

## Extra Credit

You and your students can read a more detailed account of Lafayette in America by visiting the Independence Hall Association website: [www.ushistory.org/valleyforge/served/lafayette.html](http://www.ushistory.org/valleyforge/served/lafayette.html).

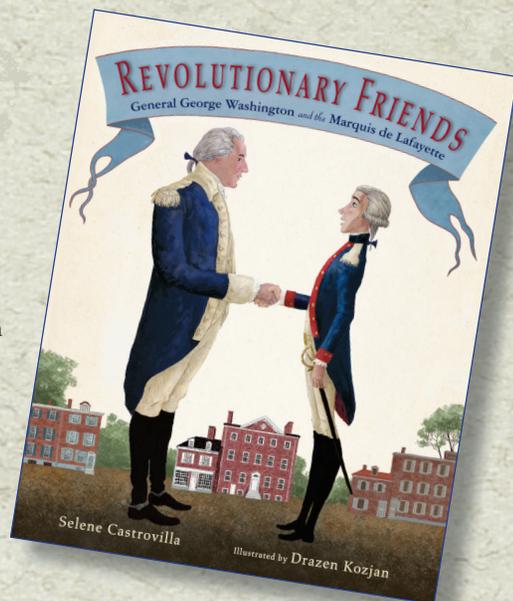
Common Core abbreviations used in this Guide:

RI – Reading: Informational Text

RL – Reading: Literature

W – Writing

SL – Speaking & Listening



### REVOLUTIONARY FRIENDS General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette

by Selene Castrovilla  
Full-color illustrations by Drazen Kozjan

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Grades 3 and up

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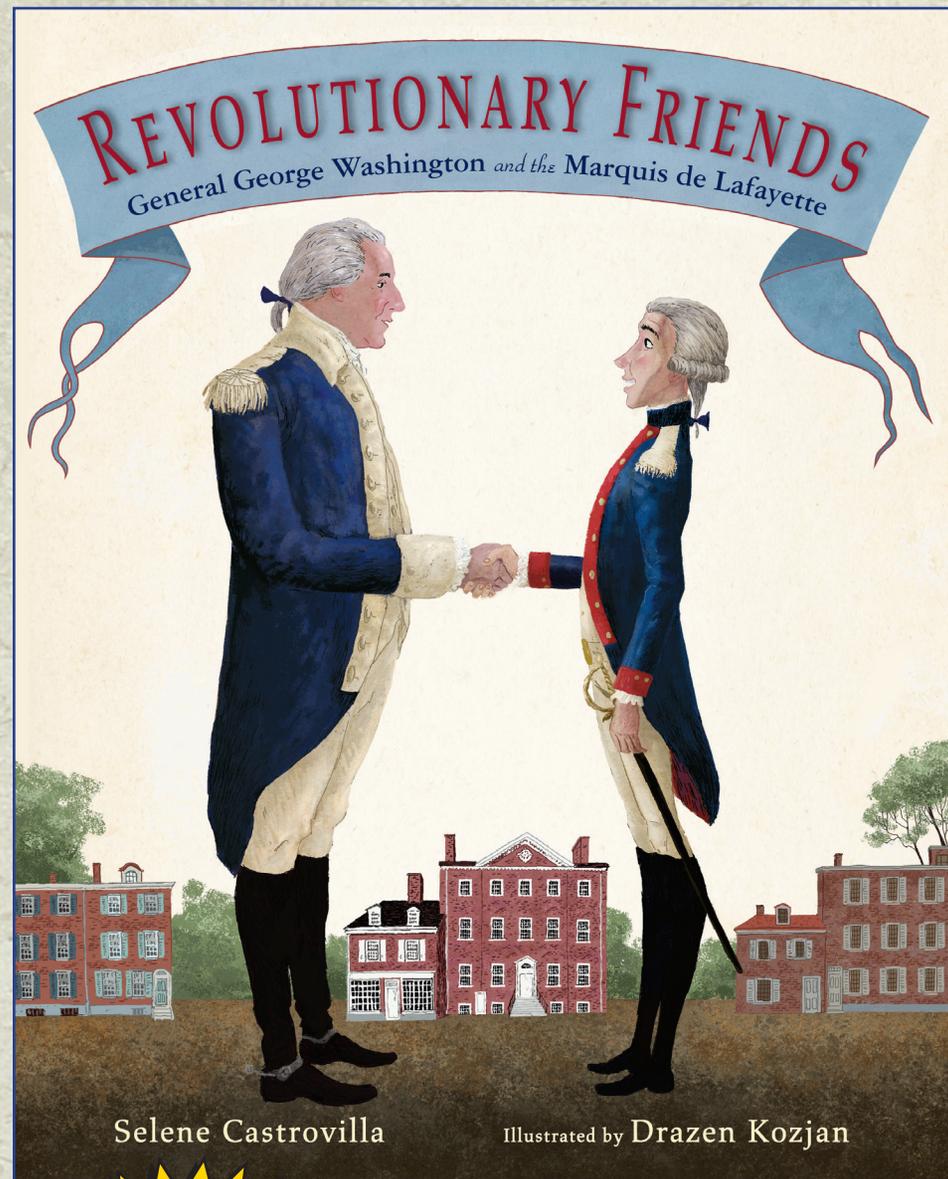
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For the complete Common Core State Standards, visit [www.corestandards.org/the-standards](http://www.corestandards.org/the-standards).

