

Felicity

Learning Guide

Learn about loyalty, independence, and the Revolutionary War through the stories of Felicity, who is growing up in 1774.





Felicity

About the Felicity Books

Felicity Merriman is a spunky nine-year-old girl growing up in colonial Williamsburg, Virginia. Her stories take place between 1774 and 1776, just as the Revolutionary War is starting. Felicity comes from a Patriot family—a family that wants the colonies to be independent from England.

One theme stands out in all six books about Felicity: the longing for independence. The colonies and young Felicity both strive for freedom, which produces conflicts of loyalty. Many people in the English colonies in North America wanted independence from England's rule—but they felt pangs of ambivalence. Many were, after all, English. Even those who weren't originally from England thought of themselves as English subjects, and English customs pervaded life in the colonies. Felicity's yearning for her own independence conflicts with her desire to be loyal to her parents; to her Loyalist friend, Elizabeth; and to the social mores of the day. Over time, Felicity learns, as the colonists do, that independence brings the responsibility of self-governance.

The six books of Felicity's core series are:

Book 1: *Meet Felicity*

Book 2: *Felicity Learns a Lesson*

Book 3: *Felicity's Surprise*

Book 4: *Happy Birthday, Felicity!*

Book 5: *Felicity Saves the Day*

Book 6: *Changes for Felicity*

Instructions for Teachers

Assign or read aloud to your students some or all of the books in numerical order. As needed, print copies of each work sheet you would like to use in class. Before assigning the work sheets to your students, consider the talking points and discussion questions for each work sheet provided below. Note: It's not essential to read all six books in order to complete the work sheets.

Talking Points and Discussion

Independence

Just as Penny struggles against Mr. Nye's cruelty and the confines of the tether and fenced pasture, Felicity struggles for independence by rebelling against what her parents and society expect of her. Felicity's and Penny's struggles mirror the one taking place among colonists as they consider wresting their freedom from England. *Discussion questions:* Have you ever wished for more independence in your life? What were the circumstances?

Loyalty

In *Felicity Learns a Lesson*, Felicity is torn between her Patriot father, who opposes the king's tax on tea, and her friend Elizabeth, whose family members are Loyalists. This struggle represents the conflict the colonists faced. Felicity also feels that Elizabeth is disloyal when she fails to defend Felicity against Annabelle's insults. Elizabeth, too, is torn between being true to her Loyalist family and her Patriot friend. *Discussion questions:* What is loyalty? Can you give an example of loyalty in your own life?



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The Revolutionary War

By 1774, when *Meet Felicity* takes place, the population of the colonies had grown to nearly one-third of the population of England. Many roads now connected the individual colonies, and newspapers kept colonists informed about each other. The colonists were beginning to think of themselves as Americans, not as residents of separate colonies. But the colonies were required to adhere to the laws of Britain, and colonists had no voice to represent them in England. Many colonists resented the control that the British king had over their lives and their businesses. Those who believed that the colonies should be an independent, self-governing country called themselves Patriots. Those who supported the king called themselves Loyalists. *Discussion questions:* If you lived during Felicity's time, would you be a Loyalist or a Patriot? Why?

Answer Key

Independence

1. Students might mention that by escaping, Penny frees herself from Mr. Nye's abuse. She can go where she wants, when she wants. But she loses Felicity's attention as well as whatever care Mr. Nye gave her.
2. Students may argue that Mr. Nye is abusing Penny and therefore she deserves freedom, or that Penny doesn't belong to Felicity and that freeing Penny creates more problems for the horse than it solves.
3. Students may mention Felicity's desire for personal freedom; she wishes to be treated as a young woman and to be free of the rules that confine her to "sitting down kinds of things" or that require her to wear a dress. Ben desires freedom from his obligation as Mr. Merriman's apprentice so that he can run away to join George Washington's army. The Patriots are fighting for America's independence from British rule and taxes. Elizabeth desires independence from bossy Annabelle.

Loyalty

1. Students might mention that sometimes to be loyal to one person or thing, you must disappoint or be disloyal to another. Or sometimes you may face opposition or ridicule if you remain loyal while others do not.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Answers will vary.

