**Grade 5:** Unit 3, Lesson 14

**Title:** *James Forten*

**Essential Question:** How did James Forten demonstrate heroism during the American Revolution?

**Week 1**

Questions to ask and discuss while reading:

**Locate two reasons why many free Africans made their homes in Philadelphia.**

*“The city was the home of a number of noted abolitionists...More important was the fact that Africans could find work in Philadelphia.”*

**Reread the first two paragraphs on page 316.  How does the author show that Thomas Forten was skilled and hard-working?**

*“Sewing the coarse cloth was brutal on the hands.  The heavy thread had to be waxed and handled with dexterity.”*

*“Forten helped in all aspects of sail making and assisted in installing the sails on the ships the firm serviced.”*

**How does James Forten feel about the different black people that he sees on and off the ship?**

*“He had seen the captives on the ships.  They looked like him:  the same dark skin, the same wide nose; but there was a sadness about them that both touched his heart and frightened him.”*

*“But the black soldiers Forten saw were something special.  They seemed taller and blacker than any men he had ever seen.”*

*“He never forgot the sight of his people, or accepted it as natural that they should be in bondage.”*

**What is the main idea of page 320?  List evidence you find in the text to support your answer.**

*The British Active engaged and was defeated by the American ship Royal Louis.*

*“The Royal Louis sailed out of Philadelphia in August and was quickly engaged by the British ship Active.”  “After what must have seemed like forever with the two ships tacking about each other like angry cats, the Active lowered its flag.  It had surrendered!”*

**Reread paragraphs 3-9 on page 320.  How does the author make the battle between the Royal Louis and the British ship Active seem real and exciting?**

*He used words to describe the exact actions of the men. He used many descriptive words as well.*

*“...up and down the stairs he raced with powder as shots from the British ship whistled overhead.”  “...men screaming as they were hit with grapeshot that splintered the sides of the ship.”  “...he would be killed instantly in the explosion.”   “Again he went below decks, knowing that if a shot ripped through to the powder kegs, or if any of the burning planks fell down into the hold, he would be killed instantly in the explosion.” “...two ships tacking about each other like angry cats,..”  “The crowd on the dock cheered wildly..”*

**Reread pages 322-323.  Summarize the events of October 16th, 1781.  In your summary, you should briefly mention each important event in the order it happened using transitional words.**

*First, the crew of The Royal Lewis sighted a ship that they recognized was British and headed straight for it. Once they were close enough, they saw a second and third ship, and they realized it was a trap.  Then, they tried to escape but it was too late.  The Royal Lewis had no choice but to surrender and its crew became prisoners. While aboard the Amphyon, James Forten forged a tentative friendship with Captain Beasley’s son during a marble game.  It was this bond that saved Forten from being sent to the West Indies.  In the end, James Forten was treated as a regular prisoner of war and sent to the prison ship Jersey.*

**How do you know how James Forten felt when the *Royal Louis* surrendered?**

*“Forten was terrified.  He had heard the stories of the British sending captured Africans to the West Indies to be sold into slavery.  He knew the Pomona had sailed back and forth from the colonies to the island of Barbados, where many Africans already languished in bondage.  It was a time for dread.”*

**What evidence is there of the author’s viewpoint toward the conditions aboard the *Jersey*?**

*The author believes they treated prisoners cruelly.*

*“The captain of the Jersey greeted the prisoners with a sneer.  The wounded were unattended; the sick ignored.  The pitiful cries of other prisoners came below decks.  A few pale, sickly prisoners, covered with sores.  They were pushed roughly belowdecks.  The air was dank as men relieved themselves where they lay.”*

**Reread page 323 and find evidence to show why James was not sold into slavery.**

*Captain Beasley’s son and James had a tentative friendship. While playing marbles, the two became friends. Because of this friendship, James was treated as a typical prisoner of war.*

**When James Forten was older, how did he help others in their fight for equality?**

*James Forten provided jobs for all people- “at its height the business employed forty workers, both black and white.”*

*James Forten supported antislavery groups and the rights of women to vote- “In the coming years he would use his great wealth to support both antislavery groups and the rights of women to vote.”*

*“He spent much of his life pleading for the freedom of his people in the country his people helped to create.”*

**Written Response**

**Option 1**

James Forten overcame difficulties in order to become one of the most successful African American men of his time. Describe the difficulties of Forten’s life and the many ways that he helped others throughout his lifetime.

