An Educational Experience for Grades 4-12

In Theatres November 19, 2004

HAVE YOUR CLASS ENTER THE NATIONAL TREASURE STUDENT WRITING CONTEST.

www.NationalTreasure.com
Dear Educator,

American history is made up of countless stories of people whose distinctive experiences have contributed to American ideas and helped mold American ideals. **National Treasure**, a new film coming to theatres November 19, 2004, tells the story of one family’s history-making experiences in a way that brings the era of Revolutionary America to life for students.

Starring Academy Award winner Nicolas Cage and a critically acclaimed ensemble cast — including Academy Award winner Jon Voight, Academy Award nominee Harvey Keitel, Emmy Award winner Christopher Plummer, and newcomers Diane Kruger and Justin Bartha — **National Treasure** follows the adventures of Benjamin Franklin Gates, a third-generation treasure hunter who has been searching all his life for a treasure no one believes existed: amassed through the ages, moved across continents, to become the greatest treasure the world has ever known. Hidden by our Founding Fathers, they left clues to the treasure’s location right before our eyes... from our nation’s birthplace to the symbols on the dollar bill. Ben’s life-long journey leads him to a map hidden on the back of the Declaration of Independence. As word of the invisible map leaks, Ben realizes in order to protect the world’s greatest treasure, he must now do the unthinkable: steal the most revered, best-guarded document in American history before it falls into the wrong hands, and unlock the 2000-year-old mystery behind the world’s greatest national treasure.

This free study guide is designed to help you add the excitement of **National Treasure** to your lessons in American history. Developed by LearningWorks in cooperation with Walt Disney Pictures, the guide features classroom activities that support national history standards across grades 4-12 by focusing on the interpretation of primary sources. Through fun puzzles and critical-thinking projects, students search out the visual symbols hidden in the Great Seal of the United States, investigate Jefferson’s original wording of the Declaration of Independence, and explore the significance of historical landmarks across our nation and within their own hometown. In addition, along the way, students can test their talent for historical detective work with a special treasure hunt at the **National Treasure** web site: www.NationalTreasure.com.

And as an extra incentive to historical learning, we invite your students to enter the **NATIONAL TREASURE STUDENT WRITING CONTEST**. Three winners — one from grades 4-6, one from grades 7-9, and one from grades 10-12 — will be awarded an expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., for themselves, two classmates, and an adult, plus special VIP behind-the-scenes tours of the National Archives and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. See page 11 for contest details. And please note that contest entries must be postmarked no later than December 3, 2004.

We hope you and your students enjoy **National Treasure**, and we encourage you to share this study guide with colleagues. Although the materials are copyrighted, you have permission to make as many copies as needed for educational purposes. And please let us know your opinion of the study guide by returning the enclosed response card. Your feedback is important to us and helps ensure that LearningWorks programs continue to meet the needs of both teachers and students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief, LearningWorks
Using the Program Components

1. This program provides a foundation for historical learning in grades 4-12. The activities offer younger students substantive information about the founding of the United States. For older students, the activities can serve as a springboard for a broader examination of our nation’s history.

2. Photocopy the six activity sheets in this booklet (two sheets for each activity) to provide a complete set for each student in your class. At the same time, make a master copy of the booklet to share with other teachers in your school.

3. Answers to the activity quizzes and puzzles are printed upside down at the bottom of the activity sheets. Discussion questions and activity extensions for different grade levels are provided on page 11 of this guide.

4. Display the enclosed poster in your classroom to introduce the program and generate student interest.

5. As a culmination of the program, encourage your students to enter the National Treasure Student Writing Contest. See page 11 for details and Official Rules. Contest entries must be postmarked no later than December 3, 2004.

Table of Contents

Activity 1

These Symbols Are Telling Us Something... (pages 4-5)
This activity is designed to acquaint students with the Great Seal of the United States. Your students have seen the Great Seal many times, but probably never realized its significance as a time capsule of 1776. Just as Ben Gates uncovers clues in National Treasure, your students are challenged to find clues to some ancient civilizations that have influenced American ideals and values in the symbols of the Great Seal. Students wind up the activity by thinking about modern-day symbols and designing a new one-dollar bill.

Activity 2

Decoding the Declaration of Independence (pages 6-7)
Ben Gates discovers that the Declaration of Independence holds the key to finding the National Treasure. This activity offers students a new perspective on this precious document. First, they use a coding technique from Revolutionary times to decipher a message hidden in the text of the Declaration. Next, they compare Jefferson’s draft of the Declaration with the final document to refine their own understanding of its inspired wording. Last, students reaffirm their faith in the Declaration of Independence by signing their names alongside the fifty-six original signatures.

