

## **ABIGAIL ADAMS Reading Comprehension**

Abigail Adams was born on November 22, 1744. Adams was both the wife and mother of two American presidents. She married John Adams, the second president of the United States, on October 25, 1764. John and Abigail Adams had six children together. One of their sons, John Quincy Adams, would later become the sixth president of the United States.

Abigail Adams is most remembered for the letters that she wrote back and forth to her husband while he was working with the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. John Adams would frequently write to her and ask for her advice on both social and political issues of the time. The letters of Abigail Adams to her husband, John Adams, are now part of the American Revolutionary War period of history because they serve as a firsthand eyewitness account of political life during this time.

Abigail Adams is also known as the first First Lady to live in the White House, which became the official residence of the presidential family after the nation's capital was relocated to Washington, D.C. in 1800. The First Lady enjoyed life at the newly built White House mansion, even though it was still under construction when the First Family moved in.

When Thomas Jefferson defeated Adams in the presidential election of 1800, Abigail and her family moved back to Quincy, Massachusetts. After leaving the White House, Abigail Adams continued to write letters to famous Americans of the time like Thomas Jefferson. She also followed John Quincy's political career with great interest. Abigail Adams died from typhoid fever at the age of 73 on October 28, 1818. Both John and Abigail are buried together in a family crypt in Quincy, Massachusetts.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1.) **Abigail Adams was not...**

- a.) a first lady.
- b.) the mother of a president.
- c.) a member of Congress.
- d.) the first woman to live in the White House.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2.) **What happened first in the passage?**

- a.) 1818
- b.) John Adams became president.
- c.) The Adams family returned to Quincy, Massachusetts.
- d.) Abigail Adams moved into the White House in Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3.) **Which question can be answered in the third paragraph?**

- a.) When was Abigail Adams married to John Adams?
- b.) Which son later became America's sixth president?
- c.) Who was the first First Lady to live in the White House when the capital was relocated to Washington, D.C.?
- d.) When did Abigail Adams die?

\_\_\_\_\_ 4.) **Which of the following is not true?**

- a.) Abigail Adams wrote letters to her husband while he was in Philadelphia, PA.
- b.) Abigail's son became the second president of the United States.
- c.) Abigail Adams was the wife of an American president.
- d.) Abigail wrote letters to Thomas Jefferson.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5.) **What does the word "crypt" mean in the last paragraph?**

- a.) house
- b.) earth
- c.) tomb
- d.) water

\_\_\_\_\_ 6.) **Abigail Adams is famous for being a First Lady and \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a.) for becoming a president herself
- b.) for the letters that she wrote back and forth to an American president
- c.) for living during the Revolutionary War
- d.) for having six children

\_\_\_\_\_ 7.) **What is implied by the following sentence:**

Abigail Adams is also known as the first First Lady to live in the White House, which became the official residence of the presidential family after the nation's capital was relocated to Washington D.C. in 1800.

- a.) The nation's capital was always located in Washington, D.C.
- b.) Abigail Adams was the last First Lady to live in the White House.
- c.) Abigail Adams was the second First Lady to live in the White House.
- d.) The nation's capital was in a different location before it was in Washington, D.C.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8.) **Who won the presidential election of 1800?**

- a.) Abigail Adams
- b.) John Adams
- c.) John Quincy Adams
- d.) Thomas Jefferson

\_\_\_\_\_ 9.) **Which question is NOT answered in the passage?**

- a.) How did John Adams die?
- b.) How did Abigail Adams die?
- c.) What did Abigail Adams do after she left the White House?
- d.) Why are the letters between Abigail and John Adams important?

\_\_\_\_\_ 10.) **Why were the letters of Abigail Adams so important?**

- a.) They describe why John Adams should have won the election of 1800.
- b.) They describe the politics of the American Revolution era.
- c.) They describe the Adams family.
- d.) They describe how John Quincy Adams will eventually become president.

## **Great Ironies of American History: July 4, 1826**

July 4, 1826, was a day full of celebrations, parades, and enthusiastic speeches. After all, it was America's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday! Fifty years before, on July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was published and read. Thomas Jefferson was the document's primary author and John Adams was part of the famed Committee of Five, which advised Jefferson.

Adams and Jefferson played prominently in American history. Adams was America's second president and Jefferson was its third. The two had a complicated relationship. While they both helped shape the new nation, their political beliefs diverged. Adams believed that the United States would thrive with a strong central government and Jefferson believed that power belonged with the states. Jefferson believed in the French Revolution and Adams did not. Over time, the relationship between the two founding fathers soured further, resulting in both parties engaging in attempts to smear the other in public before the election of 1800. When Jefferson won the election, Adams returned to Massachusetts to live in virtual seclusion with Abigail, his wife. Following Jefferson's presidency, he retired to his estate named Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia.

In 1809, the famous doctor Benjamin Rush urged both Jefferson and Adams to rekindle their friendship. Adams made the first overture and wrote Jefferson a letter on January 1, 1812. Over the next 14 years, the pair wrote 158 letters to each other. The letters discussed their different political views, theories on government, history, the state of the nation, and even the growing threat of slavery to the future of the new nation.

