



An Ale Glass:

Following Trade throughout the Atlantic World

Students will learn...

- The flow of trade throughout the Atlantic World in the 18th century.
- To expand their view from one object to a larger world context.

You will need...

- Pictures of Washington's Ale Glasses- [1](#) and [2](#)
- Optional: [Transatlantic Trade Map Handout](#)
- Optional: An Ale Glass Presentation
- A place to record ideas- interactive whiteboard, big poster paper, etc.

Opener: Widening our Perspectives

- Show one, or perhaps a few, of George Washington's ale glasses and ask your students what they notice about it- expensive materials, excellent craftsmanship, it's small and delicate, a luxury item, etc.
- Ask them how Washington would have gotten this glass? How much would it cost? Where did he get the money for it?
- Provide some context for them:

Visitors to Mount Vernon routinely commented on the abundance of food and drinks offered at dinner. All this food and drink was served with care. These ale glasses are examples of the glasses Washington would have bought from London in the 1760s and 1770s, so before or around the start of the Revolutionary War. He was a tobacco farmer at this point, shipping his tobacco to England. He then used the merchant house called Robert Cary and Company to sell his tobacco and buy English goods to be sent back to America.

Task: Following Trade

- Explain that trading tobacco for a glass is just one part of the transaction.
- As a class or in groups make a mind map of all the transactions could have taken place surrounding the ale glass.
- For example, think about:
 - How was the tobacco grown? Who would have been farming it and making it ready for transport?
 - What drinks did Washington serve that would have been drunk inside the glass? Where did he get that?

Closer: What Comes Next?

- Conclude by discussing some of the later problems Americans would have with the Transatlantic trading system:
 - The [1777 Excise Act](#), which doubled the tax rate on importation on English glass. How would that affect Washington?
 - High taxes and shipping costs that caused [Washington to stop making tobacco and diversify his crops](#).
 - How would the war with Britain have affected trade routes and especially after France joined?
- *Optional:* For homework, have your students take an object they own and try to map out all the transactions that took place to get that object to them.