

# DISCOVER AMERICA

## Course 25 - Teacher Guide



**From Struggle to Statesmanship:  
The Remarkable Journey  
of Alexander Hamilton**

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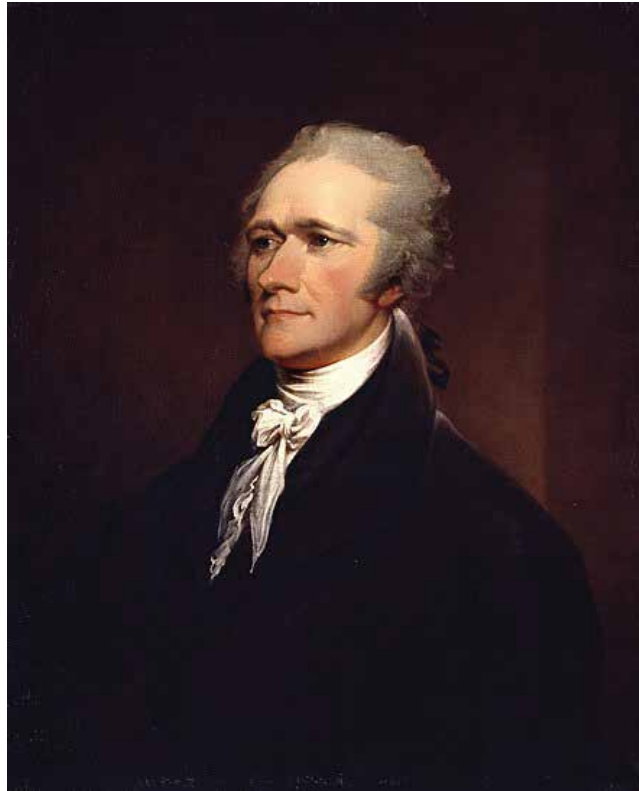
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Kindergarten

# Teacher Guide



## Key Themes

- Resilience and Perseverance
- Social Mobility and Opportunity
- Ambition and Leadership
- Impact of Education
- Legacy and Controversy

## Core Values

- Community
- Liberty

# Learning Objectives

## Students will be able to

- Identify Alexander Hamilton as a key Founding Father who played a significant role in shaping the United States.
- Define Alexander Hamilton's pivotal role in establishing the U.S. Treasury and recognize how it serves to manage the country's financial health.



# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

## Key Terms

- 01 **aide-de-camp:** a leader's top personal assistant, acting as their right-hand person. They are trusted with important tasks and ensuring messages are delivered quickly and accurately.
- 02 **clerk:** a bookkeeper who keeps track of payments, shipping details, and records important messages for ship captains and their crews.
- 03 **Department of the Treasury:** the agency responsible for promoting economic growth and ensuring the financial security of the United States.
- 04 **economy:** the way a certain place (often a country) makes things, offers services, and divides things between people, usually using money.
- 05 **Federalist Papers:** a series of 85 essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to explain why the new Constitution would be good for the United States.
- 06 **Founding Fathers:** The special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution.
- 07 **politics:** the work or study of government.
- 08 **The Articles of Confederation:** the first constitution of the United States that explained how the government should work. It set up a confederation (group of states) in 1781.

# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

## Introduction

### TELL Students

Before the activity, tell students they are going to interview a special guest. Encourage them to come up with questions they would like to ask the guest during the interview. Tell students they will interview one of our Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton. Remind students that the special people who helped America become a country and made important decisions during the American Revolution are called the **Founding Fathers**. Gather students in a designated area where "Alexander Hamilton" (played by a teacher or volunteer) is waiting to meet them. Set the scene by explaining that students have traveled back in time to meet one of America's Founding Fathers. Invite students to take turns asking "Alexander Hamilton" questions about his life, challenges, and accomplishments. Encourage them to ask open-ended questions that require more than just a yes or no answer. As "Alexander Hamilton" responds to the students' questions, encourage interactive dialogue and follow-up questions to delve deeper into specific topics of interest.

### ASK Students

Who was Alexander Hamilton? What do you know about him?

### TELL Students

That is right! Alexander Hamilton is one of our Founding Fathers. He wrote a lot of important papers called the Federalist Papers and even started the first unofficial political party in our country, called the Federalist Party. The **Federalist Papers** are a series of 85 essays written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay to explain why the new Constitution would be good for the United States.

### ASK Students

What did the Federalist Papers suggest would be good for the United States?

# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

## Introduction

### TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton also helped set up the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The Department of the Treasury is the agency responsible for promoting economic growth and ensuring the financial security of the United States.

### ASK Students

What is the U.S. Department of the Treasury?

### TELL Students

The Department of the Treasury is the money manager for the government. They do a lot of important jobs, like collecting taxes, paying bills, and making sure money is used wisely. They also keep track of how much money the government has and how much it owes. Plus, they make sure everyone follows the rules when it comes to money and taxes.



