

Lesson 4: Continental Congress

☐ Getting Started

In this lesson, you'll read about the challenges facing John and Abigail Adams while John served in the Continental Congress. You'll also learn about verb mood and work with vocabulary terms from the reading.

Stuff You Need

- *Abigail Adams: Witness to a Revolution* by Natalie S. Bober
- *Handy Guide to Writing* by Beyond the Page
- dictionary

Ideas to Think About

- How can the use of different verbs and verb forms influence the power and clarity of one's writing?

Things to Know

- Verb moods typically express attitude (such as a question or command).
- The **indicative mood** is used for statements, the **interrogative mood** for questions, and the **imperative mood** for commands.
- The **conditional mood** is used to describe situations that might be true under a certain set of conditions.
- The **subjunctive mood** is used to describe hypothetical situations.

☐ Reading and Questions

Read Chapters 7 and 8 of *Abigail Adams: Witness to a Revolution* by Natalie S. Bober. Then answer the following questions.

1. Why do you think John Adams wanted Abigail to save their correspondence?

2. What challenges did Abigail Adams face while John was away at the Continental Congress?

3. What role did faith play in the way Abigail Adams handled the challenges of war?

4. In what ways did Abigail Adams support the patriot war effort?

Activities

☐ Activity 1: Verb Mood

Verbs have tenses (like present tense, past tense, future tense, etc.) that describe when action occurs, and they have voices (active or passive) that indicate whether the subject is acting or being acted upon. Verbs also have moods, which typically indicate an attitude (such as a statement, question, or command). There are five moods — indicative, interrogative, imperative, conditional, and subjunctive. The first three are straightforward, but the other two are a little tricky. Be sure to review the explanation for those carefully.

Here are the three most common verb moods:

- **Indicative** is used for a statement or, as the name suggests, to indicate something. (This type of sentence is sometimes called declarative.) Most sentences are in the indicative mood. Example: *Many cultures tell stories about people who can transform into animals.*
- **Interrogative** is used to ask questions. When we interrogate someone, we ask them questions. For example: *Do you believe in werewolves?*
- **Imperative** is used to state orders or commands. It is always written in the second person, directed at "you." (The "you" is implied but typically not stated in the sentence.) For example: *Load the gun with silver bullets before the werewolves arrive.*

Another mood is called the **conditional mood**. It contains a subordinate clause and a main clause; the subordinate clause creates a condition that explains or is a requirement of the information in the main clause. It often follows an "if...then" pattern (if this occurs, then that will occur). NOTE: In the following examples, the main clause is underlined. There are three main types of subordinate clause/main clause situations in the conditional mood:

- **Speculating on whether something will occur:** These sentences usually feature *would*, *could*, or *might* as helping verbs in the main clause. For example -- *If the team practices more, they might score more goals.* This can also be worded as *The team might score more goals if they practiced more.* In both cases, the main clause is "they [or the team] might score more goals." That will only happen if the condition in the subordinate clause is fulfilled: "if they [or the team] practice more."
- **Describing a relationship between cause and effect:** The subordinate clause states a cause, and the main clause provides the effect. For example -- *When it rains, the roof leaks.* Again, the subordinate clause ("when it rains") places a condition on the main clause. Rain is the condition that causes the roof to leak.
- **Making a prediction:** The present-tense subordinate clause predicts what will happen in the future (in the main clause). For example -- *After my computer is fixed, I will finish my essay.* The subordinate clause ("after my computer is fixed") is a condition that must be met before "I will finish my essay."

Finally, the **subjunctive mood** is used to either 1) express a want or need or 2) describe a situation that is imaginary or hypothetical:

1. **Want or need:** *The judge requires that court spectators **be** silent.* The underlined phrase could be "asks," "suggests," "demands," or a similar word. The main clause introduces the want or need. The subordinate clause (beginning with "that") will then require a special verb change. (More on that in a minute.)
2. **Imaginary or hypothetical situation:** *If I were a superhero, I would be able to fly.* Although this example looks similar to some you saw in the conditional mood, the key here is that the subordinate clause (whether it comes at the beginning or end of the sentence) is a condition that is hypothetical or imaginary, meaning one that is not actually true. In this use of the subjunctive, the special verb change takes place in the subjunctive clause.

