

Privateers: Pirates or Patriots?

Teacher's Guide

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Objectives:

After working through this lesson, student will:

- Compare the similarities and differences between pirates and privateers in the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Explain why a new nation sometimes needs privateers to protect itself and safeguard its citizens.

Maryland Learning Outcomes:

Social Studies Skills:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of historical and current events using chronological and spatial thinking, develop historical interpretations, and frame questions that include collecting and evaluating information from primary and secondary sources.

- Find, interpret, and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics, maps, atlases, artifacts, timelines, political cartoons, videotapes, journals, and government documents.

United States History

Students will examine significant ideas, beliefs, and themes; organize patterns and events; and analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time in Maryland and the United States.

- Analyze views, lives, and contributions of significant people of the Revolutionary period.

Geography:

Students will use geographic concepts and processes to examine the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location and distribution of human activities and spatial connections throughout time.

- Construct and interpret maps using map elements including a title, cardinal and intermediate directions, compass rose, border, longitude and latitude, legend/key, author, date, and scale.
- Explain how people in Maryland and the United States are linked by transportation and communication.

Economics:

Students will develop economic reasoning to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.

- Explain how limited resources and unlimited economic wants cause people to choose certain goods and services and give up others.

Political Systems:

Students will understand the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the founding documents of the United States and the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens.

- Give examples of how the rule of law has impacted the rights and responsibilities of people.

Worksheet:

Privateers: Pirates or Patriots Worksheet (4 pages)

Key Web Sites Referenced in this Lesson:

- John Paul Jones: <http://web2.airmail.net/~lrs/jones.HTML>
- Blackbeard: <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/7012/blackbeardinfo.html>
- Fells Point: <http://www.baltimoremd.com/monuments/sea01.html>
- Sir Francis Drake: <http://www.mcn.org/2/oseeler/kidart/KBrebecca.html>
- Lambert Wickes: <http://www.cronab.demon.co.uk/br12.htm>
- St. John's College (Liberty Tree): <http://www.sjca.edu/college/libhist.phtml>

Teacher Background Information:

Pirates and privateers - it was often difficult to tell the difference between these two types of seafarers. In this lesson, the students will learn about the history of pirate activity in the Chesapeake Bay area. Students will also examine what separates pirates from privateers, and why the fledgling American Navy depended so heavily on privateers while trying to win independence from England.

A script for conducting a mock trial is included at the end of this Teachers' Guide. If you have time, your students might enjoy conducting this mock trial to determine whether or not the accused character is a pirate or a privateer.

The lesson on the War of 1812 in this *Maryland with PRIDE* curriculum is a natural follow-up and extension to this lesson. During the War of 1812, privateers were again needed to strengthen America's naval forces.

Introduction/Motivation:

Explain to students that when England began to enforce the trade laws in colonial times, many colonists, including Marylanders, did not mind. Along the broad Chesapeake many people were engaged in the shipping business, and the Navigation Acts helped the shipping business. But the acts of trade and the methods of forcing people to obey them made enemies in Maryland, as they did in other colonies. In March 1765, Parliament passed the Stamp Act. (This was an extra charge on newspapers and other items written on paper that had to have a government stamp on them.) This act led to other acts which finally resulted in

the Boston Tea Party. The Revolutionary War soon followed. Tell students that *Privateers: Pirates or Patriots?* will help them understand the importance of Chesapeake Bay during this time period and later during the War of 1812.

Lesson Development:

This lesson introduces students to life on Chesapeake Bay in the early days of our country. Maryland men were used to the water. They were good sailors; they were good shipbuilders. What did the men of Maryland do to help win the freedom of the seas? This lesson addresses these issues.

Students use historical maps to answer questions about the importance of the Bay. They learn the difference between a pirate and a patriot. The Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 are addressed in ways different from most textbooks. Students examine primary source documents to identify the importance of rules for everyone, even when at sea.

Thoughtful Application:

The mission of *Pride of Baltimore II* is to serve as the Goodwill Ambassador for the State of Maryland and the Port of Baltimore. She is a world class platform for economic development and education. In the course of this mission, *Pride II* promotes stronger commercial and cultural links between Maryland and her international trading partners.

As the only existing example of an 1812-era Baltimore Clipper topsail schooner, *Pride of Baltimore II* is a vibrant and tangible link to the state's colorful maritime heritage. As such, she captures the imagination of Maryland students, making her a natural and compelling stimulus for learning. Students can share this information about *Pride of Baltimore II* with other students throughout and country – and even the world. In the Thoughtful Application, they are directed to design a brochure that the crew of *Pride II* could use to explain the ship and her mission. The brochure should contain information about the rich history of Maryland and the importance of Chesapeake Bay. The brochure should include an appropriate title as well as the following five elements:

- At least one fact about Maryland during the Revolutionary War
- At least one fact about Maryland during the War of 1812
- At least one fact about the importance of Chesapeake Bay to shipping
- At least one reason to visit Maryland today.
- Correct spelling, capitalization, and grammar.