**Sample Student Response**

*James Forten overcame many hardships in his lifetime. To begin, James lost his father at a very young age. Despite this mishap, he continue to go to school as well as learn his father’s trade of making sails. According to the text, he even insisted, at the tender age of fourteen, that he be allowed to serve on a privateer ship. As a free black, James knew that he was at risk of being kidnapped and sold into slavery. He still chose to leave the safety of his home. While on the ship he again risked his life as a powder loader for the guns. He witnessed other men being “mortally” wounded, but bravely continued to do his job. He even survived being on a British prison ship.*

*Additionally, after the war, Forten helped others. After taking over his apprentice’s sail company, he employed both black and white workers. He used his new riches to support the women’s rights movement as well as abolitionist. Forten undeniably overcame life’s struggles and used his success to assist in the fair treatment of all people.*

**Option 2**

Walter Dean Myers writes that James Forten was “not a hero.” Instead, he describes Forten as a “man who helped to create” the United States of America. What are some things that Forten did in his later years that helped to create a nation?

**Sample Student Response**

*The author Dean Myers states that James Forten was “not a hero,” but he was a “man who helped create” the United States.  John Forten helped to create the United States by standing up for freedom and trying to improve the lives of others.*

*When Forten was a young child he had seen captives on the slave ships and he had seen Africans in chains being marched through the streets, on their way to the South.  Then, later he saw the soldiers and saw they were something special.  This inspired him to become a soldier and to sign onto the privateer Royal Louis.  He fought with bravery and skill to help to free and establish what is now the United States of America.*

*Later, after the war James Forten fought to improve the lives of others.  For example, he made several contributions to the sail making business.  For instance, he created a method of handling the huge sails in the shop, which allowed sails to be repaired much faster and saved precious time for ship owners.   He also used his great wealth to support both antislavery groups and the right of women to vote - this was during a time when over 90 percent of all Africans in America were still in a state of enslavement.   He also used his influences as a successful businessman to plead for the freedom of his people who had helped to create this country.*

*As you can see, James Forten definitely bettered the lives of others. His dedication to the sailing business and efforts to treat all Americans equally are but two of the ways Forten was a legendary man. His actions undeniably helped create our great nation.*

**Option 3**

A hero is brave, good, and often looked up to by other people. Describe at least three things that Forten did in his lifetime that would qualify him as a “hero.”

**Sample Student Response**

*There are several aspects of James Forten’s life that make him a hero. First and foremost, Forten displayed unbelievable bravery during the Revolutionary War. At the young age of fourteen, he loaded gun powder for a privateer ship fighting against the British. Despite witnessing the death of other, James continued to help his country fight. After the war, he continued fighting for Americans. For example, he employed both blacks and whites at his sailing company. He knew the importance of treating everyone equally. He also was an active abolitionist and financial supporter for women’s rights. All of these factors definitely make James Forten an American hero.*

**Week 2, Building Knowledge: Extending the Topic**

**Essential Question:** What role did African Americans play during the American Revolution?

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| Cumulative Activities – The following activities should be completed and updated after reading each resource this week.  The purpose of these activities is to capture knowledge building from one resource to the next, and to provide a holistic snapshot of central ideas of the content covered in response to the essential question.  *It is recommended that students are required to complete one of the Cumulative Activities (Rolling Knowledge Journal or Rolling Vocabulary) for the week.* |

**Rolling Vocabulary:  “Sensational Six”**

* Read each resource then determine the 6 words from each text that most exemplify (show best) the central idea of the text.
* Next use your 6 words to write about the most important idea of the text. You should have as many sentences as you do words.
* Continue this activity with EACH selection in the text set.
* After reading all the selections in the Expert Pack, go back and review your words.
* Now select the “Sensational Six” words from **ALL** the word lists.
* Use the “Sensational Six” words to summarize the most important learning from this text set.

**Sample Student Response**

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| **Title** | **Six Vocabulary Words & Sentences** |
| *James Forten* | **Words: Men of color, apprentice, bondage, influential, authorities, contributions**  **Sentences:**   1. **Men of color** were free soldiers apart of the colonial army and slaves on plantations. 2. Forten was an **apprentice** sail maker before he owned his own company. 3. James never forgot the sight of his people in **bondage**, or accepted it as natural that black people should be slaves. 4. James Forten became one of the most **influential** of the African abolitionist. 5. The *Royal Louis* turned its prisoners over to military **authorities**. 6. James’ **contributions** to American history include supporting women’s rights and being an abolitionist. |
| *Black Revolutionary Seamen* | **Words: enslaved, privateers,****exempt, vanity, ambition, marauding**  **Sentences:**   1. Unlike the Continental Army, the Navy recruited both free and **enslaved** blacks from the very start of the Revolutionary War. 2. Philadelphia's free blacks, for instance, were more inclined to serve on **privateers** than in Pennsylvania navy. 3. Some British were **exempt** from serving in the war because they sent a slave in their place. 4. Jeremiah Thomas, a black pilot and fisherman, was noted as being filled with **vanity** after he designed a strategic attack. 5. Many **ambitious** blacks worked on sea vessels to escape slavery. 6. Some slaves joined **marauding** ships that stole and attacked other vessels. |
| *“Prince Hall”* | **Words: enslaved, protested, servant, devoted, manumission, charter**  **Sentences:**   1. Hall joined the Congregational Church, and soon after, married an **enslaved** woman named Sarah Ritchie. 2. For years, he **protested** the lack of schools for black children and finally established one in his own home. 3. His son, Primus, was born in 1756 to Delia, a **servant** in another household. 4. Hall was **devoted** to speaking out against slavery. 5. His lodge supported the **manumission** or freeing of slaves. 6. Even though Hall opened the first black lodge, it took several years for the group to get an official **charter**, the document from the government that made the lodge official. |
| *Runaways* | **Words: bondage, enlisted, fugitives, militias, statues, bondage**  **Sentences:**   1. An estimated 100,000 took advantage of the disruption caused by the war and escaped from **bondage**. 2. Washington and other military officers received numerous requests to recover runways who had **enlisted**. 3. **Fugitives** often took as much with them as they could get or carry, including money, guns, powder, clothing and musical instruments. 4. Colonial laws or **statutes** were very specific for runaway slaves. 5. Runaways would join British armies or **militias** for safety. 6. For some slaves, risking their lives was better than being in **bondage**. |
| *The Extraordinary Life of Thomas Peters* | **Words: enslaved, proclamation, fortifications, forsake, petition, seize**  **Sentences:**   1. Thomas Peters was an **enslaved** African working as a mill workman. 2. During the Revolutionary War, a **proclamation** was written that stated slaves would be freed who joined the British army. 3. Thomas joined the British and built **fortifications**, housing for soldiers. 4. After the war, the British refused to **forsake** the ex-slaves, so many were taken to be free in other countries. 5. In Canada, Thomas **petitioned** the government for the land they promised. 6. Thomas and other black Loyalist **seized** an opportunity to start a new colony in Sierre Leone, Africa. |
| *Photo Essay, “African Americans in the Revolutionary War,”* | **Words: martyr, indenture, gallant, depicted, orderly, infiltrating**  **Sentences:**   1. Crispus Attics is considered a **martyr** because he was the first innocent man to die while protesting the presence of the British army in Boston. 2. Lemuel Haynes served as an **indentured** servant for years before becoming a free minister. 3. Salem Poor was described as having a **gallant** or gentleman like conduct by his peer while in the military. 4. Prince Whipple was the only black person **depicted** in the painting of George Washington crossing the Delaware River. 5. Agrippa Hull worked as an **orderly** or soldier who performs services for a superior officer during the Revolutionary War. 6. James Armistead **infiltrated** the plans of the British army by pretending to be a Loyalist runaway slave. |
| *“African Americans in the American Revolution”* | **Words: potential, misgivings, halt, decree, tactical, instrumental**  **Sentences:**   1. America has the reputation of allowing people to live up to their full **potential**, the best of their ability. 2. Despite their **misgivings**, many blacks supported the colonies. 3. William Flora was a free soldier who helped **halt** the success of the British by fighting for the Colonial Patriots. 4. Black loyalists were promised a **decree** of freedom if they fought for the British. 5. Titus Cornelius used his **tactical** skills to plan battle strategies during the war. 6. Many blacks were **instrumental** during the Revolutionary War. |
| *“African Americans and the Revolution”* | **Words: shackles, revolt, aroused, fortifications, plunder, exodus**  **Sentences:**   1. America was birthed from the **shackles** and hard work of slaves. 2. Before the Revolutionary War, colonist feared slave **revolts** or uprisings. 3. The promise of freedom for slaves who fought for the British **aroused** even more fear. 4. Some slaves created **fortifications** in swamps or other distant locations after running away. 5. Slave revolts included the **plundering** of goods from homes of slave owners. 6. After the war, there was a great **exodus** or leaving of blacks back to Freetown in Africa. |
| **Sensational Six**: **enslaved, apprentice, enlist, fortifications, bondage, statutes** | |
| **Summary:**  Both **enslaved** and free blacks played vital roles during the Revolutionary War. Those who were **apprentices** learned valuable skills that both sides could use to their advantage. Building **fortifications**, spying, and assisting soldiers were some of the duties available to blacks during the war. Hundreds of chose to **enlist** for both the Patriots and the Loyalist rather than stay in **bondage**. Most hoped for **statutes** of freedom after the war. Some found freedom in such places as Africa and Canada while others returned to slavery. | |