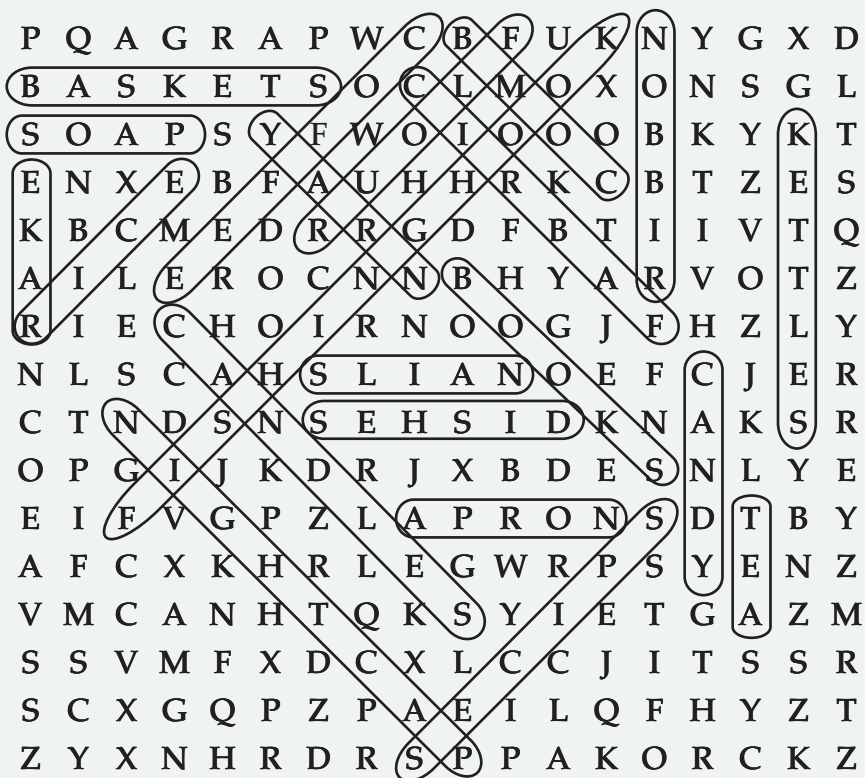


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The Revolutionary War

1. The Patriots were fighting for the colonies' independence from England. They believed they had worked hard to build their lives in America and did not want to be ruled by a king who was far away in England. They did not think it was fair to have to pay taxes to the king for things, such as tea, that they bought in stores in America. The Loyalists were fighting for the colonists to remain under the king's rule. They thought that resistance to the king was wrong and that the Patriots were ungrateful to the king. They also felt an attachment to England and wanted to preserve that relationship; after all, the colonists were English and had brought with them English traditions and customs.
2. Answers will vary.
3. Patriots: Felicity, Ben, Felicity's father
Loyalists: Annabelle, Elizabeth, Elizabeth's father, Felicity's grandfather

Word Search



Illustrations by Dan Andraesen, Luann Roberts, and Keith Skeen



Felicity

Independence

1. In *Meet Felicity*, Ben says that Felicity gave Penny what she needed most: her independence. What does Penny gain by leaving Mr. Nye's pasture? What does she give up?

2. Do you think Felicity is right or wrong to let Penny go? Give two reasons to support your opinion.

3. Penny wasn't the only one seeking independence in Felicity's stories. In what ways were the following characters seeking independence?

Felicity	
Ben	
The Patriots	
Elizabeth	



Felicity

Loyalty

1. To what or whom are you loyal? Your loyalties could include people, ideas, beliefs, or even sports teams!

2. Has there ever been a time when you found it difficult to remain loyal to someone or something? Explain.

3. In *Felicity Learns a Lesson*, Felicity's father opposes the king's tax on tea. He refuses to sell tea at his store and insists that his family not drink tea at home. But serving tea is an important part of Felicity's lessons at Miss Manderly's. Felicity feels a conflict of loyalty between her father and wanting to take part in the tea ceremony. Now imagine you are in a similar situation. Could you live without these items if it was against your principles to pay a tax on them?

Items	Yes	No
Television		
Books		
Pizza		
Playing sports		
Soap		
Ice cream		
The Internet		
Vegetables		



Felicity

The Revolutionary War

1.

What were the Patriots fighting for?	What were the Loyalists fighting for?

2. In *Felicity's Surprise*, the king of England has appointed a governor to be in charge of the colony of Virginia. How do you think the Patriots felt about the royal governor? How do you think the Loyalists felt about the governor? Explain your answers.

3. Match each person to his or her belief by putting a X below "Patriot" or "Loyalist."

Person	Patriot	Loyalist
Felicity		
Ben		
Annabelle		
Elizabeth		
Felicity's father		
Grandfather		
Elizabeth's father		



Felicity

Felicity Word Search

Felicity and Ben both helped out in her father's general store. The shelves were filled with useful items, listed in the box below. The names of those items are hidden in the puzzle. They may be shown forward, backward, diagonally, or up and down. Some of the letters are used in more than one word.



P Q A G R A P W C B F U K N Y G X D
 B A S K E T S O C L M O X O N S G L
 S O A P S Y F W O I O O O B K Y K T
 E N X E B F A U H H R K C B T Z E S
 K B C M E D R R G D F B T I I V T Q
 A I L E R O C N N B H Y A R V O T Z
 R I E C H O I R N O O G J F H Z L Y
 N L S C A H S L I A N O E F C J E R
 C T N D S N S E H S I D K N A K S R
 O P G I J K D R J X B D E S N L Y E
 E I F V G P Z L A P R O N S D T B Y
 A F C X K H R L E G W R P S Y E N Z
 V M C A N H T Q K S Y I E T G A Z M
 S S V M F X D C X L C C J I T S S R
 S C X G Q P Z P A E I L Q F H Y Z T
 Z Y X N H R D R S P P A K O R C K Z

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|---------|--------------|--------|
| apron | dishes | rake |
| baskets | fabric | ribbon |
| books | fishing hook | rice |
| candles | flour | soap |
| candy | kettles | spices |
| coffee | nails | tea |
| comb | nightcap | yarn |