*U.S. Department of the Treasury*

### ASK Students

How do you think Alexander Hamilton used his skills to establish the U.S. Department of the Treasury?

### TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton was really good with money, organization, and leading people. He used these skills to start the U.S. Department of the Treasury. He knew a lot about the economy and made rules for how the Treasury Department should work. An **economy** is the way a certain place (often a country) makes things, offers services, and divides things between people, usually using money. Hamilton also talked to people and convinced them that the Treasury Department was important. Thanks to his hard work and ideas, the

# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

# Introduction

Treasury Department was created.

## ASK Students

Why were good communication skills so important for Alexander Hamilton?

## TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton is important because he served our country in many ways. Let's watch another episode of Star Spangled Adventures to learn more about Alexander Hamilton.

## WATCH

Star Spangled Adventures Cartoon Ep. 25: Alexander Hamilton





# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

# Lesson

## TELL Students

Alexander Hamilton grew up on the Caribbean island of Nevis, part of the West Indies. While living on a tropical island might sound pleasant, Nevis in the 1750s was far from a vacation destination. The weather was hot and unpredictable. Most people spent their days working hard outdoors, farming sugar cane to sell in Great Britain and the colonies.

## ASK Students

What was life like in Nevis for Alexander Hamilton?

## TELL Students

Adding to Hamilton's challenges, he did not have his parents around to guide him. This left Hamilton and his older brother to be raised by a cousin who tragically died a few years later. With no money, no parents, and no clear path forward, Hamilton and his brother faced difficult challenges in rebuilding their lives.

## ASK Students

What are some of the challenges faced by Alexander Hamilton?

## TELL Students

Fortunately, Alexander Hamilton knew how to read and write. He also worked very hard and started his first job at the age of 11 as a clerk. A **clerk** is a bookkeeper who keeps track of payments, shipping details, and records important messages for ship captains and their crews. This meant Hamilton got plenty of practice reading, writing, and doing math. This education turned out to be the key to him getting away from the Caribbean and starting a new life in America.

## ASK Students

What did Hamilton learn from his position as a clerk?

## TELL Students

Hamilton seized the opportunity to attend college in the United States and enrolled at King's College,

# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

## Lesson

which is now known as Columbia University, in late 1772. This was a very important time because the American colonies were thinking about becoming independent from Great Britain, and the Revolutionary War was about to start. Even though Hamilton had just left behind his tough life in the Caribbean, he did not sit back and relax. Instead, he wanted to help the colonies win their freedom. Even before he finished college, Hamilton started writing papers and pamphlets to support the colonies' fight against British rule.

### ASK Students

How did Alexander Hamilton support the colonies' fight against British rule?

### TELL Students

When the Revolutionary War began, Hamilton also did not hesitate to join the fight. He became a part of the Continental Army and led soldiers in important battles like Princeton, Trenton, and Yorktown. His bravery and leadership skills made him stand out, and soon General George Washington asked Hamilton to be his right-hand man. As Washington's aide-de-camp, Hamilton worked hard and earned a reputation as a dedicated patriot with a strong sense of right and wrong. An **aide-de-camp** serves as a leader's top personal assistant, acting as their right-hand person. They are trusted with important tasks and ensuring messages are delivered quickly and accurately.

### ASK Students

What is an aide-de-camp?

### TELL Students

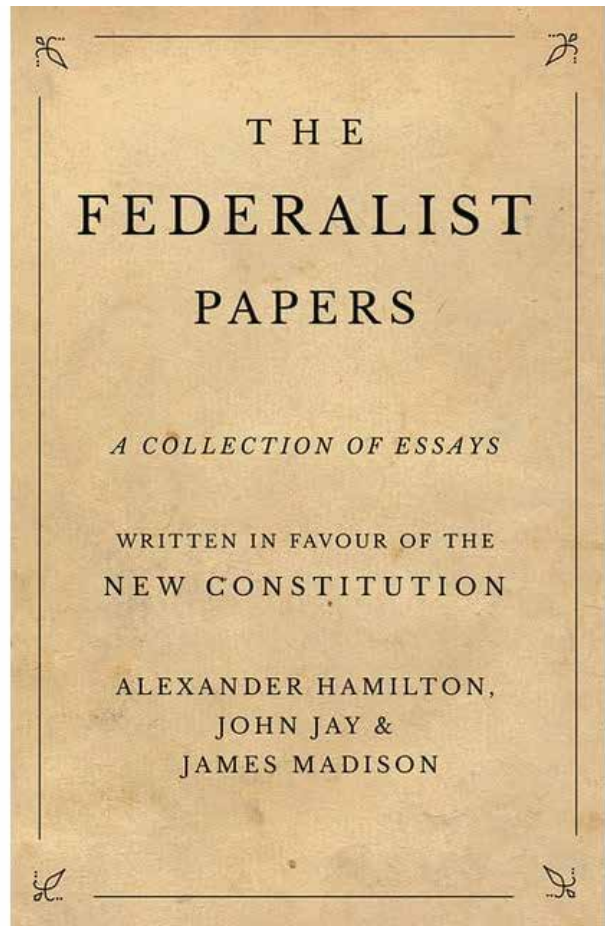
Even after the war ended, Hamilton continued to serve his country. He went back to studying and taught himself about law. Hamilton stayed involved in politics and worked with James Madison to organize the Constitutional Convention in 1787. **Politics** is the work or study of government.

