

Text Set
Colonial and Revolutionary America

Collier, J. L. (1874). *My Brother Sam is Dead*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.

Summary

My Brother Sam is Dead chronicles the life of the Meeker family of early Connecticut. The youngest child, 11 year old Tim, is caught in the struggle of the American Revolution as his father remains an English loyalist while his eldest brother Sam fights on the side of the American rebels. The setting, some of the characters, and the general plot of the story are all based in truth. Throughout the story, Tim is constantly struggling with his position on the Revolutionary War and where his loyalties lie. When word comes that Tim's father has died while aboard a prison ship, Tim has to step in as the true man of the house. Tim is thrust into the role of an adult rather quickly and is forced to make key decisions for his family while still dealing with his issues of loyalty. Young Adult readers, especially boys, can relate to the general struggles of maturation that Tim faces throughout the book. It also helps pose critical questions regarding the creation of a new nation and war as a general social problem.

Commentary

After doing some further research on this work which I vaguely remember from my later middle school days, I learned it has been as high as number 12 on the 100 Most Challenged Book list. The general level of violence is low, but the characters in the story do witness both an execution and a beheading. Regardless, *My Brother Sam is Dead* can serve as an integral tool in the classroom because the students can discern a lot of history from it in the form of an enjoyable story. This book has been used for many years in the classroom as supplemental material for teaching the Revolutionary War. For that reason, many helpful materials have been published to be used alongside the book itself to enable

teachers to develop creative and useful lessons around it. Additionally, it is a great book for teaching across the curriculum because it can be utilized alongside the curriculum of an English literature class and a great team-teaching unit can be developed.

Hawthorne, N. (2000). *The Scarlet Letter*. New York: Random House.

Summary:

Classic Nathaniel Hawthorne work *The Scarlet Letter* chronicles Hester Prynne's tale of adultery, guilt, and oppression in Puritan New England society. Hawthorne's development of Prynne's character allows Hester Prynne to become a great heroine in American literature as he paints her as a portrait of dignity, strength, and quiet grace. Prynne, a married woman, finds herself in an extramarital affair with the town minister Arthur Dimmesdale. This affair produces a child, Pearl, who becomes a living symbol of Prynne's infidelity. Dimmesdale himself does not admit to the relationship but rather fulfills his duties as town minister by publicly interrogating Prynne. Externally, Dimmesdale saves face while Prynne is reprimanded by Puritan society. However, internally, Dimmesdale is haunted by his own guilt. It is Dimmesdale who, in the end, plagued by illness and continuing feelings of guilt, meets his symbolic fate of death at the end of the novel. The novel is filled with great symbolism that has long been studied in history and literature classrooms alike.

Commentary:

While most consider this great Hawthorne work to be most integral in literature classrooms, I see it as a great supplemental tool in history curricula as well. The novel teaches the reader much about the history of rigid Puritan New England and, in particular, the ins and outs of daily life. Like other young adult novels, this piece can serve as a great bridge between the literature and history classrooms and provide many opportunities for

collaborative learning units. Because it has been so studied in the classroom, there is a wealth of supplemental material accompanying this book including several motion picture adaptations (some more appropriate than others). The story has everything teen readers could want, adulterous love affairs, public scorn, (possible) murder by poison, and personal downfall and redemption.

Lavender, W. (2002). *Just Jane: A Daughter of England Caught in the Struggle of the American Revolution*. San Diego: Harcourt.

Summary

This historical novel chronicles the life of Jane Prentice, the 14 year old daughter of an English Earl who finds herself orphaned in 1776 Charleston, South Carolina. Jane finds herself caught between two ideological struggles. Jane struggles primarily with sorting out where her own loyalties lie – with her birth country or with her new country which is *struggling for its own independence*. Additionally, her own adopted family is also struggling with the ideologies of war and on which side of the conflict they will choose to be. Jane becomes caught up in these issues as well as the issues of being a young girl coming of age.

