“Founding Fathers” is a term used to describe the influential men who helped the United States gain its independence and establish itself during its infancy. The less commonly known term “Founding Mothers” describes those women who were an important part of the early history of the United States. Who were these women? What role did these women play? This argument is designed to get students to think about the role women played in the founding of our country. Students will become familiar with some potentially lesser known, but no less important, historical figures. It is not meant to minimize any known contributions, but instead to bring to light more contributions that played into the founding of the United States. Evaluating who was the most significant will help students learn about these people. Adapt the list to include Founding Mothers that align with your curriculum. The following individuals are included for this activity:

**Founding Mothers**

Martha Washington  
Abigail Adams  
Phillis Wheatley  
Mercy Otis Warren

**Helpful Tip:** This type of argument could be done with similarly grouped people in history. Try creating your own by replacing Founding Mothers with a different group!
Station Preparation Checklists

Teacher Preparation Checklist

☐ Do students have a sufficient amount of background knowledge of the Revolutionary War era? Do they need to develop a deeper understanding of this historical era before beginning the activity?

☐ How will you help students get the proper background knowledge for this Persuasion Station argument?

☐ Do students have text information and/or articles that summarize these conflicts? Do they need access to the internet for research?

☐ Have you filled in the Requirement Template for Teachers?

☐ How will students be assigned for this activity?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arguments</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martha Washington</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail Adams</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillis Wheatley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy Otis Warren</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who Was the Most Significant Founding Mother?

Checklist for the “Martha Washington” Side to Consider
- What are the requirements for your arguments?
- How will you visually and orally present your arguments?
- How much time do you have to present your arguments? How will you present your arguments?
- Who was Martha Washington?
- What contributions did Martha Washington make to the founding of the United States?
- How did Martha Washington help George Washington?

Checklist for the “Abigail Adams” Side to Consider
- What are the requirements for your arguments?
- How will you visually and orally present your arguments?
- How much time do you have to present your arguments? How will you present your arguments?
- Who was Abigail Adams?
- What contributions did Abigail Adams make to the founding of the United States?
- What influence did Abigail Adams have on her husband, John Adams? What did she write?

Checklist for the “Phillis Wheatley” Side to Consider
- What are the requirements for your arguments?
- How will you visually and orally present your arguments?
- How much time do you have to present your arguments? How will you present your arguments?
- Who was Phillis Wheatley?
- What contributions did Phillis Wheatley make to the founding of the United States?
- What did Phillis Wheatley write?

Checklist for the “Mercy Otis Warren” Side to Consider
- What are the requirements for your arguments?
- How will you visually and orally present your arguments?
- How much time do you have to present your arguments? How will you present your arguments?
- Who was Mercy Otis Warren?
- What contributions did Mercy Otis Warren make to the founding of the United States?
- What did Mercy Otis Warren write?
Pre-Questions for the Judges

1. What factors determine how significant a person is in history?

2. What was the difference in men’s and women’s roles in the late 18th century?

3. Who was Martha Washington?

4. Who was Abigail Adams?

5. Who was Phillis Wheatley?

6. Who was Mercy Otis Warren?
Questions Judges Could Ask at the Stations

Judges have the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters at each Persuasion Station the second time that they visit. Below are questions that could be used for this. Encourage judges to think of their own questions before providing them with the suggestions below.

Questions You Could Ask the “Martha Washington” Side
1. What are the most important factors in determining a person’s significance in history?
2. Is Martha Washington only significant because of her connection to George Washington?

Questions You Could Ask the “Abigail Adams” Side
1. What are the most important factors in determining a person’s significance in history?
2. How much influence did Abigail Adams have on the Declaration of Independence?

Questions You Could Ask the “Phillis Wheatley” Side
1. What are the most important factors in determining a person’s significance in history?
2. What do Phillis Wheatley’s poems say?

Questions You Could Ask the “Mercy Otis Warren” Side
1. What are the most important factors in determining a person’s significance in history?
2. What did Mercy Otis Warren write?
Debriefing Questions

1. What factors determine how important a person is in history?

2. What Founding Mother got the most votes from the judges? Why did this side receive the most votes?

3. Create a list of Founding Fathers and a list of Founding Mothers side by side. Add more names to the Founding Mothers list besides the names that are provided with this activity.

4. Why do you think we know more about the Founding Fathers than we do about the Founding Mothers?

5. Create a graphic organizer of your choice that shows the accomplishments of each of these four women that were compared in this activity.