The special verb change mentioned in the examples is unique to the subjunctive mood. The "be" in the first sentence and the "were" in the second sentence are not the usual verb forms (you would expect "spectators are" and "I am" or "I was," which are the normal tenses). Here's how the verb changes work:

- For expressions of need or want that begin with phrases such as "she requires that," "he demands that," or "I request that," the verb that follow is in the plain or regular form (that is, the one that you would pair with "to" -- *be, have, sit, bring, etc.*) Examples: *She asks that we be quiet. The coach demanded that he do 50 push-ups.*
- For hypothetical or imaginary situations, the "if" clause is in the past tense, with "were" used for all cases involving the verb "to be." Examples: *If we had money (but we really don't), we might buy a car. If I were taller (but I'm actually not), I would play basketball.*

Subjunctive and conditional mood sentences can look similar. How do you tell them apart? Look at these sentences:

- 1) If I practice every day, I might improve my singing.
- 2) If I were a famous singer, I'd sign autographs all day.

The difference? Sentence 1 describes a situation that could actually happen (it's very likely that if I practice, I will improve), so it is in the conditional mood. Sentence 2 describes a situation that could not happen — the sentence describes an imaginary or hypothetical condition, not a real one (I'm not actually a famous singer), so it is in the subjunctive mood.

The subjunctive can be confusing, but just remember the patterns to look for:

subject + *require, suggest, ask, etc.* + "that"
(verb that follows is in the plain form)

OR

"if" clause that contains a false or hypothetical situation
(verb in "if" clause is in past tense,
with "were" used for both singular and plural uses of "be")

Ask your parent which option you should complete for this activity. After your activity page has been checked (and corrected as needed), be sure to save the page. Its examples may be helpful when you study for the test at the end of this unit.

NOTE: If you are confused at all about the subjunctive mood, you may want to check out one or both of the videos whose links are included below. Each presentation is only 2-3 minutes long.

**Subjunctive Mood by Knewton**www.beyondthepage.com/link/2065/**Subjunctive Mood**www.beyondthepage.com/link/2066/**Option 1**

Complete the "Verb Mood" (Option 1) page. NOTE: For more information about verb mood, see p. 16 in the *Handy Guide to Writing*.

Option 2

Complete the "Verb Mood" (Option 2) page. NOTE: For more information about verb mood, see p. 16 in the *Handy Guide to Writing*.

☐ **Activity 2: Vocabulary Review**

In this activity, you will review vocabulary terms from the first half of *Abigail Adams: Witness to a Revolution* and, based on your familiarity with each, either think of a sentence using the word or look up the word in the dictionary and then write a sentence using it. Complete the "Vocabulary Review" page.

Wrapping Up

As John Adams spent more and more time away from home, Abigail Adams adapted to the new situation, often taking over roles that John usually filled. You'll learn more about how she managed the household and about the progress of the Revolution in the next lesson.

Verb Mood

Part 1

Instructions: Identify the moods of each of the following sentences. Choose from **indicative, interrogative, imperative, conditional, and subjunctive**. If a sentence is in conditional or subjunctive mood, underline the word(s) that help you identify the mood.