Commentary

Jane Prentice's character is a great subject for a young adult novel about this time period because so many of the novels written about this time focus on the struggles of young boys caught in the midst of war. While absorbing a lot of content knowledge about the Revolutionary War and the birth of a new nation, young girls can find an admirable character with whom they can identify in Jane because she is just another girl trying to find her own place. 14 year old girls all go through that time when they look to belong and be accepted but also become their own unique individual. At the core of this novel are those same situations with which the readers can relate. Not that young girls wouldn't enjoy novels about heroic teenage boys and Revolutionary soldiers but in *Just Jane* girls

can enjoy the story *as well as* identify with the main character which is a critical element of successful young adult novels.

Rees, C. (2001). *Witch Child*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

Summary

This book is set in 1659 Puritan New England and follows 14 year old Mary Newbury's life in a witch community. Mary flees to the New World with her family to escape the witch hunts in England. However, when the family settles in the strict Puritan town, they find themselves in the midst of the same persecution. The novel is written as if derived from young Mary's diary so as to tap into her innermost thoughts and hidden concerns as she lives an undercover life. Rees loosely bases many of her characters, like Mary and the chief witch hunter, on true life characters found in the annals of New England witchcraft history. It serves as a great glimpse into the rigidity and paranoia that surrounded the Puritan New England communities that were settled in pre-Revolutionary America.

Commentary

Like Jane in *Just Jane* young female readers can identify with the struggles of Mary Newbury. Although on the surface it might be hard to realize the similarities between Mary's story of hiding her true identity from the persecutions of Puritan New England and the lives of teenage girls today, it is important to recognize that both Mary and girls today are just trying to find their places in society. As young girls mature socially, they often find themselves situated in a cultural milieu that deemphasizes being an individual. Being different can cost girls this age a place in the social scheme of things. For that reason, Mary's diary writings and her character development can be great points of interest for female readers. Additionally, the readers will at the same time get a lot of

content knowledge regarding the religious and cultural beliefs of Puritan society. There is also an underlying message of toleration and acceptance of differing beliefs.

Rinaldi, A. (2003). *Break with Charity: A Story of the Salem Witch Trials*. Orlando: Harcourt.

Summary:

Another great young adult novel about the Salem Witch Trials, *Break with Charity* chronicles the story of Susanna English, a young girl in Puritan New England who found herself on the cusp of a group of hysterical teenage girls in 1692 – the height of witch hysteria. The story is similar to *The Crucible* with historical slave woman Tituba as the principle witch figure in the story. The group of girls, led by historical figure Ann Putman, meets secretly in the town parsonage and Susanna desperately wants to be included in the group. Ringleader Ann begins a windstorm of false accusations against “witches” in the Salem village which begins to tear the town apart. Susanna is faced with a tough decision -- she can choose to silently side with the group or break her silence and expose Ann Putnam’s lies. If she tells what she knows, she puts herself and her family in jeopardy of being accused of witchcraft.

Commentary:

I like this story about the Salem Witch Trials because it really parallels a lot integral events and people from this period in history. The characters of Tituba and Ann Putnam and the hysteria she created in Salem are real and that’s what sets this piece of fiction apart from some of the other witch trials novels I looked at. Additionally, Susanna is like many of the other characters found in these young adult novels in that she is a great reflection of her readers. The peer pressure put on girls in middle and high school to go

along with the group is an absolute reality and girls often find themselves in the midst of conflict with the group as well as internally. I have seen a lot of young adult novels, some historical some not, that address this issue of girls being cast aside by a clique or peer group for “betraying” the group or ratting out a secret. A young girl’s journey is often followed until the resolve – when she is able to find herself and create an identity away from the peer pressure.

Barretta, Gene. (2006). *Now and Ben: The Modern Inventions of Benjamin Franklin*.

New York: Henry Holt and Co.

Summary:

This adorably written and illustrated book takes readers to a place where things like hospitals, libraries, and post offices don't exist until Benjamin Franklin's brilliant mind conceives them. Readers of all ages will see just how many nuances of daily life Benjamin Franklin had a hand in creating. From bifocals to daylight savings time, electricity and dozens of little life lessons, Franklin truly was a great American and creative genius. This book proves that not a day goes by that we don't have something to thank Ben Franklin for.

