Women in the 18th Century

Activity Suggestions

**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?

- Create a chart comparing Nelly's roles and education to other colonial gentry women in the Washington family (Martha Washington, Martha "Patsy" Parke Custis, and Mary Ball Washington).

**Making a Difference**

- 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. Like Powel, write to a politician about an important issue that you are passionate about. When writing, consider:
  - Your own perspective and biases
  - Your relationship to this politician
  - Word choice - be sure to use persuasive language!
  - Format - how are you conveying this information?

**Studying Women's History**

- Fill in a blank silhouette with images of artifacts, words, and other ways to describe a woman who lived at Mount Vernon. Make sure you consider intersectionality 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.

- Using the Database of the Enslaved Population, research a woman listed and construct a biography using the evidence found.