pages described by clicking on the arrows*

The library of congress has developed an excellent inquiry based primary source analysis tool with teacher guides for a variety of source types.
SCIM-C (Summarizing, Contextualizing, Inferring, Monitoring, and Corroborating). A method for analyzing primary sources in the classroom. The website offers an explanation of SCIM-C, demonstrations of SCIM-C’s use and research and evidence to support the SCIM-C approach.

LDC is a model for teaching literacy in the content areas. The website offers detailed information about the LDC model, fill-in-the-blank templates, sample modules, and other guidance and support.

Ready to use classroom activity

Deciding the Future of the Georgia Colony

Standards: SS8H2, L8-8WHST1, L6-8WHST4, L6-8WHST8, L6-8WHST9

Goal: To facilitate student investigation into the differing visions for the future of the Georgia colony existing during the Trustee Period.

Objectives (Students will be able to…)
- Express the vision of Oglethorpe and the Georgia Trustees for the Georgia colony compared to the vision of the malcontents.
- Give a verbal argument for or against an assigned position.

Procedures (this may require up to three class periods depending on your school’s schedule):

1. Set up four stations in the classroom. In each station, provide enough copies of the primary source listed below for ¼ of the class to read them at a time.
   a. Station I: Original Charter of Colony (page 4 with transcript)
   b. Station II: Oglethorpe Promotional Text (pg 8-10 of PDF 49-51 of pamphlet)
   c. Station III: Benjamin Martyn “An Impartial Inquiry”
   d. Station IV: Patrick Telfair “A True and Historical Narrative”
2. Assign your students a 1, 2, 3, or 4. This will decide at which station the students will begin.
3. Give each student four copies of the Library of Congress’s “Primary Source Analysis Tool” (available on the next page).
4. Display the following two questions for everyone to see. How does the author describe Georgia? What vision does the author have for Georgia’s future?
5. Instruct students that they will be reading four different primary source documents related to colonial Georgia. They are going to fill out an analysis sheet for each of the documents. Explain that as they read the documents and fill out the sheets, they should keep the two framework questions you have displayed in mind. Let them know that at the end of this activity they should be able to discuss each document.
6. Give the students equal amounts of time at each station. You may decide if students will be able to work together at the stations or if they should work alone. You may also want to include some of the visual sources from this set at each station to make the activity more engaging.
7. After the have read and interpreted the documents, facilitate a discussion about the differing visions and viewpoints about the colony of Georgia. It will be appropriate at this
time to fill in student gaps in knowledge about the malcontents and the original design for the colony.

8. Elect two to five students to act as the Georgia Trustees (judges) for a debate on the future of the colony of Georgia. Assign each remaining student one of two positions on the future of Georgia’s colony.
   a. Vision 1: The colony will continue to pursue silk, olive, grape, and citrus production. Slavery and rum will remain banned in the colony. Land distribution will remain the same as laid out in the original charter.
   b. Vision 2: The colony will become more like the prosperous South Carolina colony by growing rice, indigo and cotton using slave labor. Restrictions on land ownership will be lifted and rum will no longer be banned.

9. Give students in each vision group time to prepare their arguments.
10. Give each group a specific amount of time to give their arguments. Then allow a few minutes for the teams to refute the others argument.
11. Have your trustees decide which vision team they believe won the debate and why.
12. To assess student understanding have them write a summary of the differing viewpoints on the future of the Georgia colony during the Trustee Period.

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View of Savannah as it stood on 29th of March 1734. Georgia Historical Society Map Collection, 1361MP-001. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society

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Runaway Slave Notice. “Georgia Gazette”, November 16, 1774 Page3 C2. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society

A Proclamation by James Wright Issued March 28, 1774. James Wright Papers, MS 884. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society

List of Loyalists Whose Lands Were Confiscated, 1780s. Loyalist Papers, MS 506. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society.


Abigail Minis Petition for Certificates, 14 January 1780, Minis Colonial Papers, MS 568. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society.

“Plan of the Siege of Savannah, with the joint attack of the French and Americans on the 9th October 1779 In which they were defeated by his Majesty’s Forces under the Command of Major Genl. Augustine Prevost. From a survey by an Officer. Engraved for Stedman’s History of the American War Jan. 20th 1794.” Map Collection, 1361MP601. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society.


*United States Constitution draft annotated by Abraham Baldwin, 1787, MS 1703*. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society.


Georgia Constitution, 1777. MS 1704. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society

“Opinion of the Supreme Court of the United States, at January term, 1832: delivered by Mr. Chief Justice Marshall, in the case of Samuel A. Worcester, plaintiff in error, versus the state of Georgia; with a statement of the case extracted from the records of the Supreme Court of the United States.” Rare Pamphlet Collection, E99.C5.U553 1832a. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society


Elisha Strickland land grant, MS 769. Courtesy of the Georgia Historical Society