

## Chesapeake Campaign Perspectives Lesson #1 of the War of 1812 Perspectives Module

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

How did people respond to the Chesapeake Campaign, especially the Burning of Washington and threats to Baltimore? What are some of the unique stories and perspectives of people affected by the War of 1812?

### OVERVIEW

England's war strategy for 1813-1814 drifted southward from the Canadian frontier to the Chesapeake Bay region. America's largest estuary was the nation's heart of farming, commerce, ship-building and government, making it a high prize of war. In March 1814, a British squadron arrived to enforce the admiralty's blockade declaration of the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays, making use of extensive surveys conducted of those waterways by the Royal Navy during the Revolutionary War.

"Their Sea Port Towns laid in Ashes & the Country wasted will be some sort of a retaliation for their savage Conduct in Canada [at York].... [I]t is ... therefore but just, that Retaliation shall be made near to the Seat of their Government from whence those Orders emanated, you may depend upon my most cordial Support in whatever you may undertake against the Enemy." The offensive was driven by more than vengeance. The global geopolitical game had fundamentally changed. Following his disastrous 1812 Russian campaign and resounding loss at the October 1813 Battle of Leipzig, Napoleon had surrendered in Paris to the allied coalition on March 31, a capitulation so complete that the emperor was forced into exile on the isle of Elba. England found itself able to focus upon a final campaign with renewed strength to chastise the Americans into submission once and for all.

In the summer of 1814, after 18 months of British occupation and raids against port towns, the British campaign against the American mid-Atlantic was building to a climax, with Baltimore in the cross-hairs. "The Clouds of war gather Fast and Heavy in the East," wrote American Marine Captain George Stiles that July, "and all Hands are called." The cities of Washington and Baltimore were particularly targeted in 1814. The American defeat at the Battle of Bladensburg opened the way for the British to reach the American capital where they burned government buildings. A couple of weeks later, the British tried to reach Baltimore but were defeated at the Battle of North Point and at Fort McHenry, marking the end of the Chesapeake Campaign.

### OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this lesson, the students will be able to:

1. Knowledge
  - Briefly explain the Chesapeake Campaign, particularly noting the Burning of Washington and the bombardment of Fort McHenry
2. Comprehension/Application/Analysis

- Examine multiple primary sources to gain an appreciate for the American and British perspectives and experiences during the Chesapeake Campaign.
3. Evaluation
- Discuss findings from primary sources and consider how the Chesapeake Campaign affected the soldiers and civilian population.

## ACTIVITIES

1. Use the [Lesson's PowerPoint](#) to explore the context and history; the PowerPoint introduces Essential Questions and lays foundational knowledge the War of 1812 and Chesapeake Campaign.
2. Distribute or show in large size the [Chesapeake Campaign map](#) for students to examine and reference.
3. The [primary sources for this perspectives](#) lesson plan offer multiple perspectives on different events; students can be divided into groups to read and fill out the worksheet.

Campaign	<i>Alexander Cochrane's Proclamation</i>
Washington	<i>"The city was left a prey to the invaders"</i>
Washington	<i>"To the Inhabitants of Washington...A Night of Terror and Dismay"</i>
North Point	<i>"She was at the Battle of North Point"</i>
North Point	<i>"Undaunted we marched out"</i>
Fort McHenry	<i>"Undaunted we marched out"</i>
Fort McHenry	<i>"The enemy's fleet arranged...before Fort McHenry"</i>
Fort McHenry	<i>"The Star-Spangled Banner"</i>

4. Distribute the [lesson's worksheet](#).
5. Students will read a primary source and fill out the worksheet which will guide them through exploring the document.
6. Encourage a class discussion and draw group conclusions, answering the questions:
  - How did people respond to the Chesapeake Campaign, especially the Burning of Washington and threats to Baltimore?
  - What are some of the unique stories and perspectives of people affected by the War of 1812?

## STANDARDS

Please visit the [Lesson Plan Page](#) and select the “Common Core and NCSS Standards for Social Studies” to view the details.

## RESOURCES

Visit the [Lesson Plan Page](#) to find all resources in one convenient place. You'll find everything mentioned or linked in this Lesson Plan along with additional videos, articles, primary sources, and biographies.

### Quick Links

- [PowerPoint](#)
- [Primary Source Worksheet](#)
- [Chesapeake Campaign Map](#)

## OPTIONAL HOMEWORK/ASSESSMENT/ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

### ***Option 1: Biography Study***

Have the students selected a historical person connected to the Chesapeake Campaign. (There are six biography articles already prepared on the [Lesson Plan Page](#)). The students will read the biography and make notes for the following topics. Students can write a short essay, share their findings verbally, or incorporate their findings into a larger class project that might include art, costumes, or props.

#### *Key Life Events:*

Identify and describe three key events or milestones in the life of the individual. How did these events shape or influence their character, achievements, or contributions?

#### *Role in the Chesapeake Campaign*

What did this person do during the Chesapeake Campaign? Does this seem to be a significant moment in this person's life?

#### *Legacy and Impact:*

Reflect on the individual's legacy and impact on society. What are the person's major contributions or accomplishments? Do you think these accomplishments were good? How have their actions influenced the course of history or inspired others?

### ***Option 2: Star-Spangled Banner Virtual Field Trip***

Students can watch the [Star-Spangled Virtual Field Trip](#), which tours Fort McHenry and other War of 1812 related sites in and around Baltimore, Maryland. Students can then write a short essay about a place of interest that they saw in the video. For additional resources related to the Star-Spangled Banner Virtual Field Trip, including more information about featured sites, please visit [this resource hub/landing page](#).