Women in the 18th Century
Activity Suggestions

Women at Mount Vernon

- Listen to the story of Caroline and Nelly, and read about Eleanor. Write down details about their lives, and how the three women might have interacted with one another while at Mount Vernon.

- Look at a room from the Mount Vernon Virtual Tour. List: what objects do you notice, and how might Caroline, Eleanor, or Nelly interact with those objects? Are there objects that all three of them would have used? Discover more information with our Collections Page.

Why Women Matter

- Women in the 18th century 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 of your own that show those identities. Consider: why would this describe you? What do you want people to remember about you?

- Choose three women in your life that are important to you. Draw a picture of these women. Write: why are these women important to you, and how do they meet your needs?

- Read out loud Elizabeth Wiling Powel’s letter to George Washington convincing him to run for a second term. In a class discussion, ask:

  - What was Powel’s relationship to Washington?
  - How did women participate in politics in the 18th century?

- Write a persuasive letter, like Powel’s, convincing your teacher to change something about your classroom or school.

Studying Women’s History

- Fill in a blank silhouette with images of artifacts, words, thoughts, and other ways to describe a woman who lived in the 18th century (like Caroline, Eleanor, or Martha).

- Show 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 six-year-old George Washington Parke Custis’s thank-you letter to Elizabeth Powel. Then, write a thank-you to an important woman in your life.