Commentary:

It is books like this one that has gotten me hooked on the beauty, humor, and usefulness of good children's books. In fact, I think the term "children's book" is a misnomer because these really are some of the greatest avenues of learning for anyone. They present the information in a such a manner that is free from historical jargon, filled with witty writing, and come featuring great illustrations to drive the ideas home. Furthermore, the more knowledge a reader has about the subject prior to reading books like this, the wittier the writing becomes because of the subtle humor. I like the way the book is set up – the left-hand pages reference a present day concept or item and the facing page links it to Benjamin Franklin. It is a great way to scaffold readers into linking what they know

about and use everyday to the developmental path such things had to take in their infancy stages.

Catrow, D. (2005) *We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States*.

New York: Dial Books for Young Readers.

Summary:

This book, in short, serves as a illustrated version of the Preamble. Most everyone who has gone through the American public education system has probably, at some point, had to memorize the Preamble to the Constitution. This book offers a break from the monotonous, overly wordy memorization approach and lets young and old readers alike experience the Preamble in a whole new way. Catrow uses his talents as an artist, political cartoonist, and – as the book states – “another smart guy” to bring the Preamble to the masses in a non-threatening way. The humorous, comic like illustrations are paired with the real Preamble text to help readers create a visual of the concepts presented.

Commentary:

Again, I love love love this book! I think I was first shown this book either in my middle school A internship placement at Knoll Middle or in this class, and I went looking for it again for this text set. I think it is so cleverly written and serves as a much-needed break from the typical memorization assignments students are asked to do. Furthermore, for those “older” readers who insist picture books aren’t for them, this book will not only help in learning the Preamble, but also absorbing the Preamble and actually knowing what all those long, wordy sentences mean. Like the author of the previous book Caltrow includes a lot of subtle humor that, as a reader’s content knowledge grows, he or she will come to further appreciate every time he or she picks up the book.

Fritz, J. (1987). *Shh! We're Writing the Constitution!* New York: Putnam.

Summary:

This well-illustrated children's book describes how the Constitution came to be written and accepted by the new American government. The book contains great tidbits that enlighten the reader into the nuances of the framers. Fritz's writing takes readers into the Constitutional Convention of 1787 and allows them to follow along in the very personal journey of our nation's founding fathers. Her writing is easily readable and is great for those readers who might become frustrated or bogged down by monotonous reading in a history text book filled with dull language and historical jargon. The book also includes the Constitution as it was accepted by the Convention for easy reference and reading.

Commentary:

Although I don't like the illustrations as much in this book as in some of the others, I do appreciate the lengths the author goes to ensure that all levels of readers can appreciate the minds that helped form our government and lay the framework for the nation we live in today. The Constitution and the framing of a new government is a topic that can easily intimidate some readers, no matter the age, because it so often gets bogged down in the historicity of it all and the dull commentary. This book turns the Convention into a real story, including fun facts that would probably be left out of a history textbook for one reason or another. In addition, it turns the framers of our government into real people with very personable character traits, not just dusty, archived faces of history.

Ross, K. (1995). *The Story of the Pilgrims*. New York: Random House.

Summary:

This children's book introduces readers to a group of American settlers known as the Pilgrims. It follows the Pilgrims from their home in England where they struggled for religious freedom, their rough journey to the New World, and their first year as new Americans. The book is concise yet not lacking in information, and presents readers with a great history of these people, the Mayflower, and the first Thanksgiving.

Commentary:

I like this book for its historical presentation of a holiday that the majority of students celebrate yet might not know much about depending on their exposure to the history of it. Because it is so short and to the point, it is a great addition to any lesson for any age group because younger readers can stay focused and older readers won't get bored being read to. In addition, the illustrations are a great way to help students create images of these people and the times in which they lived. The book serves as a great way to build upon the growing history of early America's founding peoples in the time leading up to the fight for independence.