Thoughtful Application Scoring Tool:

The student will receive:	
5 Points	If all 5 parts of the requirements are completely met.
4 Points	If 4 of the 5 parts of the requirements are met.
3 Points	If 3 of the 5 parts of the requirements are met.
2 Points	If 2 of the 5 parts of the requirements are met.
1 Points	If 1 of the 5 parts of the requirements are met.

Other Resources

- *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society*, edited by Gary B. Nash, Julie R. Jeffrey, et. al.; New York: Harper Collins, 1994
- *The Burning of Washington*, by Anthony Pitch; Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1998
- *Jack London, A Life of Adventure*, by Rae Bains; U.S.A.: Troll Associates, 1992
- *Naval Documents of the American Revolution: 1776, Volume 6*, edited by William James Morgan; Washington, D.C.: United States Navy, 1972
- *Our Maryland*, by Jane Eagen and Jeanne McGinnis; Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, Inc., 1987
- *Pirates on the Chesapeake: Being a True History of Pirates, Picaroons and Raiders on Chesapeake Bay, 1610-1807*, by Donald Shomette; Centreville, MD: Tidewater Publishers, 1985
- *The Pirate's Handbook: How to Become a Rogue if the High Seas*, by Margarett Lincoln; New York: Cobblehill Books, 1995
- *The Pirates Own Book: Authentic Narratives of the Most Celebrated Sea Robbers*, compiled by the Marine Research Society; New York: Dover Publications, Inc., originally published 1837, reprinted in 1993
- *Pirates and Patriots of the Revolution: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Colonial Seamanship*, by C. Keith Wilbur; Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1984
- *Rebels Under Sail: The American Navy during the Revolution*, by William Fowler, Jr.; New York: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1976
- *Seafaring America*, by Alexander Laing; New York: American Heritage Publishing, 1974
- *Shipbuilding in Colonial America*, by Joseph A. Goldenberg; Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 1976

***Ships and Seaman of the American Revolution*, by Jack Coggins; Harrisburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 1969**

Extension Activity:

At the end of this Teacher's Guide, you will find the script for a short play entitled, "The Trial of Chesapeake Charlie!" by Jacqueline Ann Moore. The play dramatizes an incident in which a citizen is accused of stealing goods from a ship owned by an Annapolis merchant. The accused, Charles Clark, better known as Chesapeake Charlie, claims that he is a privateer who legally seized enemy goods.

The play calls for a cast of 7 speaking roles, plus the jury. Other members of the class can be courtroom spectators.

You may wish to rehearse this play with the class as a combined language arts/social studies activity. After working with the script, students should have a better understanding of the differences between a pirate and a privateer. Have them vote on whether Chesapeake Charlie is guilty or innocent of the charge.

Finally, you might present this dramatization to another class. Have them play the role of the jury and decide whether Chesapeake Charlie is a pirate or a privateer.

The Trial of Chesapeake Charlie!

By Jacqueline Ann Moore

Cast of Characters

- *Charles Clark*, also known as Chesapeake Charlie
- *Judge Pickering*, colonial judge from the Colony of Maryland
- *Charles Carroll*, lawyer for the defendant, Charles Clark
- *William Tory*, lawyer for the plaintiff, Anthony Stewart
- *Anthony Stewart*, head of the powerful Stewart merchant family of Annapolis
- *Clerk of the Court*
- *Foreman of the Jury*
- *Jury*, men of Annapolis
- *Courtroom Spectators*, women and men of Annapolis

Historical Context: The Congress of the United Colonies has just declared war on Great Britain. There have been skirmishes on both land and sea. Citizens that support Great Britain have complained that Colonial merchant ship captains have been committing acts of piracy against the British Navy and against other merchant ship owners who support the British. Colonists that favor independence from Great Britain have argued that these so-called acts of piracy are actually acts of patriotism being carried out by privateers.

Setting: a courtroom in Annapolis, Maryland, in 1776. Barrels of salt pork, yards of sail cloth, horns of gunpowder and an anchor with the name of Anthony Stewart engraved on it have been discovered on board *Clark's Legacy*, Charles Clark's sleek schooner, while at dock south of Annapolis in Beard's Creek.

(The courtroom is filled with citizens of Annapolis. Before the trial begins, these citizens are debating among themselves whether Chesapeake Charlie is a pirate or a privateer. Some of the conversations are quite animated, and it becomes clear that there are diehard patriots and diehard loyalists in the courtroom.)

Scene 1

Judge Pickering: Order, order in this courtroom. Charles Clark of Annapolis, you have been accused of stealing food and supplies from a ship owned by the venerable Stewart Family of Annapolis while this ship was sailing up the South River. What do you have to say in your defense?

Charles Carroll (lawyer for Charles Clark): My client is not guilty, your honor.

William Tory (the Stewart family's lawyer): Balderdash, your honor! The goods discovered by the Annapolis Militia are clearly marked with the name of my client, Anthony Stewart. Clark is a common pirate, as was his uncle Richard Clark, also of that nest of pirates known as Beard's Creek!

Mr. Stewart: He's a pirate, a common thieving pirate!