Activity 3

Learning from Landmarks (pages 8-9)
In National Treasure, Ben Gates searches for clues in many of America’s most cherished landmarks. In this activity students test their own knowledge of landmark lore by solving a crossword puzzle, then use another Revolutionary era coding technique to decipher a message in the puzzle itself. Finally, students investigate and celebrate historical landmarks in their own state or community by creating commemorative postcards.

The National Treasure Student Writing Contest

Sharing a National Treasure (page 10)
This contest challenges students to uncover their own share in the treasure of our national heritage by writing about a family heirloom or tradition that could be hidden away for future generations to discover. Students describe their family “treasure” and its significance, tell how they would hide it, and explain the clues they would leave for later treasure hunters to follow. Prize-winning students receive a trip to Washington, D.C., for themselves, two classmates, and an adult, provided by NWA World Vacations, plus special VIP behind-the-scenes tours of the National Archives and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.
Activity 1

These Symbols Are Telling Us Something...

In National Treasure, the new film that uncovers clues to America’s past, a young Benjamin Franklin Gates watches his grandfather take a one-dollar bill from his pocket. “These symbols are telling us something,” his grandfather says, pointing to the Great Seal of the United States on the back of the bill. For Ben, the symbols are clues to a real treasure hidden during the American Revolution. But they are clues to American history as well. In this activity, you will find out how important these symbols actually are.

PART ONE
Ancient Symbols

In National Treasure, Ben Gates searches for a treasure that has been passed down by many ancient civilizations. You can find symbols of these ancient treasure keepers in the Great Seal on a dollar bill. Look for the symbols named below and circle each one on this picture of a dollar bill. Then unscramble the words to find out which ancient civilization each symbol represents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Civilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Pyramid</td>
<td>Ancient PEGYT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Star of David</td>
<td>Ancient RAELIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Roman Numerals</td>
<td>Ancient MEOR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shield</td>
<td>Medieval HTINKGS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of these ancient civilizations helped to form America’s ideals and values. Look up information about them on the Internet or in books.
PART TWO  Hidden Symbols

In National Treasure, Ben finds many clues leading back to 1776. That’s when the original thirteen colonies united to declare their independence from Great Britain. Almost like a photograph, the Great Seal captures that moment in time. See if you can find these clues about 1776 in the Great Seal.

1. How many rows of stone make up the pyramid? ______________
2. How many letters are in the motto above the pyramid? __________
3. How many stars are in the starburst above the eagle? ___________
4. How many leaves are on the olive branch in the eagle’s right claw? _________
5. How many arrows are in the eagle’s left claw? _______________
6. How many stripes are on the eagle’s shield? __________
7. How many letters are in the motto on the banner in the eagle’s beak? __________

Can you explain how these clues take us back to 1776? What do they remind us about from that year? What do they tell us about our nation?

You can learn more about the symbols on the dollar bill at the U.S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing website: www.moneyfactory.com/document.cfm/18/120.

PART THREE  Symbols for a New Age

Look closely at the symbols on the dollar bill. Do you see that the pyramid is unfinished? That’s because America is always aiming higher. Our history is not finished. Now look at the Latin motto below the pyramid—NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM. That means “a new order of the ages.” It’s a reminder that the United States builds on the past to become an even greater nation in the future.

Now it’s your turn to build on the past by designing a new dollar bill. Think about symbols that are important to Americans today. Then use your ideas to draw a new dollar bill in the space below. You can see how the design of American money has changed over the years at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing website: www.moneyfactory.com.

DESIGN YOUR OWN DOLLAR BILL!

YOUR CLUE to the TREASURE

Ready for more historical detective work? Try the games section at the National Treasure website: www.NationalTreasure.com. If you can find all thirteen thirteens on the back of a dollar bill, you’re on your way to collecting real digital treasure. Good luck!
Activity 2

Decoding the Declaration of Independence

In National Treasure, Ben Gates gives a salute to the signers of the Declaration of Independence: “Here’s to the men who did what was considered wrong in order to do what they knew was right.” Then he steals the Declaration of Independence from the National Archives! Ben knows it contains clues and that other treasure hunters are after it. But he’s willing to risk his own freedom to keep the Declaration (and the treasure) from harm. Like the signers, Ben does what he knows is right.

PART ONE Secret Messages

Ben discovers a code on the back of the Declaration that helps him uncover a secret message. It’s a code used by real spies in the Revolutionary War. Each word in the message is represented by numbers that identify words in another document. But you need the original document for the code to work. See if you can use this code to uncover a message in the original Declaration of Independence (on page 7). The numbers identify words by line number and word number. Find the right line, then count the words to find the right word.