On July 3, 1826, just a day before the 50<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson fell into a coma after suffering from a long, intestinal illness. He died on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile John Adams, who was nearing his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday, collapsed in his reading chair on July 4<sup>th</sup>. He lapsed in and out of consciousness for the next few hours before succumbing. His last words were said to be "Jefferson lives." Little did he know that he had outlived Jefferson by several hours. Both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on the same exact day – July 4, 1826. It just so happened that the day marked America's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday.

- 1. Which of the following best describes why the event was so ironic?**
- A. Because John Adams was the 2<sup>nd</sup> president and Thomas Jefferson was the 3<sup>rd</sup>
  - B. Because both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on the same day – which happened to be the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a document they both helped write
  - C. Because Thomas Jefferson were friends, then became enemies, then became friends again at the end of their lives
  - D. Because John Adams thought that Thomas Jefferson outlived him, when in fact, he outlived Jefferson

- 2. How did the political views of Jefferson and Adams diverge?**
- A. Because Adams believed in a strong central government and that the French Revolution was a positive event
  - B. Because Jefferson believed in a strong central government and that the French Revolution was a positive event
  - C. Because Adams believed in a strong central government and Jefferson believed power should remain with the the states
  - D. Because Adams believed in the French Revolution and Jefferson did not believe in the French Revolution

- 3. What does “seclusion” mean as used in the following sentence?**

When Jefferson won the election, Adams returned to Massachusetts to live in virtual seclusion with Abigail, his wife.

- A. With relatives
- B. Alone
- C. Silence
- D. Hiding

- 4. Which of the following is NOT true?**
- A. Thomas Jefferson lived in Virginia
  - B. John Adams lived in Massachusetts
  - C. Thomas Jefferson was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence
  - D. The relationship between Jefferson and Adams soured after Adams won the presidency in 1800

- 5. What is revealed in the third paragraph?**
- A. Adams’s attitudes on slavery
  - B. Discussion topics within the letters between the former presidents
  - C. The date in which the last letter was sent
  - D. Jefferson’s attitudes on the current state of government

**6. What happened first?**

- A. Jefferson lapsed into a coma
- B. Adams uttered “Jefferson Lives”
- C. America celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday
- D. The first day of July, 1826

**7. Which of the following sentences best explains why the relationship between Jefferson and Adams likely became estranged?**

- A. When Jefferson won the election, Adams returned to Massachusetts to live in virtual seclusion with Abigail, his wife.
- B. Adams made the first overture and wrote Jefferson a letter on January 1, 1812.
- C. Over time, the relationship between the two founding fathers soured further, resulting in both parties engaging in attempts to smear the other in public before the election of 1800.
- D. Following Jefferson’s presidency, he retired to his estate called Monticello in Charlottesville, Virginia.

### **The Birth of a Patriot**

John Adams was born in 1735 to Henry and Susanna Boylston Adams. Adams graduated from Harvard University in 1755 and became an attorney in 1758. From an early age, Adams developed intense feelings for political causes. He wrote powerful speeches against the Stamp Act of 1765 but also defended British soldiers charged with murder after the Boston Massacre. In 1764, he married Abigail Smith. Together they would have five children, including future president John Quincy Adams. Their marriage would provide a source of comfort for John during his years away from her negotiating in Europe.

### **Political Life and Presidential Years**

In 1771, Adams was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives, and later, to the Continental Congress in 1774. Adams carried great influence among the members of Congress and strongly favored separation from England. Adams also assisted in the drafting of the Declaration of Independence and the Massachusetts Constitution. He quickly became a vocal leader in the quest for independence and gained a reputation for being incorruptible, stubborn, and fiery. After spending several years negotiating business treaties with European powers at the conclusion of the Revolutionary War, Adams was elected as the second president of the United States (he lost to George Washington previously and served two terms as his vice president). His presidency, however, was marred by the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts, controversy within his Federalist Party regarding foreign policy, and a general feeling that Federalists relied more on the ideas of Alexander Hamilton than his. Adams was defeated by Thomas Jefferson in 1800 in his bid for a second term in the presidency.

### **Later Life and Relationship with Thomas Jefferson**

After completing his term as president, Adams became depressed and moved back to his home, called Peacefield, near Quincy, Massachusetts. He completely dropped out of politics. In 1812, however, he began corresponding with Thomas Jefferson, and the two former presidents sent letters to each other for fourteen years about politics, government, and philosophy. In 1825, his son, John Quincy Adams, was elected as America's sixth president. On July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, John Adams died at his home. Ironically, his friend and fellow Founding Father Thomas Jefferson died the same day, only hours before him.

### **Legacy as a Founding Father**

Today, John Adams is remembered as one of the Founding Fathers. For much of history, however, he was overshadowed by the likes of Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and Benjamin Franklin (whom Adams detested). