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Patriot Challenge® Curriculum Guide

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Help Students Take the Patriot Challenge® Celebrate America in Classrooms and with Youth Groups

Introduction to the Patriot Challenge board game

Game Description

Patriot Challenge, *the game that celebrates America*, is an award-winning educational board game for use in classrooms, at home, in after-school programs and with youth groups. Patriot Challenge brings history alive and makes learning fun for children ages 10 and up using colorful stamp art from the United States Stamp Collection to tell America's story.

Developed by classroom educators and based on national curriculum standards, the game reinforces what children are learning in school today. Questions are divided into three levels: elementary school, middle and high school. Players participate in lively discussions, demonstrations, and group interactions as they learn about America's past and discuss contemporary issues of today. Game play promotes teamwork, freedom of expression, tolerance and responsible citizenship.

Patriot Challenge was selected by Scholastic's *Instructor* magazine for their **Best of 2004** list of educational resources and is a **2004 Parents' Choice Recommended Award Winner**.

Educational Value

Patriot Challenge is different from most trivia games, because it focuses players on important information about America. It supports social studies education by teaching and reinforcing critical information, key concepts, and cultural values that prepare students for citizenship responsibilities and participation in the democratic process.

The Patriot Challenge game develops critical thinking skills and enhances skill development in reading, public speaking, and debate. Game play promotes character development and reinforces respectful behavior as players practice and model for each other the interpersonal skills of teamwork, freedom of expression and tolerance.

The game uses educational principles to enhance learning. Some questions require players to analyze situations, see different points of view, apply concepts, and develop their own opinions. This is what makes Patriot Challenge more than just a question and answer game. It takes players beyond rote recall to higher levels of learning by asking them to apply their knowledge in discussions and demonstrations. These higher level learning objectives facilitate the integration of knowledge into daily life.

The questions are divided into three educational levels (elementary school, middle school, and high school) which are represented by red, white and blue cards. Each color incorporates subject matter that is commonly taught at those grade levels.

Graduated question cards allow players to learn at and above their grade level. When students have prior knowledge of a topic, it fosters confidence as they answer individual questions or team up with a peer to tackle the question at hand.



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Use of Stamp Art

The Patriot Challenge game is the only Americana board game to feature stamp art, creating a visual experience that appeals to players of all ages. Telling America's story with postage stamps is a unique way to bring history to life, capturing the player's attention and stimulating interest in the subject matter. The United States Stamp Collection tells the American story and each stamp reveals a piece of that story in color, concept, and artistry.

Stamp art facilitates the learning experience by reinforcing key concepts and information. It helps make history interesting and relevant. As students journey around the stamp game board they witness historic milestones, some happening in their own lifetime. This helps increase student awareness that each of us is a part of history and a participant in creating the history of our time.

The Patriot Challenge game features more than 300 stamp art reproductions honoring people, events, and America's culture. Patriot Challenge, Inc. is a licensee and the Patriot Challenge game is an official licensed product of the United States Postal Service.

Product Benefits

Educators traditionally rely on books and audio/video materials to facilitate the educational process. Adding board games to the mix adds variety and an interactive learning experience. With a board game players are often learning from one another while at the same time having fun.

Teachers who tested the game noted it was successful in getting kids interested in history as they discovered that history connects the past and the present. Several teachers told us that use of the game reinforced key concepts and led to a broader understanding of each unit of study, preparing students to dig deeper into the next topic. They found their students applying problem-solving and critical thinking skills during game play. One was delighted with how the game created a perfect lead-in to the school service requirement, illustrating various ways to serve one's community. Teachers commented that the game offered a different venue for study, with opportunities to discuss, act out, debate and recite, making it extremely effective in providing for the learning styles of all their students.

Finding the best way to educate children is an on-going national discussion, but everyone agrees that it all starts at home and the more parents are involved in the process, the better the outcome. The Patriot Challenge game is a product that teachers can confidently recommend to parents for continuing the educational process at home. It facilitates family learning, parental role-modeling and social interactions that create strategic opportunities to teach and promote the integration of cultural values. It strengthens the family unit and deepens family relationships as students learn from and about other family members.

Summary

The Patriot Challenge game is a unique resource for educating students about America. It offers a multitude of ways to bring excitement and valuable learning to the educational process. The product meets the educational standards of traditional teaching materials while incorporating the fun, social interaction, and charm associated with an old-fashioned board game.

Additional information, product reviews, and news articles can be found on the company website:
www.patriotchallenge.com



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Adapting Patriot Challenge for use in the Classroom

Objectives

- Assess prior knowledge
- Reinforce curriculum concepts
- Review unit content before testing

Question Card Index

Using all 600 question cards gives a broad overview of U.S. history with breadth of topics and depth of response formats. You may, however, wish to utilize stamps or question cards related to a particular historical period or skill set. Use the [Card Index](#) to select the numbered cards that are most suitable for your current study.

Small Group Play

Game play as a free-time enrichment activity will reinforce history, civics, and geography concepts. Small groups of 3 to 6 students can play as individuals, or partners can pool their knowledge and skills to compete against other teams. For a game of shorter duration, double all point values.

Whole Class Play

You can easily adapt the game to whole class play. Assign teams by tables or rows of students, and assume the role of moderator, reading the questions, adapting them as appropriate for your class, and confirming the answers. Rotate among team members for answers, or allow teams to work cooperatively to come up with answers.

Student Benefits

Unlike some games that reward students who display quick recall and leave others languishing, Patriot Challenge has multi-level play built in, with color-coded cards that reflect levels of difficulty: white cards (elementary), blue cards (middle school), and red cards (high school). In addition, approximately one third of the cards follow an information question with a bonus question that encourages students to evaluate the topic from their own perspective, share their experience, or relate the topic to current events. Many of these bonus questions are written to allow students to answer at their competence level, which encourages all students to actively participate in the game. Opponents evaluate the success of responses to bonus questions, thereby reinforcing teamwork and the concept of majority rule. Comments from teachers using the game in their classrooms showed that a spirit of cooperation grew from the opportunity to value the experiences and knowledge of all students.

Lessons and Activities

Choose from the following lessons and activities to help meet your curricular requirements while you turn learning into play. Click on the name of the lesson to display a detailed lesson plan that can be printed out.

We would appreciate hearing about your classroom experience using the Lesson Plans provided. Please forward any comments to:

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Classroom Lessons

[Design Your Own Stamps!](#) (History, Art, Grades 7-12)

How does a commemorative stamp become one? Your students will learn about the stamp selection process, design their own stamps, and do a thorough review of their history units in the process.

[Off The Wall Timelines](#) (Social Studies, History, Grades 6-9)

This lesson gets students working cooperatively to place events on a timeline. They'll research the era, and stretch their imaginations to put a date on select stamp images.

[Stamp News](#) (Language Arts, History, Grades 5-12)

Expository writing is a skill your students will practice in this lesson. They'll assume the role of a reporter in the past and develop a news story that tells about an event on a question card.

[Stirring Words](#) (Language Arts, Civics, Grades 6-12)

Inspired by the spirit of Patriot Challenge, students will explore the emotions that influence patriotism and utilize them as poetic devices in writing poems.

[States Debate](#) (Geography, Grades 5-8)

Your students will enjoy recalling facts and key concepts about all 50 states when they play this version of Patriot Challenge. There are chances for students to gain extra points for locating them on a map, identifying key facts, and offering personal experiences.

[Public Opinions](#) (Civics, Language Arts, Grades 9-12)

Do your teenage students have an abundance of attitude? Put it to good use as they write letters on political issues, showcasing their persuasive writing skills and making connections with other students.

Small Group Activities

[Public Service 101](#) (Civics, Health, Grades 4-8)

Some commemorative stamps call attention to issues for which public education can make a difference. Your youth group will examine why these stamps work and create some public education images of their own.

[Crafty Stamps](#) (Art, Grades 3-7)

When your group has started stamp collecting and finds themselves with more stamps than needed for their albums, use the leftovers for creative craft projects.



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[Mapping Stamps](#) (Geography, Math, Grades 3-8)

Encourage your philatelists to learn about the origin of their collection. They'll locate states and countries on maps and make a graph of stamps.

[Card Index](#)

All question cards have been categorized so educators can select cards for particular units of study.

Resources for teachers, students, and youth group coordinators

[Internet](#)

General Sites on Stamps

The Smithsonian National Postal Museum
<http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/>

The American Philatelic Society
<http://www.stamps.org/>

Lessons and Youth Group Activities

National Postal Museum Curriculum Guides
www.postalmuseum.si.edu (Educators page)

Five unit curriculum guides to download for: ESL students grades 8 and up, 2 units for K-8, a middle school intergenerational letter-writing project, and a 7-12 activity book and resource guide using letters from people involved in American wars to explore U.S. history.

Greetings from America
<http://www.stamps.org/kids/kidGreetingsAmerica.htm>

Five lesson plans for elementary students on postal history, post cards, letters, and U.S. states.

Philatelists in the Classroom
<http://library.thinkquest.org/10320/lessons.htm>

Forty suggestions for incorporating stamp activities into existing curricula.

American Philatelic Society Fun Facts
http://www.stamps.org/kids/kid_FunFacts.htm

This *Did You Know?* site presents facts kids find fascinating and can be used to motivate interest in stamp-related activities and lessons.

Scouts on Stamps Society International
<http://www.sossi.org/badges/badges.htm>

Award-winning site with online support for scouts and guides, with details on badge requirements for 19 youth organizations.



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Activities for Students

Smithsonian National Postal Museum Activity Zone

http://www.postalmuseum.si.edu/activity/8_activity.html

Interactive online activities from coloring pages to quizzes. Suitable for classroom use to reinforce postal history.

APS Activity Pages

http://www.stamps.org/kids/kid_ActivityPages.htm

Activities to complement youth group study of stamp collecting.

Celebrate the Century Internet Scavenger Hunts

http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson130.shtml

Learn about each decade of the 1900's with *Celebrate the Century* stamps. These activities pose questions related to the stamps and link to sites that will inform and explain the era.

Resources for Student Research

A Brief History of Postage Stamps Through the Years

http://www.stamps.org/kids/January/stamp_overview.htm

A timeline of important events in postal history, appropriate for elementary and middle school use.

The United States Postal Service - An American History 1775 – 2002

<http://www.usps.com/cpim/ftp/pubs/pub100/>

An in-depth history of mail service, good for high school research.

Their Stamp on History

<http://www.stamponhistory.com>

This site offers brief biographies of people featured on U.S. commemorative stamps, categorized by their areas of expertise.

Stamp Collecting Resources

Stamps 4 Kids

<http://mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/stamps4kids>

This United Kingdom site has a question and answer section with details about starting and maintaining a stamp collection.

The Lessons Learned from Stamp Collecting

http://www.linns.com/howto/refreshers/lessons_19980216/refreshercourse.asp?uID

An informal essay that would appeal to middle and high school students who are developing an interest in stamp collecting.

APS Questions and Answers

http://www.stamps.org/kids/kid_QA.htm#history

Contains detailed questions and answers about postal history and philately.



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Books

Elementary School

Bronco Charlie and the Pony Express by Marlene Targ Brill, published by Carolrhoda Books, 2004.

Fast 'n Snappy by Pattie L. Schnetzler, published by Carolrhoda Books, 2004.

Here Comes the Mail by Gloria Skurzynski, published by Bradbury Press, 1992.

In America by Marissa Moss, published by Dutton, 1994.

A Lucky Dog: Owney, U.S. Rail Mail Service Mascot by Dirk Wales, published by Great Plains Press, 2003.

Mailing May by Michael O. Tunnell, published by Greenwillow Books, 1997.

Send It by Don Carter, published by Roaring Brook Press, 2003.

A Small Dog's Big Life: Around the World with Owney by Irene Kelly, published by Holiday House, 2005.

Toddlecreek Post Office by Uri Shulevitz, published by Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1990.

Wanted—A Few Bold Riders: The Story of the Pony Express by Darice Bailer, published by Soundprints, 1997.

Middle School

America's Leaders: The Postmaster General by Scott Ingram, published by Blackbirch Press, 2004.

The Bald Eagle's View of American History by C.H. Coleman, published by Charlesbridge, 2006.

Cool Collectibles: Stamps by Jennifer Abeyta, published by Childrens Press, 2000.

Dear Austin: Letters from the Underground Railroad by Elvira Woodruff, published by Knopf Books for Young Readers, 1998.

Dear Mr. President, Abraham Lincoln: Letters from a Slave Girl by Andrea Davis Pickney, published by Winslow Press, 2001.

The History of the Post Office by Barbara A. Somervill, published by Child's World, 2006.

I Know America: Our Postal System by Eileen Lucas, published by Millbrook Press, 1999.

Keep in Touch: Letters, Notes, and More from the Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants by Ann Brashares, published by Random House, 2005.

Liberty Letters: The Personal Correspondence of Hannah Brown and Sarah Smith by Nancy LeSourd, published by ZonderKidz, 2003.



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Mail by the Pail by Colin Bergel, published by Wayne State University Press, 2000.

Mail Call: The History of the US Mail Service by Nancy O'Keefe Bollick, published by Franklin Watts, 1994.

The Pony Express: A Primary Source History of the Race to Bring Mail to the American West by Simone Payment, published by Rosen Publishing Group, 2004.

Stamp Collecting: Discover the Fun of the World's Most Popular Hobby by Stephen R. Datz, published by General Philatelic Corporation, 1999.

Stamp It! The Ultimate Stamp Collecting Activity Book by Leslie Jonath, published by Chronicle Books, 2002.

Stepping Through History: The Mail by Peggy Burns, published by Thomson Learning, 1995.

William Fargo: Young Mail Carrier by Katharine Elliott Wilkie, published by Bobbs-Merrill, 1962.

High School/Young Adults

Airlines and Air Mail: The Post Office and the Birth of Commercial Aviation Industry by Robert van der Linden, published by University Press of Kentucky, 2002.

George Washington: The Writer: A Treasury of Letters, Diaries, and Public Documents edited by Carolyn Yoder, published by Boyds Mills Press, 2003.

The Inverted Jenny: Money, Mystery, Mania by George Amick, published by Scott Publishing, 1987.

The Legend of the Barefoot Mailman by John Henry Fleming, published by Faber & Faber, 1996.

Letters of the Century: America 1900-1999 edited by Lisa Grunwald and Stephan J. Adler, published by Dial Press, 1999.

The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America by David M. Henkin, published by University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Postal Service Guide to U.S. Stamps published by the United States Postal Service, published annually.

Stamping Our History: The Story of the United States Portrayed on Its Postage Stamps by Charles Davidson, published by Carol Publishing Corp., 1995.

They Carried the Mail: A Survey of Postal History & Hobbies by Matthew Boywer, published by Backinprint.com, 2001.

War Letters: Extraordinary Correspondence from American Wars edited by Andrew Carroll, published by Scribner, 2002.

The World Encyclopedia of Stamps and Stamp Collecting by James MacKay, published by Lorenz Books, 2005.



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Video

The Air Mail Story, Acorn Studio, 2002.

Stamps in Motion, The History Channel, 2006

Tommy Tricker and the Stamp Traveler, Lion's Gate, 1990.

Acknowledgements

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