1. How many letters did John and Abigail exchange in their lifetime?

Mood: _____

2. Abigail's friend said, "If she were a man, she would be a great leader."

Mood: _____

3. John Adams had an important role in the Continental Congress.

Mood: _____

4. Unless the colonists revolted, they would continue to be treated unjustly.

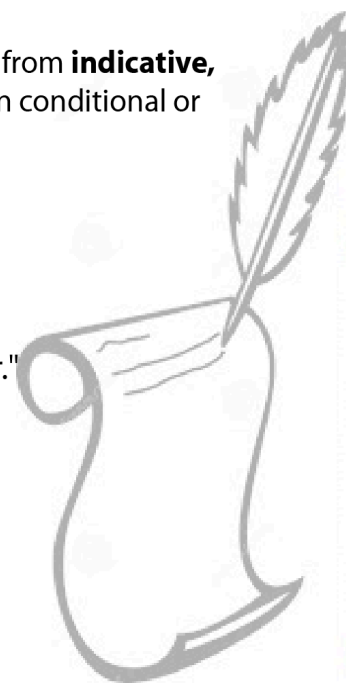
Mood: _____

5. Don't forget to consult the "Family Trees" pages as you read the book.

Mood: _____

6. The leaders requested that John serve as a delegate.

Mood: _____



Part 2

Instructions: If any verbs are used incorrectly in the following paragraph, cross out the verb and write the correct form above it. (HINT: Not all verb errors will be related to mood.)

During this period, Abigail demanded that the children continued their studies as usual, and she looked after the farm and law practice. John did not contribute financially to the family, so Abigail is careful with money. If John was home, he could have taken care of the matters of the house. In his absence, Abigail made these decisions.

Verb Mood

Part 1

Instructions: Identify the moods of each of the following sentences from today's reading. Choose from **indicative, interrogative, imperative, conditional, and subjunctive**. If a sentence is in conditional or subjunctive mood, underline the word(s) that help you identify the mood.

1. "For God's Sake make your Children hardy, active and industrious..." (p. 51)

Mood: _____

2. "They were struggling to preserve the freedom the colonies already had." (p. 54)

Mood: _____

3. "Is it not better to die the last of British freemen than live the first of British slaves?" (p. 54)

Mood: _____

4. "When you return we can then consult what will be best." (p. 51)

Mood: _____

5. "He went on to suggest to his friend that they recommend to their respective wives..." (p. 48)

Mood: _____

The following sentence is in subjunctive mood. Based on what you've learned today, can you explain why? "God Almighty grant us Wisdom and Virtue sufficient for the high Trust that is devolved upon Us." (p. 51)

Part 2

Instructions: If any verbs are used incorrectly in the following paragraph, cross out the verb and write the correct form above it.

During this period, Abigail demanded that the children continued their studies as usual, and she looked after the farm and law practice. John did not contribute financially to the family, so Abigail is careful with money. If John was home, he could have taken care of the matters of the house. In his absence, Abigail made these decisions.

Vocabulary Review

Instructions:

Without looking back to earlier lessons, look over the list of vocabulary terms below. Write C for CONFIDENT next to a word if you are now confident that you know what the word means and could use it in a sentence easily. Write M for MAYBE if you think you know what the word means but you aren't 100% sure or might have trouble using it in a sentence. Write a ? next to any word that you are still unfamiliar with.

Then complete these activities:

- For "C" words, think of two different sentences that would use that word. Write down your favorite.
- For "M" words, look up the word in Lesson 1 to remind yourself of the definition. Then write a sentence that uses the word.
- For "?" words, look up the word in the dictionary, write down its definition in your own words and write a sentence that uses the word.

confidences

lucrative

wistfully

foreboding

affliction

fortitude

entail

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Getting Started

✿ Ideas to Think About

- How can the use of different verbs and verb forms influence the power and clarity of one's writing?



Things to Know

- Verb moods typically express attitude (such as a question or command).
- The **indicative mood** is used for statements, the **interrogative mood** for questions, and the **imperative mood** for commands.
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⦿ Skills

- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on grade 8 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. (LA)
- Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general, academic, and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (LA)
- Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects (e.g., emphasizing the actor or the action; expressing uncertainty or describing a state contrary to fact). (LA)

Parent Introduction

In this lesson, your child will read about the challenges facing John and Abigail Adams while John served in the Continental Congress. She will also have the chance to learn about verb mood and work with vocabulary terms from the reading.