Judge Pickering: Hold your tongues, Mr. Tory and Mr. Stewart! Your turn to speak will come soon enough. Continue please, Mr. Carroll.

Charles Carroll: As you are well aware, your honor and esteemed members of the jury, we are at war with England. Charles Clark, also known as Chesapeake Charlie, is in possession of a Letter of Marque and Reprisal granted to him by John Hancock, President of these United Colonies. The Stewart Family is composed of loyalists true blue to our declared enemy, King George III. Acting as a privateer, Chesapeake Charlie had every right to apprehend the Stewart vessel and take possession of the items he thought would be useful to himself. We are no longer experiencing a time of peace, this is war! I present to you exhibit A, Chesapeake Charlie's Letter of Marque and Reprisal.

Judge Carroll: Clerk, hold this letter as evidence and enter its existence into the records of this trial.

Clerk of the Court: Yes, your honor.

(Clerk of the Court takes the Letter of Marque from Mr. Carroll. The clerk returns to his desk and begins to write.)

Judge Pickering: Thank you for your report, Mr. Carroll. You may return to your seat. Mr. Tory, what say you in regard to this testimony?

(As Mr. Tory takes his place in front of the Judge, Chesapeake Charlie can be heard grumbling to his lawyer, Mr. Carroll.)

Chesapeake Charlie: I say, Charles, what chance have we in this imperial court of law? Even though Judge Pickering was appointed to the bench by our new Congress, you and I both know that he has had positive dealings with those Loyalists, those Stewarts, in the past. I'll be declared a pirate and hung by my tender neck with this Stewart family crony occupying the seat of justice! My Uncle Richard may have been a pirate, but I am an honest privateer!

Charles Carroll: Now, now Charlie. Stop worrying and let's see what happens. You may not have heard about the irritation expressed by Judge Pickering when Anthony Stewart dared to bring his ship the *Peggy Stewart* to our Maryland shores laden down with English tea! Judge Pickering was overheard calling Stewart a fool for paying the abominable tax to the British. You have been too long at sea and you have missed much of the local news.

(Judge Pickering gives Chesapeake Charlie and Charles Carroll a withering look.)

Judge Pickering: Will the defendant and his attorney please refrain from talking? The plaintiff deserves equal time. This is an American court, not a British court, and both sides will get equal time to explain their position.

Chesapeake Charlie: I told you, Charles. My neck is starting to ache!

Judge Pickering: Mr. Tory and Mr. Stewart, would you please tell the court your version of this story?

Mr. Tory: Of course, your honor. While sailing home to Annapolis on the South River, the merchant ship *Stewart's Merchant Prince* was accosted by the dread pirate Chesapeake Charlie. Chesapeake Charlie, also known as Charles Clark, absconded with 4 barrels of salt pork, 50 yards of high quality sail cloth, 7 horns of gunpowder, and an anchor bearing the name of Anthony Stewart.

Chesapeake Charlie: Fine sailcloth indeed! That canvas had more holes than a maggoty piece of ships' biscuit! I have been using it to kindle my fires because it couldn't catch the wind on a blustery day!

Judge Pickering: That's enough out of you, Captain Clark! Continue, Mr. Tory.

Mr. Tory: To add insult to injury, several of Chesapeake Charlie's crew stayed on board *Stewart's Merchant Prince* and sailed her to Baltimore!

(Chesapeake Charlie leaps out of his chair.)

Chesapeake Charlie: That should prove that I am not a pirate! If I were a true pirate I would have burned that cranky old tub of a ship and destroyed the evidence of my attack. But no, I am proud of what I have done to serve the cause of independence. Everyone knows that the Stewarts have been supplying money to the coffers of the British government!

Judge Pickering: Another word out of you, sir, and I will be forced to fine you for contempt! What say you in response to this report, Mr. Carroll?
(Chesapeake Charlie reluctantly takes his seat.)

Mr. Carroll: Sir, it is true that Mr. Clark did attack *Stewart's Merchant Prince*, did take possession of the items he needed to continue his work as an agent of our new government, and it is true that he sent his prize crew to Baltimore to deliver *Stewart's Merchant Prince* into the hands of the Maryland Committee of Safety. I ask you sir, and gentlemen of the jury, indeed all citizens of Annapolis gathered here today, would a pirate do these things?

Judge Pickering: Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the testimony of both the plaintiff and the defendant. The fate, rather the neck, of Chesapeake Charlie is in your hands. You may retire to consider your verdict.

(Jury members begin to file out of the courtroom to consider their verdict. While they are gone, spectators might take a vote as to whether they think Chesapeake Charlie is a pirate and should be punished as a criminal – or a privateer and should be regarded as a hero.)

Scene 2 Later

Judge Pickering: Gentlemen of the jury, have you reached a verdict?

Foreman of the Jury: We have, your honor.

Judge Pickering: How do you find the defendant?

Foreman of the Jury: We find Mr. Charles Clark, alias Chesapeake Charlie, _____.

(The verdict should reflect the deliberation of the jury members.)