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# Educator's Guide



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**W**ith the title of her book, Selene Castrovilla announces two of the main themes of this history: first, that it is set during the American Revolution and second, that the friendship between the commander of the American forces and a French nobleman was a rare—even revolutionary—thing.

What is unique about *Revolutionary Friends* is its particular focus and the depth of detail it provides. The use of excerpts from Lafayette’s journal and letters and the sprinkling of French phrases throughout the book enable students to get to know one of our nation’s most important foreign supporters at a critical time in American history. Students also get a fresh take on George Washington. Over the course of the book, it becomes clear that the Marquis de Lafayette’s unwavering support of George Washington, combined with his passion for the ideals of freedom and liberty, played a significant role in the success of the war and the establishment of the new nation.

*Revolutionary Friends* opens up many topics for discussion and for further research and exploration. The questions and activities suggested in this guide provide opportunities for educators to link the book with a variety of curriculum studies, including history, geography, language arts (writing, speaking, interviewing, and performance), reading, and social studies. The book also ties to the Common Core State Standards. You’ll find connections to the Common Core noted with each project.

## Quick Questions

- ★ When Lafayette first arrived in America, members of the Continental Congress were wary of him. Why? [RI 5.3]
- ★ What made them change their minds? [RI 5.3]
- ★ While most Americans were displeased with the conduct of many Frenchman, why was it so important for them to cultivate a relationship with Lafayette? [RI 5.3]
- ★ How did Lafayette try to change the way Americans looked at the French? [RI 5.3]
- ★ How did Lafayette distinguish himself at the Battle of Brandywine despite the fact that the Americans lost the battle? [RI 5.1]
- ★ When the war effort was not going well in 1777, how did Lafayette react to the news that General Gates might replace Washington as the Commander in Chief of the Continental Army? [RI 5.1]
- ★ Lafayette considered himself a French patriot. How did that bode for him during the French Revolution? [RI 5.1]
- ★ What are some examples that show Lafayette’s courage? [RL 5.1]
- ★ Lafayette told Washington that he came to America “to learn, and not to teach” (sidebar, page 14). What did he mean by that? What effect did that statement have on Washington and other Americans? [RI 5.3]
- ★ When Washington brings Lafayette to review his troops, we see a flag with a snake drawn on it, along with the words “Don’t Tread on Me.” Have your students find out more about that flag. What is its meaning, and how did it come to be? [RI 5.7]

## Discussions and Activities

### RI 5.4, 5.8

Excerpts from Lafayette’s journal and letters appear throughout *Revolutionary Friends*. The first entry reads, “*Having to choose between slavery that everyone believes he has the right to impose upon me, and liberty, which called me to glory, I departed.*” Discuss the meaning of this statement. What is the “slavery” that Lafayette speaks of? Who is the “he” that Lafayette refers to?

## Language Arts—writing

### W 5.7

Upon meeting George Washington, Lafayette wrote a letter to his wife, telling her, “*I have a friend. . . . That friend is General Washington.*” Students can read the full versions of some of these letters at [web.ulib.csuohio.edu/lafayette/documents/doc1.shtml](http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/lafayette/documents/doc1.shtml).

