Viewing Guide for *THE PATRIOT*

**Directions:** Today during class and Pride Time you will be watching the movie *The Patriot* to prepare to learn about the Revolutionary War. While watching the movie and as homework this weekend, you need to complete this viewing guide. This will count as a major classwork/homework grade. Answer all questions with complete sentences.

**Storyline of the Movie:** It is 1776 in colonial South Carolina. Benjamin Martin, a French-Indian war hero who is haunted by his past, now wants nothing more than to live peacefully on his small plantation, and wants no part of a war with the most powerful nation in the world, Great Britain. Meanwhile, his two eldest sons, Gabriel and Thomas, can't wait to enlist in the newly formed "Continental Army." When South Carolina decides to join the rebellion against England, Gabriel immediately signs up to fight...without his father's permission. But when Colonel William Tavington, British dragoon, infamous for his brutal tactics, comes and burns the Martin Plantation to the ground, tragedy strikes. Benjamin quickly finds himself torn between protecting his family, and seeking revenge along with being a part of the birth of new, young, and ambitious nation.

1. Where is the children’s mother?

2. What is the setting of the film (time and place)?

3. Who are the Continentals?

4. What is the mood of the people in Charles Towne at the beginning of the film?

5. What does Colonel Harry Burwell mean when he says that “If you value independence you must vote for war. It has come to that. There is no other way.”? Was there anything the colonists had done to try and avoid this war?
6. What is the significance of Colonel Harry Burwell's statement: “This is not a war for the independence of one or two colonies, but for the independence of one nation.”?

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7. Who is the “tyrant 3000 miles away”?

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8. What do you think of Benjamin Martin’s declaration: “I will not fight. And because I will not fight, I will not cast a vote that will send others to fight in my stead.” Is this a cowardly or an honorable decision? **Explain** your thoughts.

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9. How old is Thomas?

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10. When does his dad say he can enlist to fight?

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11. What is Thomas’ objection to this?

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12. What does “aim small, miss small” mean?

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13. What is the term for an American colonist who supported the British side in the Revolutionary War?
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14. Why does Colonel Tavington distrust the colonial captain?
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15. Why does Benjamin say, “That Gates is a damned fool. He’s spent too many years in the British army. Going muzzle to muzzle with Redcoats in open field – it’s madness. This battle was over before it began”?
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16. What is Martin’s task as a colonel in the Continental militia? What is he supposed to do and why?
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17. How does Benjamin Martin prove to his French companion that the tavern was “the right place” to recruit militia men?
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18. What does Benjamin do with Thomas’ toy soldiers?
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19. What is the difference between the American militia and the British army?
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20. What was Fort Wilderness, and what happened there? Who were the enemies that Benjamin Martin and his men were fighting then?

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21. According to the film, why did the Americans place the militia at the center of the line in the last battle?

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