1. 3-6 5. 8-4
2. 6-4 6. 10-22
3. 7-11 7. 12-23
4. 7-20

Write the secret message here:

Now use this code to make up your own secret messages.

PART TWO Evolving Languages

Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence. You can see part of his rough draft below and at the Library of Congress website (www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt001.html). After Jefferson wrote the Declaration, John Adams and Ben Franklin changed some of the wording. Then more words were changed before the Continental Congress voted to approve the document. Compare Jefferson’s wording with the final version of the Declaration in the passages below. Would you vote for the changes? Why or why not?

Jefferson

1. “to advance from that subordination in which they have hitherto remained….”
2. “we hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable…”
3. “that from that equal creation they derive in rights inherent and inalienable…”

Final Version

What if we were revising the Declaration of Independence today? How would you reword it? Underline some parts that are hard to understand. Then paraphrase or rewrite those passages so that they are much simpler and clearer for readers today.

Jefferson’s Rough Draft of the Declaration of Independence

Photos: Signing of the Declaration of Independence and Jefferson’s rough draft courtesy The Library of Congress; Declaration of Independence courtesy National Archives and Records Administration.

© Disney. Created by LearningWorks.
On July 4, 1776, the Declaration was considered final. Forty-two signers were present to place their signatures on the document. Later, fourteen others squeezed their names onto the bottom. As you can see, there’s still room for more signatures.

Add your name to this list of liberty’s champions. Then visit the National Archives website to find out more about some of the original signers: www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/charters/declaration_join_the_signers.html.

Now use your code-cracking skills to uncover a secret message in the games section of the National Treasure website. You could be on your way to collecting real digital treasure.

Learning from Landmarks

In National Treasure, Ben’s search for clues takes him from Washington, D.C. to Philadelphia and New York. Each city he visits played an important role in America’s history, and Ben uses his knowledge of history to uncover clues in each city’s famous landmarks.

PART ONE
Landmark Lore

How much do you know about American landmarks? Test your knowledge with this crossword puzzle about some famous places where American history really happened.

ACROSS
4. This mount is carved into a monument to four great American Presidents.
5. This Washington, D.C. memorial honors “The Great Emancipator.”
6. The building where the U.S. Congress meets.
7. Battleground near Boston where patriots fought for independence.
9. This towering monument honors “The Father of His Country.”
10. The Philadelphia building where the Declaration of Independence was signed.
11. This memorial in Washington, D.C., honors the author of the Declaration of Independence.
12. Winter quarters where the Continental Army nearly froze to death during the American Revolution.

DOWN
1. The American Revolution ended when the British surrendered here.
2. Washington led his troops across this river on Christmas Eve in a surprise attack on the British.
3. This symbol of liberty signaled the Declaration of Independence and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
8. The building American Presidents call home.

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PART TWO Site Insight

In National Treasure, Ben uses a special pair of spectacles to read a treasure map on the back of the Declaration of Independence. During the American Revolution, patriots used all kinds of devices to conceal secret information. One device was called a “mask.” It was a sheet of paper with holes cut into it so that, when the mask was placed on a printed page, only certain words or letters would show through, spelling out the message. Make your own mask with a second copy of the Landmark Lore crossword puzzle. Cut out the shaded boxes in the puzzle. Then place your mask over the completed puzzle to read the letters that spell out a secret message. Unscramble the letters to learn the name of the town where patriots hid the Liberty Bell when the British attacked Philadelphia in 1777.

PART THREE Hometown History

Clues to America’s past are all around you, not just at the historical sites you’ll see in National Treasure. In fact, there are probably many clues to America’s past right in your hometown. Here’s a chance to show off your part of our nation’s heritage by creating a picture postcard. Before you begin, check out the local landmarks. Are there any monuments to local heroes? Can you visit the homes of early settlers? Were any famous battles fought nearby? All these are clues to historical landmarks in your hometown. Use the information you discover to draw your postcard.

Create-A-Card

YOUR CLUE to the TREASURE

Still hoping to find digital treasure at the National Treasure website? Go to the games section and use your landmark savvy to complete the pyramid puzzle. Visit www.NationalTreasure.com. And good luck!
Every family has a piece of American history. It could be an heirloom passed from generation to generation. It could be a bundle of old letters or faded photographs. It could be a special family recipe or a holiday tradition, a medal that reminds you of a family member’s service in a war, or a keepsake from some famous event. You probably have a piece of American history in your family. Here’s a chance to share your piece of history with others.

The National Treasure Student Writing Contest challenges you to write about a family treasure that you would like future generations to discover. Tell the story behind your piece of history — where it comes from and why your family treasures it. Then imagine that your piece of history is like the treasure Ben Gates searches for in National Treasure. Where would you hide it for safekeeping, and what clues would you leave behind to help future treasure hunters find it?