Lafayette also corresponded with other noted Americans, including Martha Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Patrick Henry. Your students can read these letters online at [web.ulib.csuohio.edu/lafayette/documents.shtml](http://web.ulib.csuohio.edu/lafayette/documents.shtml).

Why is it that the letters are so long and detailed?

### SL 5.1

Discuss with the class how long it must have taken for Lafayette's letter to reach his wife, and then for him to receive a letter in return. Could your students wait that long for a response? Why? Why not? Today there are many ways we communicate with each other that are instantaneous and brief. List with the class the different forms of communication available to them. Did any of them actually include letters that they mail?

### RI 5.2

After reading some of Lafayette's letters, have your students translate one of one of them into an e-mail, a Facebook post, and a tweet. Then ask them to decide if these modern forms communicate the same meaning and if they provide the same kind of emotional context. Ask about the benefits and drawbacks of each form of communication.

### W 5.3

Now revisit the "lost art of letter writing" with your class. Divide students into letter-writing pairs. Have them write from the perspective of Revolutionary War-era correspondents: for example, a citizen corresponding with his or her representative at the Continental Congress or a soldier in the Continental Army at Valley Forge writing to a loved one at home.

### W 5.10

Since the co-responders are separated by time and distance, the letters should be thoughtful and detailed without an expectation of an immediate response. Students can use the letters that Lafayette and his wife sent to each other as models. (They should note that Lafayette's letter to his wife dated June 1777, composed en route to America, was nine pages long and written over a period of several days.) Set up a mailbox in the classroom where students can post their letters. Then, every week or two, deliver the letters.

## Narrative Writing

### W 5.3

*Revolutionary Friends* is told primarily through the eyes of the Marquis de Lafayette. We see his relationship

with George Washington from Lafayette's perspective. We know how he felt about George Washington and how he perceived Washington's feelings about him, but do we really know what Washington thought about him? Have your students rewrite the opening scene of *Revolutionary Friends*—the first encounter between Lafayette and Washington at City Tavern—from Washington's perspective. Their re-imaginings should include Washington's impressions and thoughts about Lafayette as the young Frenchman stood by, watching Washington and his colleagues discuss the Revolution. Just as Lafayette's narrative includes many colloquial French phrases, your students should include American phrases in their rewrites.

## Feast

### RI 5.7

*"Lafayette quivered with excitement. What a thrill to dine at City Tavern. . . . Was he dreaming? Mais non. Dreams did not offer the succulent aromas of fine dining."*

City Tavern continues to be one of Philadelphia's best-known restaurants. Students can find City Tavern's website listed on the "Places to Visit" resource page at the back of the book. As they examine the menu, they will notice that some items harken back to when Lafayette first visited the tavern. If possible, with the help of parents or a local restaurant, your class can hold a Revolutionary lunchtime feast with eighteenth-century dishes from the City Tavern menu. (Of course, adaptations are welcome, as long as the spirit is there.) If an actual feast is impossible, each student should at least select the meal she or he would order.

## Oral History

### SL 5.1, 5.3, 5.4

*"Burning to prove himself, [Lafayette] nagged Washington. . . . [Washington] apologized for the distress the young man felt. Although he had no power to grant a command, Washington did have affection to offer. He told Lafayette to think of him as 'friend and father.'"*

Many students have older people in their lives—family members, neighbors, and friends. These relationships can help to guide a young person in many aspects of growing up and in setting and reaching goals. Each student should interview an older person to gain perspective and wisdom. Their interview questions can be personal or broader or a mix.



Brainstorm with the class to come up with basic questions. These suggestions can help you get started.

- ★ The weather has been in the news a lot recently, thanks to superstorms, hurricanes, droughts, and tornadoes. What kinds of things do you remember from the news when you were young?
- ★ It's so easy for us to stay in touch these days as a result of cell phones, e-mail, and social networks. When you were a kid, how did you keep up with your friends?
- ★ A lot of my hobbies involve technology, such as video games, computers, and MP3 players. How was it different when you were younger? What kinds of things did you like to do?
- ★ My parents treat me like a little kid. How can I get them to realize I'm capable of making some decisions for myself?