**Rolling Knowledge**

1. Read each selection in the set, one at a time.
2. After you read *each* resource, stop and think what the big learning was. What did you learn that was new *and important* about the topic from *this* resource?
3. Write, draw, or list what you learned from the text about (topic). Then write, draw, or list how this new resource added to what you learned from the last resource(s).

**Sample Student Response**

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| **Write, Draw, or List** | | |
| **Title** | **New and important learning about the topic** | **How does this add to what I learned already?** |
| 1. *James Forten* | James Forten was a soldier during the Revolutionary War. | Free blacks were soldiers in the war and they were proud to serve their country. |
| 1. *“Black Revolutionary Seamen”* | Free as well as enslaved blacks served on ships to help in the war. | These men served in positions as laborers, deck hands, pilots, and carpenters. |
| 1. *“Prince Hall”* | Prince Hall was a freed slave and leather worker who established the first black Free Masons. | He spoke out again the unfair treatment of blacks. |
| 1. *“Runaways”* | Runaway slaved during colonial times had severe consequences for leaving their owners. | Slaves did revolt or leave due to these harsh punishments. |
| 1. *Photo Essay: “African Americans in the Revolutionary War”* | Many blacks played important roles in the Revolutionary War. | Blacks also helped the colonist win the war, not just the British. |
| 1. *The Extraordinary Life of Thomas Peters* | Thomas Peters was freed after serving in the Revolutionary War as a Loyalist. | He helped to establish one of the first towns in Africa for former American slaves. |
| 1. *“African Americans in the American Revolution”* | Vital battles were won due to blacks during the Revolutionary  War. | Blacks not only fought and assisted, but help with strategical plans as well. |
| 1. *“African Americans and the Revolution”* | Blacks who possessed crafty skills were hired out by their owners. | Some slaves has special trades like blacksmithing. |

**Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Title:** *James Forten*

**Essential Question:** How did James Forten demonstrate heroism during the American Revolution?

*This is a note taking form for you to collect thoughts and evidence during your reading and class discussions. You can use this when you write your essay later.*

Locate two reasons why many free Africans made their homes in Philadelphia.

