

★ AMERICAN REVOLUTION SERIES ★

GRADES 4-6

Nathan Hale & Spies

PRIMARY SOURCE INVESTIGATION

ELA INTEGRATED

✓ Assessments

✓ Build Thinking Skills

✓ Engaging Activities

Lesson:

Materials:

Included with download:

- Commission of Nathan Hale, captain i by Colonel Charles Webb. Signed by Jo
- “Nathan Hale & Spies” informational t
- “Nathan Hale & Spies - Summarize!” - one is lined paper to write the summar

Online:

- Link to: Commission of Nathan Hale, commanded by Colonel Charles Webb https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nathan_Hale_commission_as_c

Anticipatory Set: enjoys spy novels needed during a

Body: From there quick document commissions, and that this document is th Captain.

Next, have students read the informationa After reading, work with students to comp organizer, then have students use the orga

Closure: Have students share out their sur

Formative Assessment: Written summary.

Nathan Hale & Spie

Liberty’s Kids Connection: Episode 116, One Life to Lose. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TGEtp2Sh80Y>

Suggested Children’s Books:

- *Redcoats and Petticoats* by Katherine Kirkpatrick
- *Toliver’s Secret* by Esther Wood Brady
- *The Scarlet Stockings Spy* by Trinka Hakes Noble
- *Nathan Hale’s Hazardous Tales: One Dead Spy* by Nathan Hale (yes, that is the author’s

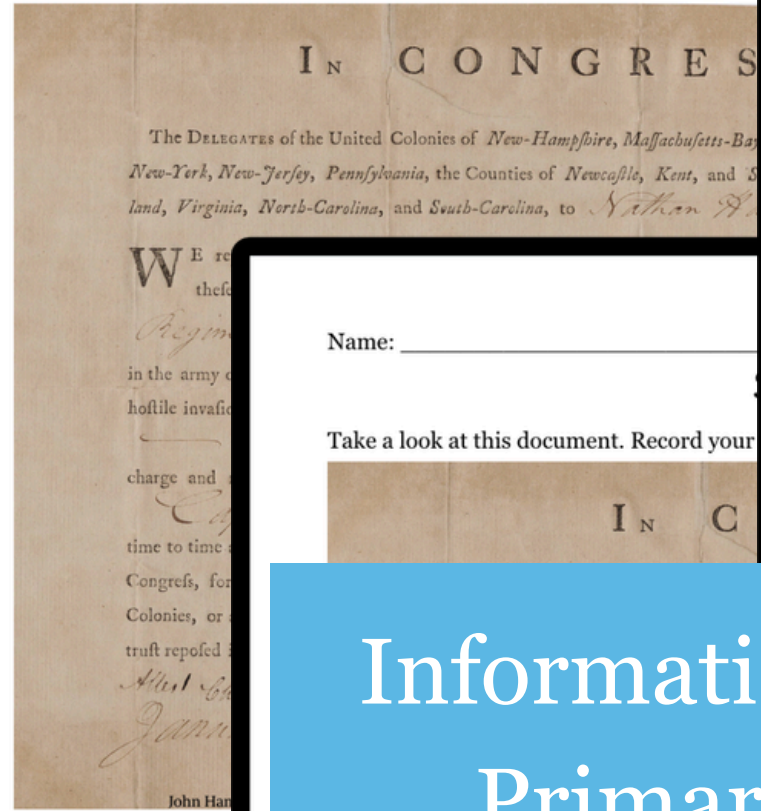
Full Lesson Plan



Name: KEY - Possible Answers Date: _____

Nathan Hale

Take a look at this document. Record your observations and inferences below.



Name: _____

Take a look at this document. Record your



- Observations**
- the date on the document
 - it is signed by John Hancock
 - it says, "In Congress"
 - some of it is typed and some is handwritten
 - Nathan Hale's name is written in the document
 - it says this is an order
 - it says that Nathan Hale is a Captain in the 11th Regt

What do you think this document is?
I think this document is a letter from John Hancock to Nathan Hale.

Observations

What do you think this document is?

Copyright Toni Stevens-Oliver 2026

Name: _____

Nathan Hale & Spies

Nathan Hale was an American hero during the American Revolutionary War. He was born on June 6, 1755, in Coventry, Connecticut. His parents were Richard Hale and Elizabeth Strong. Nathan grew up in a large, religious family that believed learning and hard work were very important. When Nathan was fourteen years old, he went to Yale College. He was a good student and worked very hard. He graduated with honors in 1773, when he was only eighteen years old. After college, he became a schoolteacher in Connecticut. Teaching was his job before the war began.

for a volunteer to go behind enemy lines and spy on the British. Spying was very dangerous, but Nathan Hale volunteered because he wanted to help his country.

