

A Spy in the King's Colony, written by Lisa Banim, is set in Boston in 1775. The air is thick with intrigue, and eleven-year-old Emily Parker is caught up in a web of loyalty and deception on the eve of the American Revolution. Surrounded by occupying British soldiers, Emily is worried about all the rebellious talk. Who is a patriot? And who is a loyalist? When Emily becomes suspicious of her older sister's beau, she finds herself in the middle of a revolutionary spy game. Emily's curiosity and keen observations often lead her into trouble. However, in uncovering the mystery, she protects the people she loves and defends the cause to which they are devoted.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Before reading *A Spy in the King's Colony*, discuss with the class what they already know about spies. Look up the word in the dictionary and discuss the definition. Show the cover of the book and discuss both the title and the picture.

Possible questions:

- What kind of story does the title suggest?
- What kind of story does the cover art suggest?
- What king is being referred to in the title?
- What did it mean to be a colony of the king?
- Are spies still in the news?
- What is the difference between a spy and a traitor?
- What are some of the characteristics or traits that a spy would need to be effective and successful?
- What would be the hardest part of being a spy?

These questions may be answered in a **KWL** chart form:

Know **Would like to know** **Learned**

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

Literature • Social Studies • Art • Writing

1. After reading the story, discuss historical fiction as a type of literature, a mixture of fact and fiction. Many of the characters actually existed and the events really occurred. Discuss how the reader can distinguish between what is fact and what is fiction. Discuss how they can check historical facts using reference materials (encyclopedias, almanacs, dictionaries, atlases, historical documents, journals or diaries, letters, etc.—perhaps a visit to the library and a research lesson would be appropriate).

2. Some ideas for students to research:

- What was 1775 America like? What had been the history of the colonies up to that point?
- Who were: General Percy? General Washington? King George III? Colonel Knox?
- What happened during the battles of Lexington and Concord? Breeds and Bunker Hill?
- Who were the Whigs and who were the Tories? How did they get their names? Who were the Patriots and who were the Loyalists?
- Where is Framingham? Where is Fort Ticonderoga? Locate them on the map).
- What did the British soldiers wear during the American Revolution? What did the American soldiers wear?

3. Have students imagine that this story is a play. The students may choose a scene from the play and then act it out for their classmates (group activity).

4. Have the students create a guide book describing the many important events during the American Revolution. Then they can become tour guides and take their classmates on a historical trip.

TEACHERS GUIDE

A Spy in the King's Colony

by Lisa Banim

5. Have students create either a newspaper or a documentary around the Revolutionary War.

6. Have the students create a diary, journal or scrapbook that Emily, a soldier, or a spy might have written at the time and then share them with classmates.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING ACTIVITY

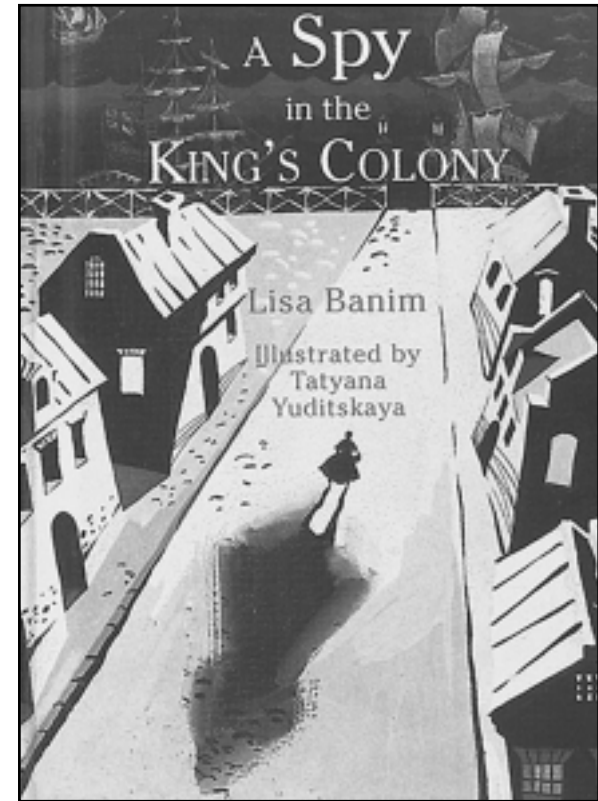
The Next Chapter

Have students break into small groups and create the next chapter—twenty years later, what were the characters doing?

Ideas to keep in mind:

- Where did the story end?
- What happened in the story during the twenty years after 1775?
- How old were the characters, and what did they want from life?

The students' work can take the form of a sequel, a play, or the next chapter in the book. The finished pieces should be shared with the class and displayed in the classroom.



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