After their interviews, each student should present a short report to the class on what she or he learned from the interview.

## Social Studies—geography; history

RI 5.7, 5.9

In August of 1824, Lafayette returned to America as “The Nation’s Guest” and visited all twenty-four states.

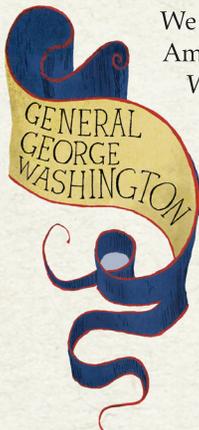
Have your students research Lafayette’s tour. They should plot the cities and towns he visited on a map of the United States. See if they can find articles in newspapers or letters that chronicled his visit. Here are some websites that may be useful:

- ★ [www.schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/lafayette.html](http://www.schillerinstitute.org/educ/hist/lafayette.html)
- ★ [rnc.library.cornell.edu/lafayette/exhibition/english/tour/index.html](http://rnc.library.cornell.edu/lafayette/exhibition/english/tour/index.html)
- ★ [www.bookrags.com/research/lafayettes-tour-aaw-01/](http://www.bookrags.com/research/lafayettes-tour-aaw-01/)
- ★ [www.bergencountyhistory.org/Pages/lafayette.html](http://www.bergencountyhistory.org/Pages/lafayette.html)
- ★ [www.ncmarkers.com/Markers.aspx?sp=map&sv=I-12](http://www.ncmarkers.com/Markers.aspx?sp=map&sv=I-12)
- ★ [www.pbs.org/programs/lafayette](http://www.pbs.org/programs/lafayette)

We learn from the book’s afterword that, as part of his tour of America, Lafayette visited Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington. He toured the grounds and visited Washington’s tomb. Your students can take a virtual tour of Mount Vernon by going to [www.mountvernon.org](http://www.mountvernon.org).

After visiting Mount Vernon, have students explore the mansion where Lafayette grew up in Le Puy-en-Velay, France. Visit [www.chateau-lafayette.com](http://www.chateau-lafayette.com).

After their virtual visits to the homes of Washington and Lafayette, your students should compare the men’s lifestyles. What was different and what was the same?



## Language Arts—speech

W 5.1; SL 5.1, 5.4

Have students imagine that the local library committee is thinking about naming a new library the Washington-Lafayette Memorial Library in honor of George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, heroes of the American Revolution. The library committee has also announced a competition to select the person who will give the dedication speech. Your students must meet the challenge. Each student should write and present a three-minute speech that extols the virtues of Washington and Lafayette and explains how they worked together to reach a common goal. Have the class vote on which speech did the best job of advocating the new name of the library.

## Social Studies—geography; history

W 5.7

The notes at the end of the book tell us that dozens of U.S. cities, towns, counties, streets, and institutions are named in honor of the Marquis de Lafayette. The same is true of George Washington. (Some states even have cities named for both.) How many places can your students find that bear their names? When was each place founded? They should mark each place on a wall map of the United States. For example, Washington, Massachusetts, is located in western Massachusetts just east of Pittsfield, and Fayetteville, North Carolina, is just off I-95 about 65 miles south of Raleigh. There is even a Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. When students are finished, they will have a great idea of how these two men continue to be a part of the life of our country.

## Language Arts—performance, writing

RI 5.6; W 5.3; SL 5.1, 5.5

An early news/entertainment television program dating back to the 1950s—*You Are There*—took viewers back in history to view events as they were happening. Actors portraying historical figures were interrupted by an interviewer and were asked questions, giving a greater sense of immediacy to the action.

You and your students can take a step back in time to some of the events in *Revolutionary Friends*, creating your own *You Are There* program. Divide your class into teams that will work on various scenes. There are several that will work well for this project: for example, Lafayette’s visit to City Tavern in Philadelphia and Washington at Lafayette’s bedside after the Battle of Brandywine. In writing the script, your students will need to create their own dialog based on the events. Be sure each team assigns roles for the key characters *and* the reporter who will interrupt the action. There should be scenery and costumes for the actors, and the scenes should be videotaped so that they can be shared with other classes in your school.

