



Day 10 American Revolution
65 Minutes

Fort Ticonderoga and the Noble Train

Fort Ticonderoga and the Noble Train of Artillery

Detailed Lesson Plan with PowerPoint Script

Grade Level: 5–8

Time: 60–75 minutes (with extensions available)

Unit: Early Battles of the American Revolution

Lesson Overview

This lesson explores the capture of Fort Ticonderoga and explains why this early, nearly bloodless victory proved crucial to the American Revolution. Using a teacher-led PowerPoint presentation as the anchor, students learn how geography, leadership, and logistics turned a small fort into a turning point in the war.

Students then deepen understanding through a core article, an additional article on the Noble Train of Artillery, and an interactive map with a built-in scavenger hunt tracing the movement of cannons from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston. Optional biographies and reading comprehension exercises support differentiation and literacy goals.

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Explain why Fort Ticonderoga was strategically important
- Describe how the fort was captured with little resistance
- Identify the roles played by Patriot leaders
- Explain how captured cannons helped force the British evacuation of Boston

- Analyze how geography and transportation influenced the war
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Essential Question

Why did the capture of Fort Ticonderoga matter more than the fighting that took place there?

Materials

- PowerPoint presentation: *Fort Ticonderoga*
 - Article on Fort Ticonderoga
 - Additional article on the Noble Train of Artillery
 - Interactive map of the Noble Train of Artillery
 - Integrated online or printable scavenger hunt
 - **Optional biographies:**
 - Benedict Arnold
 - Ethan Allen
 - Reading comprehension exercises
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Lesson Sequence

1. Hook and Background Activation (5 minutes)

Begin with the prompt:

Can a victory without a battle still change the course of history?

Explain that early in the American Revolution, the Patriot forces were short on weapons, supplies, and artillery, making captured resources extremely valuable.

2. PowerPoint Anchor Instruction (20 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/revwar/ticonderoga.pptx>

Use the PowerPoint presentation as the instructional anchor.

The following **script matches the slides created for the Fort Ticonderoga presentation.**

PowerPoint Script

Fort Ticonderoga

Slide 1 – Fort Ticonderoga

Fort Ticonderoga was a small British fort located at the southern tip of Lake Champlain in upstate New York. Although it appeared unimportant, its capture became one of the most significant early victories of the American Revolution.

Slide 2 – Fort Ticonderoga Before 1775

Before the Revolution, Fort Ticonderoga was poorly maintained and lightly guarded. During the French and Indian War, it had been known as Fort Carillon. By 1775, it was no longer a strong defensive position.

Slide 3 – Why Fort Ticonderoga Was Important

Fort Ticonderoga controlled a key route between the American colonies and British Canada. Even more important, the fort held valuable cannons, guns, and military supplies that the Patriot forces desperately needed.

Slide 4 – Planning the Seizure

The Massachusetts Committee of Safety authorized a secret mission to seize the fort. Colonel Benedict Arnold was selected to help lead the effort and recruit soldiers for the mission.

Slide 5 – A Rival Mission

At the same time, Connecticut planned a separate mission led by Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys. When Arnold and Allen met, they agreed to share command, although tensions quickly developed between them.

Slide 6 – A Bloodless Victory: May 10, 1775

On May 10, 1775, Arnold, Allen, and 83 soldiers entered Fort Ticonderoga. The British soldiers were asleep and surrendered immediately. No one was killed during the capture.

Slide 7 – After the Capture

After the fort was taken, hundreds of additional American soldiers arrived. Some caused damage to the fort while searching for supplies and liquor. Arnold was furious at the lack of discipline.

Slide 8 – Tension and Credit

Ethan Allen took public credit for the capture, while Arnold felt disrespected and ignored. The disagreement between the two leaders nearly led to violence and revealed growing divisions among Patriot leaders.

Slide 9 – Arnold Removed from Command

The next day, Arnold led the capture of nearby Fort Crown Point, gaining even more cannons and weapons. Soon after, Benjamin Hinman arrived with troops and removed Arnold from command.

Slide 10 – The Cannons' Journey to Boston

Despite leadership conflicts, the captured cannons became extremely important. George Washington placed Colonel Henry Knox in charge of transporting the heavy artillery to Boston.

Slide 11 – The Noble Train of Artillery

Henry Knox and his men hauled 59 cannons over 300 miles using ox-drawn sleds. The journey took 56 days through snow, mountains, and frozen rivers. The total weight exceeded 60 tons.

Slide 12 – Dorchester Heights

Once the cannons arrived, they were placed on Dorchester Heights overlooking Boston Harbor. British forces were stunned by the Patriots' success and were forced to evacuate Boston.

Slide 13 – Why Fort Ticonderoga Mattered

The capture of Fort Ticonderoga provided the weapons needed to drive the British from Boston. It boosted Patriot confidence and proved that the American cause could succeed.

3. Core Reading Activity (15 minutes)

Students read the **article on Fort Ticonderoga**. In addition, students should explore the Noble Train interactive map in the middle of the page.

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/battles-of-the-revolutionary-war/the-seizure-of-fort-ticonderoga>

Guided reading focus:

- Why the fort mattered despite its condition
- How leadership disagreements emerged
- Why the capture mattered beyond the fort itself

Reading comprehension exercises may be completed alongside the article.

4. Noble Train of Artillery Exploration (15–20 minutes)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/battles-of-the-revolutionary-war/the-noble-train-of-artillery>

Students read the **additional article on the Noble Train of Artillery**, then explore the **interactive map**.

5. Optional Biography Extensions

Students may read biographies of:

- [Benedict Arnold](#)
- [Ethan Allen](#)

Optional discussion focus:

- Leadership styles

- Personal conflict
 - How early disagreements affected the Patriot cause
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6. Literacy Reinforcement Options (15-25 minutes)

Use your discretion to select a literacy activity suited to your students or classes:

- [Fort Ticonderoga Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1100
- [Fort Ticonderoga Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1100
- [Noble Train Printable Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1000
- [Noble Train Online Reading Comprehension](#) - Lexile 1000

These activities may be used for centers, homework, or differentiation.

7. Noble Train - the game! (Optional)

<https://learnaboutamerica.com/american-history/revolutionary-war/revolutionary-war-online-games/the-noble-train-a-revolutionary-war-adventure-game>

Can you guide the noble train of weapons and artillery from Fort Ticonderoga to Boston? Students play the role of Henry Knox and have 56 days to bring the oxen-drawn sleds 300 miles in the dead of winter. Use your knowledge of the Revolutionary War to advance but watch out for blizzards, wolf packs, ice storms, and yetis. Super fun!

- While this game is inspired by the Noble Train of artillery, it is probably best played at the end of the unit as it involves questions not covered yet.
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Closure (5 minutes)

Discussion prompt:

Why did the cannons from Fort Ticonderoga help change the course of the war?

Exit ticket options:

- One reason Fort Ticonderoga mattered
- One challenge faced during the Noble Train of Artillery