Nathan Hale traveled to Long Island and New York, where the British army was staying. Since he was already a schoolteacher, he used his real job as a way to move around without drawing attention. While there, he quietly wrote down information about British camps and forts. After several days, he tried to return to the American army, but he was caught by the British on September 21, 1776. Papers found on him showed that he was spying.

The British did not know about the captured spies were away. Nathan Hale was captured on September 22, 1776, when he was only twenty-one years old. British officers were very brave at his execution. Nathan Hale is famous for his last words. He said, "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country." His words showed great courage and the cause of American independence. Nathan Hale's death was a great loss to the American cause. Spying could be very dangerous, but Nathan Hale was a brave man who was willing to risk his life for his country. Washington learned from Nathan Hale's example that spies were needed in the war. Spies played an important place in the war. The British controlled the city of New York. American spies were needed to help the American army. Spies like Nathan Hale were very important. They helped the American army win the war. Spies who blended into the enemy were very important.

In 1778, Washington's army was more organized than the British. The spies used the ring and worked in New York. The spies used invisible ink to send signals to the British. Spies sent signals by using invisible ink on their clothing. Spies used invisible ink on their clothing to send secret messages. Unlike Nathan Hale, the British did not know about the Culper Spy Ring. The British did not know about the group. Their work was very important. Information that they sent helped the American army. Spies showed how spying had improved since Nathan Hale's mission.

Copyright Toni Stevens-Oliver 2026

Name: _____ Date: _____

Nathan Hale & Spies - Summarize!

What was the text "Nathan Hale & Spies" about? Let's summarize. Use the prompts and organizer below to help you get started.

In the article Nathan Hale & Spies,
Type of text Title
the author explains the spy Nathan Hale's work,
Action - what is the author doing? Main idea
how he was caught and then spies during the Revolutionary War.

Important Details -

- The British
- School teacher
- "I only regret that I have but one life to give for my country."
- Washington
- The spies were not discovered

When you write your summary, remember to keep it organized and keep the details in the same order as they appeared in the text.



Brainstorm transition words and phrases you can use in your summary.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Nathan Hale & Spies - Summarize!

What was the text "Nathan Hale & Spies" about? Let's summarize. Use the prompts and organizer below to help you get started.

In the _____
Type of text
the author _____
Action -

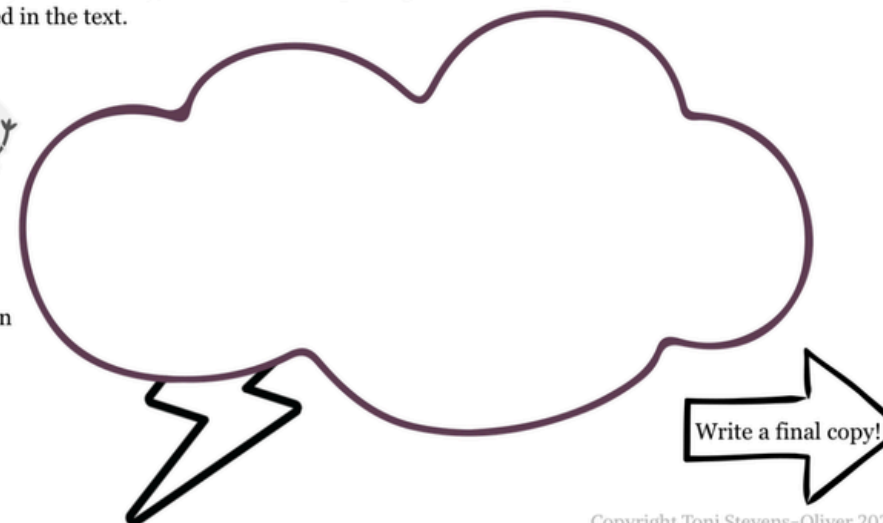
Important Details -

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

When you write your summary, remember to keep it organized and keep the details in the same order as they appeared in the text.



Brainstorm transition words you can use in your summary.



Copyright Toni Stevens-Oliver 2026

Nathan Hale & Spies - Summarize!

Copyright Toni Stevens-Oliver 2026