Reading and Questions

1. Why do you think John Adams wanted Abigail to save their correspondence?

Answers will vary, but your child may mention that they recognized the importance of the historical moment in which they lived and John Adams's potential role in it and wanted to preserve the letters for future generations.

2. What challenges did Abigail Adams face while John was away at the Continental Congress?

She needed to manage the household and financial affairs, take care of the children, see to their education, attend to the farm, manage John's law practice, and make other decisions for the family in John's absence.

3. What role did faith play in the way Abigail Adams handled the challenges of war?

She turned to her faith during times of stress and anxiety, quoting the Bible in a letter to John discussing the death of Joseph Warren.

4. In what ways did Abigail Adams support the patriot war effort?

Answers may vary, but your child might mention housing militia men, melting down the family's pewter to make bullets, and other actions.

Activities**Activity 1: Verb Mood**

In this activity, your child will explore the various moods of the English language. Some students find the subjunctive mood to be challenging. Links to short videos are provided in case your child needs additional explanations. There are two options for this activity; Option 2 is more advanced. Advise your child which option to complete.

NOTE: Depending on the source you consult, you may find that English has between 3 and 5 official moods. For example, sometimes the interrogative is referred to as a sentence type rather than a mood. The designation isn't that important in this case; students just need to understand that the interrogative asks a question. Five moods are covered in this unit to line up with those mentioned in the Common Core Standards.

Option 1Answer Key, Option 1

Part 1

1. interrogative
2. subjunctive: word that identifies — "If she were a man..."
3. indicative
4. conditional: words that identify: "Unless the colonists revolted, they would continue..."
5. imperative
6. subjunctive: word that identifies — "The leaders requested that John serve as a delegate."

Part 2

Sentence 1: "continued" should be "continue"

Sentence 2: "is" should be "was"

Sentence 3: "was" could be either "had been" or "were"

Option 2Answer Key, Option 2

Part 1

1. imperative
2. indicative
3. interrogative
4. conditional: words that identify — "When you return, we can then consult..."
5. subjunctive: words that identify — "...suggest to his friend that they recommend..."

This is a challenging question, so if your child struggles with the answer, just share this answer with her. As you saw with the imperative mood, in some cases part of a sentence is implied ("Walk the dog." instead of "You walk the dog."). The implied beginning to this sentence is something like "[We ask that] God Almighty grant us..." The sentence with the implied beginning follows this pattern: subject + *require, suggest, ask, etc.* + "that" (verb that follows is in the plain form), so it is subjunctive. It is an old form of the subjunctive that is rarely used today.

Part 2

Sentence 1: "continued" should be "continue"

Sentence 2: "is" should be "was"

Sentence 3: "was" should be "had been" or "were"

Activity 2: Vocabulary Review

In this activity, your child will evaluate vocabulary words from *Abigail Adams: Witness to a Revolution* and determine her familiarity with each. She will then think of a sentence for words she already knows well, look up the definition and write a sentence for words that she may be familiar with but does not yet know well, and write down a definition and sentence for any completely unfamiliar words.

If your child will need to write sentences or definitions and sentences for more than five words, you may decide to break up the activity and have her complete work on a few words per day until she has finished the activity.

Wrapping Up

Questions to Discuss

- What are the indicative, interrogative, and imperative moods used for? (Indicative is a statement, interrogative is a question, and imperative is a command.)
- Give an example of a sentence in the conditional mood. (Look at Activity 1 for examples of conditional mood sentences.)
- What is unique about the subjunctive mood? (Your child may mention that it is used for hypothetical or contrary-to-fact situations or that it requires a change in verb form.)

Things to Review

- Review your child's activity page about verb moods.
- Review your child's vocabulary activity page.