

# Women in the 18th Century

## Activity Suggestions

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S  
MOUNT ★ VERNON



THE MOUNT VERNON LADIES' ASSOCIATION

### Women at Mount Vernon

- Choose a room from the **Mount Vernon virtual tour**. Examine the objects in that room. How would women like **Caroline**, **Nelly**, or **Eleanor** have interacted with the objects? Are there objects that all three of the women would have used? Why would these women interact with these objects?
- Find an object in the **Mount Vernon collections**. Think about that object - who might have used it, and where might it belong in the house?

*The Mount Vernon Virtual Tour is an excellent way to explore the stories of the women who lived, worked, and interacted with the Mount Vernon plantation.*



### The Importance of Women

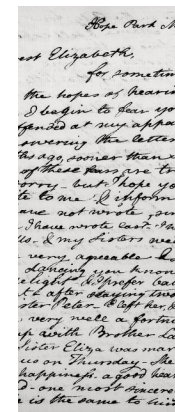
- Women in the 18th century were identified by their gender. Think of ideas, words, and adjectives that describe how you identify yourself see this **identity thinking routine** for ideas).
  - Then, choose **three objects from the mansion** that show those identities. Consider: why would this describe you? What do you want people to remember about you?
- Choose three famous, historic women that are influential to you. Write: why are these women important to you, and how did they change history? What lessons can we learn from the women you chose?
- Read **Elizabeth Wiling Powel's letter to George Washington** convincing him to run for a second term. Determine the answers to these questions in a class discussion:
  - What was Powel's relationship to Washington?
  - Based on this letter, do you think Powel was influential to Washington? Why or why not?
  - How were women politically active in the 18th century?



SILHOUETTES



OBJECTS



LETTERS

### Making Connections

- Fill in a **blank silhouette** with images of artifacts, words, thoughts, and other ways to describe a woman like **Martha**, **Eleanor**, or **Charlotte**. Make sure you consider aspects of identity such as race, gender, and social class.
- Choose a **picture of a single object**, like a scraping tool used by indigenous people or a teacup used by individuals who were enslaved. Build a story about how that item would have been used in daily life.
- Read **Nelly's letter to her friend, Elizabeth**. List things you learn about Nelly in the letter. Then, create a list of ten things people would learn about you by looking at your texts or writings.