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Reread the first two paragraphs on page 316.  How does the author show that Thomas Forten was skilled and hard-working?

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What is the main idea of page 320?  List evidence you find in the text to support your answer.

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Reread paragraphs 3-9 on page 320.  How does the author make the battle between the Royal Louis and the British ship Active seem real and exciting?

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Reread pages 322-323.  Summarize the events of October 16th, 1781.  In your summary, you should briefly mention each important event in the order it happened using transitional words.

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How do you know how James Forten felt when the *Royal Louis* surrendered?

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What evidence is there of the author’s viewpoint toward the conditions aboard the *Jersey*?

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Reread page 323 and find evidence to show why James was not sold into slavery.

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When James Forten was older, how did he help others in their fight for equality?

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**Week 1 Written Response**

**Prompt #1**

James Forten overcame difficulties in order to one of the most successful African American men of his time. Describe the difficulties of Forten’s life and the many ways that he helped others throughout his lifetime.

**Prompt #2**

Walter Dean Myers writes that James Forten was “not a hero.” Instead, he describes Forten as a “man who helped to create” the United States of America. What are some things that Forten did in his later years that helped to create a nation?

**Prompt #3**

A hero is brave, good, and often looked up to by other people. Describe at least three things that Forten did in his lifetime that would qualify him as a “hero.”

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**Week 2, Building Knowledge: Extending the Topic**

**Essential Question:** What role did African Americans play during the American Revolution?

**Rolling Vocabulary:  “Sensational Six”**

* Read each resource then determine the 6 words from each text that most exemplify (show best) the central idea of the text.
* Next use your 6 words to write about the most important idea of the text. You should have as many sentences as you do words.
* Continue this activity with EACH selection in the text set.
* After reading all the selections in the Expert Pack, go back and review your words.
* Now select the “Sensational Six” words from **ALL** the word lists.
* Use the “Sensational Six” words to summarize the most important learning from this text set.

**Sample Student Response**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Six Vocabulary Words & Sentences** |
| *James Forten* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *Black Revolutionary Seamen* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *“Prince Hall”* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *Runaways* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *The Extraordinary Life of Thomas Peters* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *Photo Essay, “African Americans in the Revolutionary War,”* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *“African Americans in the American Revolution”* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| *“African Americans and the Revolution”* | Words:  Sentences:  1.  2.  3.  4.  5.  6. |
| **Sensational Six:** | |
| **Summary:**  . | |

**Rolling Knowledge**

1. Read each selection in the set, one at a time.
2. After you read *each* resource, stop and think what the big learning was. What did you learn that was new *and important* about the topic from *this* resource?
3. Write, draw, or list what you learned from the text about (topic). Then write, draw, or list how this new resource added to what you learned from the last resource(s).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Write, Draw, or List** | | |
| **Title** | **New and important learning about the topic** | **How does this add to what I learned already?** |
| 1. *James Forten* |  |  |
| 1. *“Black Revolutionary Seamen”* |  |  |
| 1. *“Prince Hall”* |  | . |
| 1. *“Runaways”* |  | . |
| 1. *Photo Essay, “African Americans in the Revolutionary War”* |  |  |
| 1. *The Extraordinary Life of Thomas Peters* |  | . |
| 1. *“African Americans in the American Revolution”* |  |  |
| 1. *“African Americans and the Revolution”* |  |  |