### ASK Students

What do you think Hamilton did to teach himself about law? Why would this be important to him?



*Young Alexander Hamilton*



*Federalist Papers*



*Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay*

# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

# Lesson

## TELL Students

Hamilton was worried that the government set up under the Articles of Confederation was not strong enough to keep America safe and united. **The Articles of Confederation**, the first constitution of the United States, was a document that explained how the government should work. It set up a confederation (group of states) in 1781. Hamilton thought that if the states argued with each other, it could weaken the country, especially when other countries wanted America's land and resources. So, Hamilton helped plan the Annapolis Convention in 1786, where leaders decided to meet again in Philadelphia to write a new Constitution.

## ASK Students

What were the Articles of Confederation?

## TELL Students

Even though Hamilton was one of the younger members, he played a big role in writing the **Federalist Papers** with James Madison and John Jay. These papers explained why the new Constitution was important, and they helped convince people to support it. Hamilton's hard work and ideas helped shape the future of the United States of America.

## ASK Students

What contributions did Alexander Hamilton make to our country? What contributions will you make to our country?

## WATCH

Learn More With Liberty: Alexander Hamilton's Early Life and Challenges



# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

## Back in Time with Alexander Hamilton

**Objective:** To actively engage kindergarten students in a creative exploration of Alexander Hamilton's life and contributions, utilizing hands-on activities, role-playing, and crafts to foster an understanding of his historical significance in a fun and interactive manner.

### Materials Needed:

- Hats, scarves, and toy swords.
- Clothing items to mimic colonial attire.
- Paper plates or sheets of construction paper for making tricorn hats.
- Feathers, colored paper, and pencils for crafting quill pens.
- Markers, various colors of construction paper, and glue for designing colonial-style flags.

### Introduction:

- Briefly review Alexander Hamilton, emphasizing his roles as a Founding Father and a revolutionary figure.
- Explain the objectives of the activities and what the students can expect to learn and create.

### Role-Playing Activity:

- Group Formation: Divide the students into small groups.
- Scene Assignment: Assign each group a specific aspect of Hamilton's life to act out:
  - Group 1: Hamilton's childhood in the Caribbean, focusing on his early life and environment.
  - Group 2: The Revolutionary War scenes where Hamilton served as an artillery officer.
  - Group 3: Hamilton as a statesman, writing crucial documents like The Federalist Papers.
- Preparation and Rehearsal: Give students time to plan and rehearse their scenes, using props and costumes to enrich their performances.
- Performance: Each group performs their scene, allowing students to showcase their understanding and creativity.

## **Craft Session**

- Introduction of Crafts: Explain each craft activity, demonstrating how to create each item inspired by Hamilton's era.
- Station Rotation:
  - Tricorn Hats: Students use paper plates or construction paper to cut and fold into hat shapes, decorating them with markers and stickers.
  - Quill Pens: Students create a quill pen by wrapping colored paper around a feather, adding detail with markers.
  - Colonial Flags: Students design their own flags using construction paper and markers, drawing symbols or scenes related to the Revolutionary War or Hamilton's life.
- Guidance and Assistance: Circulate among the students, offering help and encouraging their artistic expressions.

## **Presentation and Wrap-Up**

- Invite students to present their crafts and briefly describe what they created and learned.
- Allow students to discuss what they enjoyed most about the role-playing and crafting activities.
- Conclude by emphasizing the importance of Alexander Hamilton in American history and encourage students to share their crafts with their families at home.

Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

# Who is Alexander Hamilton?

**Instructions:** Draw a picture of Alexander Hamilton busy at his big desk. Imagine him with a lot of papers and a quill pen, maybe even talking to a friend. Use bright colors and include details to make your picture fun and interesting!



# Alexander Hamilton - Kindergarten

# Resource List

<https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/alexander-hamilton>

<https://www.varsitytutors.com/earlyamerica/early-america-review/volume-6/alexander-hamilton-childhood>

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/alexander-hamilton>

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Hamilton/01-01-02-0042>

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/alumni/content/alexander-hamilton-cc-1778>

<https://www.alexanderhamiltonexhibition.org/about/objects/a166.html>

<https://law.marquette.edu/facultyblog/2017/03/alexander-hamilton-as-attorney/>

<https://billofrightsinstitute.org/activities/handout-e-excerpts-from-the-annapolis-convention-report>