Before you start writing, talk with a parent or older relative to find out the story behind your family’s most treasured piece of American history. Then use the chart below to organize your ideas. When you’re ready, write your contest entry on a separate piece of paper. Fill out the entry form and attach it to your entry. Then give your entry to your teacher to mail in.

You could win a trip to Washington, D.C., for you, two classmates, and an adult, provided by NWA World Vacations, plus special VIP behind-the-scenes tours of the National Archives and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. Ask your teacher for contest details. And remember: entries must be postmarked by December 3, 2004.

Describe your family’s piece of American history. Where does it come from? Why do you treasure it?

Where or how would you hide your family treasure to keep it safe for future generations?

What clues would you leave behind to help future generations find your treasure?

The National Treasure Student Writing Contest Official Entry Form

Student Name: ________________________________________________  Grade: ____
School: ____________________________________________________________  Home Phone: (___) ______________
School Address: ____________________________________________________  School Phone: (___) _____________
City: ____________________________  State: ______  Zip: __________  Teacher: _______________________
Email: _________________________

Fill out this form and attach it to your contest entry. Give your entry to your teacher to mail in. Entries must be postmarked no later than December 3, 2004. Prizes will be awarded to one student in grades 4-6, one student in grades 7-9, and one student in grades 10-12. Entry word limits — Grades 4-6: 150 words; Grades 7-9: 250 words; Grades 10-12: 350 words. See your teacher for Official Rules and contest details.
Activity 1: These Symbols Are Telling Us Something...
In this activity, students learn to recognize and interpret various symbols and images and to learn the deeper meaning behind them. First, students are asked to examine the Great Seal of the United States on the back of a dollar bill. Then, they should explore the various symbols found on the dollar bill, such as the eagle and the all-seeing eye, and identify their meanings. Finally, students apply what they have learned to real-world situations, such as recognizing symbols in advertisements or on government buildings.

Activity 2: Decoding the Declaration of Independence
In this activity, students learn that textual interpretation can take many forms by “reading” the Declaration of Independence, first as a secret code, then as a revision of Jefferson’s original ideas. Students apply these insights by creating their own ciphers and codes, and then using the code to write their own version of the Declaration. Afterwards, they add their signatures to a copy of the original document. For background on the Declaration of Independence, visit the “Charters of Freedom” section of the National Archives website (www.archives.gov/national_charters/charters.html) and the “Top Treasures” exhibit of Jefferson’s rough draft at the Library of Congress website (www.loc.gov/exhibits/toptreasures/100fr.html).

Activity 3: Learning From Landmarks
This activity focuses on historical landmarks, both monuments to the past and sites where important events of the past occurred. Students test their knowledge of historical landmarks with a crossword puzzle, then gain practice in interpreting landmarks by creating a historically significant site or monument in their own community. For background on many national landmarks, visit “Links to the Past” on the National Park Service website (www.nps.gov).
In Print

Brenner, Barbara. *If You Were There in 1776* (Bradbury Press, 1994)
Fink, Sam. *The Declaration of Independence* (Scholastic, 2002)
Fritz, Jean. *Will You Sign Here, John Hancock* (Geoghegan, Inc., 1976)
Patrick, John, ed. *Founding the Republic: A Documentary History* (Greenwood Press, 1995)
Sakurai, Gail. *The Liberty Bell* (Children's Press, 1996)
Stein, Sandra, and Susan Stein. *Independence Hall* (Macmillan, 1984)

Online

National Treasure – The Official Movie Website
www.NationalTreasure.com
Explore the film's historical background with interactive features on the Templar Knights, the Masons, Benjamin Franklin, Revolutionary spies, and the Declaration of Independence, plus clues to real undiscovered treasures.

National Archives: Digital Classroom
www.archives.gov/digital_classroom
Resources and lesson plans for teaching American history with original documents, including downloadable images and other primary sources.

National Archives: The Charters of Freedom
www.archives.gov/national_archives_experience/charters/charters.html
Online exhibit providing a close-up look at and in-depth information on the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. Features a “Join the Signers” section where visitors can add their name to the Declaration of Independence online.

U. S. Bureau of Engraving and Printing
www.moneyfactory.com
Background on the design and manufacture of U.S. currency including information on anti-counterfeiting security features.

Liberty: The American Revolution
www.pbs.org/ktca/liberty
Companion site to the six-part PBS series with an interactive quiz on the Revolutionary War and features on life in Revolutionary times.

Educational Resources

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NATIONAL TREASURE

Claim Your Share of the Treasure! Enter the NATIONAL TREASURE Student Writing Contest. See your teacher for details.

www.NationalTreasure.com