Smith, L. (2006). *John, Paul, George, and Ben*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.

Summary:

The famed author and illustrator of such works as *The Stinky Cheese Man* and *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs* conquers American history with this adorable story of the five framers of the American government (Thomas Jefferson is included as well, he just didn't make title status!). Smith uses clever little points about these men when they were children (Paul Revere was a loudmouth) to explain how these traits helped the men become such integral parts of American history (Paul could warn the town that the Redcoats were coming!). The story is cleverly written although Smith admits he takes many liberties with the truth. These "liberties" are set straight at the end when Smith addresses all the historical points he may or may not have "tampered" with in writing the book and addressing the actual facts on the issues. The illustrations portray the framers as "little men" turning them into children who still have their very recognizable adult features. The subtleties in the illustrations and in the writing are what make this book so great for all readers.

Commentary:

I was introduced to this book by my coaching teacher at White Knoll Middle School and fell in love with it. She read it aloud to the class and they all snickered at the little pieces of subtle humor. It is a catchy way for readers to remember the basic roles these men played in writing the Constitution. The information is not extremely in depth, but it is

enough to spark interest and encourage further reading. In addition, the “epilogue” Smith includes to clear up any misconceptions about the liberties he took in writing the story are great accidental history lessons. He integrates the information with contemporary humor (ie: True or False? Benjamin Franklin invented everything from libraries, to bifocals, to XBOX 360? True. OK maybe not XBOX 360). He cleverly taps into what he knows readers of his book will be interested in and before they know it, they’re laughing at historical humor and learning at the same time!

Bennett, W. (1998). *Our Country's Founders: A Book of Advice for Young People*.
New York: Simon & Schuster.

Summary:

This compilation work by William Bennett includes such colonial and Revolutionary America documents as The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as well as a timeline and biographical information on our nation's forefathers. Additionally, important quotations from speeches, letters, and other early American writings provide young people with first hand advice from the country's earliest figures including Abigail Adams and Benjamin Franklin. The book is divided by subject headings like "Patriotism and Courage," "Love and Courtship," and "Piety" and also includes an index for easier searching. This is the more juvenile version of *Our Sacred Honor* by Bennett.

Commentary:

I have included both *Our Country's Founders* and *Our Sacred Honor* in this text set because they serve as great one-stop compilations for primary documents from this time period. *Our Country's Founders* is great because it takes key parts of the longer documents in *Our Sacred Honor* and categorizes them by subject to make searching easy for students. This book would be great in a classroom if students wanted to get key quotes for papers, presentations, or just for furthering interests in a key player in early America. Quotes like this are also great to use in the classroom as bell ringer work (open discussion on the meaning) and to post around the room. In general, I like the concept of being able to "take advice" from the founders of the country and perhaps if students

become interested by one quotation they will turn to Bennett's other work to take a closer look at the longer document.

Bennett, W. (1997). *Our Sacred Honor: The Stories, Letters, Songs, Poems, Speeches and Hymns That Gave Birth to Our Nation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Summary:

In this compilation of primary documents from colonial and Revolutionary America, Bennett attempts to return to the words of the founders to discover what common ideals make us uniquely American. Bennett sees the words of these American greats to be commentary on every aspect of “the good” from love and friendship to politics and industry. Bennett compiled this collection because he feels America needs a return to basic principles and that the original goal and direction of America has been abated by those on the right as well as the left in politics. The collection is divided up by subject and can easily be searched by the index.

Commentary

As previously mentioned, I chose two of Bennett’s works – the shorter *Our Country’s Founders* as well as *Our Sacred Honor* because of their abilities to provide one-stop access to documents vital to the heartbeat of early America. Although I wouldn’t necessarily use the book as Bennett did to comment on the misdirection of American since its founding, I do see it as a great classroom resource because it can lead students and teachers alike to a historical American document on almost any subject. Additionally, the inclusion of song lyrics holds the potential for great classroom activities on what from colonial and Revolutionary America is reflected in the songwriting from the same time period. This book could make for great character education as well as Bennett expounds

upon the idea that these founding fathers and mothers were just as flawed as the modern generations and struggle with the issues of doing good and the potential of people to choose the right. However, the primary documents included in this book show the great moral compass (also a title of a Bennett book) of the founders and can help guide students in the modern world.

Gray, E. (2003). *Colonial America: A History in Documents*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Summary:

Breaking with the tradition of general textbooks that *tell* history, this book *is* history. Edward Gray's compilation includes documents ranging from news articles and government documents to memoirs and works of fiction – all illustrating the shaping of the New America. The work starts at the very beginning with documents that recount England's look to expand in the New World to a very personal look at the men and women who settled America with documents on how to be a gentleman or a lady. Indian documents are included as well as documents that focus primarily on women, giving voices to groups often minimized in concise histories of colonial America. The book also chronicles the growth of spiritual communities in the New World and the workings of a colonial family. An index makes for an easily searchable text and quick-finds.

Commentary:

I like the depth and breadth of this book with regards to the types of documents included. It is not solely focused on government documents or accounts of the most noted early Americans but rather it includes letters, memoirs, diaries, and sermons – among other things -- that recount the tales of the common Americans as they began their new lives. Additionally, the book is not focused primarily on one colonial region but rather spans the New World from Georgia to Maine. Students will enjoy and relate to these more

intimate glimpses into the personal lives of Americans more so than the often monotonous, text-heavy examinations of government documents.

Barton, D. (1991). *New England Primer: Improved for the More Easy Attaining the True Reading of English: To Which Is Added the Assembly of Divines, and Mr. Cotton's Catechism*. Aledo, TX: Wallbuilder Press.

Summary:

Used in the earliest of American schools, this first “textbook” was used to teach reading and Bible lessons to children until the 20th century. This is a reprint of the format used in 1777 that some of the most influential minds in early America learned to read with. It serves as a great background and representative foundation of education in America.

Commentary:

This pocket sized piece of history is a great tool to keep in the classroom that allows students to get a hands-on look at what school would be like if they were living in early America (and even later America since the primer was used up until the 20th century). Much has changed with regards to what can and cannot be included in textbooks, specifically regarding religion, so the Primer is a great way to show the evolution of education in America. It is also indicative of what knowledge was emphasized for students and what good American children were expected to know.

Grafton, J. (2000). *The Declaration of Independence and Other Great Documents of American History 1775-1865*. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications.

Summary:

This book covers time periods well beyond colonial America yet it still includes many documents crucial to understanding the development of America as a nation. It includes Patrick Henry's "Give me Liberty or Give me Death" speech as well as George Washington's first Inaugural Address and Farewell speech to his new nation. There is a brief introduction to each document, which helps put it in its proper place in the general scheme of the history. It does not include the widest variety of documents but nevertheless is a great resource to have on hand for easy reference of primary sources.

Commentary:

I like this book because of its easy reference capabilities. Several can be kept on hand in a classroom for group work activities or general reference. I am glad the compilers included Washington's Farewell Speech because he warned the people of the new nation against so much that we are now seeing the effects of (like political parties). Of course most of these documents can be found online nowadays, but for times when the internet is not as easily accessible, this book provides a great source.

The American Colonist's Library: A Treasury of Primary Documents

<http://home.wi.rr.com/rickgardiner/primarysources.htm>

Summary:

Arranged in chronological order from as far back as 500 B.C.E to the 1800s, this extremely comprehensive website includes documents that might not directly relate to colonial America but rather show the influences of much older documents on American colonists as they prepared to create a new nation. Such documents include classical sources from Greco-Roman authors and medieval sources like the Magna Carta. The *Malleus Malificarum* is linked as it was used as the tool for witch-hunting. Not much is included by way of personal memoirs, common letters, or diaries but regardless there is a wealth of information on this site.

Commentary:

I am so glad to have found this site for 2 reasons. The first is the obvious amount of documents included in one place for easy access. The other is the fact that each document link is briefly annotated and put into context as to how it relates directly to colonial American History. It serves to help illustrate the relationship between many different historical eras and the accumulation of such in the character of America as a new nation.

*The Internet School Library Media Center page for Early American and Colonial
Literature to 1700.*

<http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/amlitcol.htm>

Summary:

This site is designed to be used by parents, teachers, students, and librarians alike to access Early American literature. The links to documents are divided up by Early American individuals, some better known than others. Some links are to primary documents while others are to lesson plans and supplemental materials and activities for teaching Early American history.

Commentary:

I like this website because it provides instructors with a great deal of information with which to teach American history. There are many links to notes pages, biographical sketches, different types of handouts, and full-lessons to help develop a personal lesson. Since it is sorted by individual with a separate section on the history and criticism of the times, it is easily navigated and searchable. Additionally, each link is briefly annotated to explain further what information waits on the other end of the hyperlink.

Salem Witch Trials Documentart Archives.

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/salem/witchcraft/>

Summary:

This site is a comprehensive compilation of documents relating to the Salem Witch Trials of 17th century New England. It is divided up into 4 categories: Documents, maps, notable people, and *Literary Works*. The documents include court transcriptions, maps of accusations, personal letters, and books written by 17th century contemporaries with first-hand knowledge of the hysteria that surrounded the witch trials.

Commentary:

The tales alone of the witch trials are fascinating enough for even the most reluctant of history students but this website helps really bring the whole ordeal to life. It illustrates how real the people were and the realized level of the hysteria in these tiny Puritan communities. The only complaint I have is that some materials haven't been transcribed or edited; they are simply scanned images, making them hard to read. However, even this slight complaint can turn into a positive because it adds an extra element of realism. The section on key people helps to put names with faces and better understand how different people came to be involved with the witch trials.

Archiving Early America

<http://www.earlyamerica.com/>

Summary:

This fabulous website includes everything from letters and government documents to downloadable music of the times. In addition, there are lesson plans, quizzes, online games, movies, and timelines all revolving around Early America. There is a digital library to search for primary documents and a wealth of Early American images.

Browsers can even explore the world of Early America through a carefully selected and laid out series of primary documents including newspaper articles, writings, and maps.

Commentary:

I am so happy I ran across this website! It has just about anything and everything one could need to enhance lessons on Early America. The movies, the music, and the images all help bring the colonial era to life. Women are even given a special section of their own devoted to chronicling the lives and roles of colonial women. There are interactive crosswords to help students learn if they were using a computer lab or doing web quest activities. It truly is the most comprehensive website in terms of including a little bit of all types of information on colonial America.

Rare Map Collection

<http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/colamer.html>

Summary:

This website is a great source for maps as they were in colonial times. The images have been preserved and included on this website so as to show how villages, towns, and the United States in general was set up before the Revolution. The maps date back to early drawings of Florida in 1625. Also included on this site are visual descriptions of new territories like the Carolinas. Some are written in French based on the source of the map, but the visual is a key resource, regardless

Commentary:

I chose to include this website because it has quick access to original maps. Sometimes a classroom set of maps is inappropriate or ineffective because the maps are not the same as they were in colonial times and thus trying to point out general locations of things is harder to do. These maps are easy to pull up on a projector for students to get an idea of the perspective new explorers and colonists had of the New World.

National Geographic (2006). The New World: Nightmare in Jamestown (DVD).

Summary:

This DVD tells the harsh story of those who settled America. It is set in the “starving time” of 1607 – a critical year in America’s history. The colonists’ stories are marked with tales of plague, cannibalism, dispute, and dedication to a new life. The DVD accesses archaeological and forensic information like only *National Geographic* can.

Commentary:

Students love to watch great films that really capture the milieu of the times. I believe that this film produced by National Geographic will capture that well by incorporating first hand accounts and significant pieces of archaeological history. Also included are authentic recreations of historical situations that further help students understand the life in Jamestown and of colonial America. I haven’t gotten a chance to view this film but it received a lot of good feedback online. However, I have viewed another film in National Geographic’s series on colonial America – the film on Blackbeard – and it is excellent. Students will appreciate the stories of the true struggles of colonists more from a movie with narration and images than they will from a textbook or handout.

