The Black Regiment of the American Revolution
by Linda Crotta Brennan, illustrated by Cheryl Kirk Noll

In 1778 Rhode Island offered slaves freedom in exchange for fighting in the Continental Army. The "Black Regiment" became one of the finest military units fighting for independence in the Revolutionary War.

Classroom Activities:

READ the description of the men who were part of the Black Regiment on page 5. What was the same about them? What was different?

DISCUSS the reasons why the French didn't help the Americans during the Battle of Rhode Island. Do you think they could have helped? What might have happened if the French had fought in the Battle of Rhode Island?

IDENTIFY why it was important for the Black Regiment to hold their line against the Hessians in the Battle of Rhode Island. What might have happened if the Hessians had beaten them?

THINK ABOUT the weapons people used during the Revolutionary War. WRITE about how the weapons affected the way they fought battles.

SEARCH for all the names of the men in the Black Regiment mentioned in the book. Pick one of those men. DRAW a picture of what he might have looked like. WRITE about him, using the facts in the book and your imagination.

Imagine that you were a member of the Black Regiment. WRITE about something that happened to you during the Revolutionary War.

RESEARCH other Black heroes from the Revolutionary War. FIND OUT what those men did for their country.

LIST the places where the Black Regiment was stationed during the Revolutionary War. (Tiverton, RI; Newport, RI; Croton-on-the-Hudson, NY; Yorktown, VA; Saratoga, NY.) FIND all those places on a map of the first 13 states.

LIST some of the problems the men of the Black Regiment faced after the war was over. What are some of the problems minorities face now? How are they the same? How are they different?

Do you THINK the men of the Black Regiment changed the way people thought about slavery? How and why?

Why do you THINK Rhode Island decided to abolish slavery gradually? Do you think that was the right way to do it? Why or why not?