

# THE INDEPENDENCE TRUNK



## Characters

Dad

Grandma

Danny

Jackson

Fred

Paul Revere

## Setting

This reader's theater takes place at Grandma's home, the National Heritage Museum, and Lexington Battle Green in Lexington, MA.



Grandma



Dad



Paul Revere



Danny

## Act 1

**Dad:** Thanks for inviting Danny and me to stay with you this summer.

**Grandma:** I'm happy to have my son and grandson at my house for a while. I can always use the extra hands.

**Dad:** Maybe a change of scenery will do Danny some good. He has been arguing with me a lot lately.

**Grandma:** I think he needs to learn some responsibility. I have a lot of jobs for him to do this summer that will teach him just that. Don't worry. He'll learn.

**Danny:** Are you talking about me again?

**Grandma:** I was just telling your dad that I need a lot of help around here.

**Danny:** Because this house is so old?

**Grandma:** You're right. It is very old. In fact, this house is considered a historic landmark.



# Responsibility Lesson Plan

## Objectives

- **Fluency:** Students will practice the oral reading of a script, paying attention to changes in tone, voice, timing, and expression.
- **Content Area:** Students will research to discover the important events that led to the American Revolution and the effects of the Revolution on both the people involved and the country as a whole.

## Summary

*Independence Trunk* is the story of a boy named Paul who visits his grandmother in the summer. While trying to solve the mystery of who fired the first shots of the Revolutionary War, Paul discovers a trunk that contains artifacts from the Revolution. Searching through the trunk to solve the mystery, Paul learns to be more independent and responsible during his search for the truth about the American Revolution.



## Materials

- *Independence Trunk* script booklets
- *Responsibility Character Masks* copied on cardstock

## Introduce the Literature

Give students the following situations in which they must make decisions:

**Situation 1:** Your mother wants you to stay home on Friday night for a “Family Night In,” but your friends have asked you to go to the movies. What do you choose?

**Situation 2:** You admire your brother, but he has asked you both to go against your parents’ wishes and to lie. What do you choose to do?

Ask students to share their thoughts about the choices that they would make in the above situations. Were some choices easier than others to make? Explain that the class will read a book about a young boy who is torn between his brother and his father during the Revolutionary War. He must make several difficult choices that could affect his life and the life of his family. Read the book, *My Brother Sam Is Dead*, with the class. Ask students if the choices they make every day are easier than the decisions Sam had to make. Discuss the steps to follow when making a tough decision, such as listing the pros and cons of each choice.



## ELL Support

Read segments from *My Brother Sam is Dead* to English language learners. Instruct the students to draw pictures that depict events from the book and encourage them to share and discuss the drawings. While reading the book, discuss the events that were occurring in the colonies during this time period. Because this material will most likely be new to English language learners, providing them with background knowledge will help them with the reading of the script later in the lesson.

## Involving All Students

Allow different groups of six students to practice the script, giving all the students an opportunity to be involved and to practice fluency skills. Pick a specific day to have each of the groups perform for the class.