Lovell, M. (2005). *Art In A Season Of Revolution: Painters, Artisans, And Patrons In Early America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Summary:

Lovell uses her book as a *culmination of 20 years of research*. She includes both well-known and unknown painters and works and uses them as illustrations of the economic, family, and geographical lives of British North Americans. The book uses art to represent the evolution of thought, culture, and life for the colonists.

Commentary:

I am very much a proponent of incorporating art into the curriculum. I think art is a great way to help students understand and capture the mood of a historical time period. Art is a great way to incorporate content because students get to delve into themes of symbolism, double meaning, and artist nuances that can only be understood with a good grasp of the content itself.

Roark, E. (2003). *Artists of Colonial America*. Westpoint, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Summary:

This work chronicles ten pioneers in the world of Early American art. In the colonial and pre-Revolutionary period, the Americans began making a name for themselves and carving out an identity for the country through art. Even maps and drawings from explorers helped link the new America to the rest of the world, artistically. The artists are written about in a way that illustrates the bond between the culture, their work, and themselves. The book seamlessly marries history and art and proves the integral relationship between the two. Additionally, Roark includes works of the Indians as well as less obvious forms of art like stone cutting (important in headstone carvings) and silver workings.

Commentary:

Again, as with the other art book, I stress the importance of integrating art into the classroom. Art can be a great way to create a discussion question in class or on a test because to be able to interpret a work of art as a primary historical document, the students must understand the context of and be able to link the piece of art to its historical underpinnings. Also, serves as a great tool for encouraging individualized interpretations and creative thinking. No two people see art in the same way, yet all interpretations can help students create a better understanding of the cultural milieu the work of art represents.

Music in the Life of Benjamin Franklin. (2006, CD)

Summary:

This is an online link to a CD released that features colonial/pre-Revolutionary America music. The CD incorporates the varying musical tastes of Franklin – from the Scotch inspired drinking music of the common man to the more noble works from operas and symphonies. The recording also features sounds of some of the instruments which Franklin himself conceived. The CD also features a companion book to supplement the musical pieces themselves.

Commentary:

Just like art in the classroom, I think music plays a great role in marrying historical and cultural enrichment. Even though the selections are specific to Benjamin Franklin, they are still reminiscent of the overall musical tastes of the time period. The companion book features the lyrics for songs which could serve as an interesting approach to document analysis. In addition, the CD could be used in the classroom just to play in the background one day if students are working in groups or doing other free-work activities.

Online Salem Witch Trials activity

<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/features/97/salem/newepilogueframe.html>

Summary:

From National Geographic, this is a website that is designed as a sort of webquest meant to take students on a journey through a New England town at the height of the Witch Hunts. Students can jump back and forth to different features of the interactive journey as well as reference the bibliography used in creating the website.

Commentary:

I chose this website because it would be a great learning website in a wired classroom where students had access to the internet. Exploring the exciting theme of the New England witch trials, students will learn a lot about the cultural milieu of the times, the rigidity of Puritan society, and the role religion played in all aspects of daily life. The activity is self-guided so students can spend as much time exploring which sections of the website they are most interested in.

Early Colonial America Lecturettes

<http://middle.usm.k12.wi.us/faculty/markwald/Americacolonedunit/earlycolonialamerica.htm>

Summary:

This website was designed by a school in Wisconsin and features links to several short movies on different subjects regarding the time period. Topics include the Mayflower Compact, the settlement of Jamestown, and why the English came to the New World.

Commentary:

I chose to add this website in addition to the others because the lecturettes make great incorporations into the lesson. They aren't full length films so they can be integrated quickly and without interrupting the flow of an entire lesson. Like the films shown on United Streaming, these are the type of mini-films that can be referenced quickly in the event that another planned activity doesn't work or to serve as a break between different instructional activities. The website also includes other helpful links to other websites on colonial America that students could explore if given free time on the computer or as part of a webquest activity.

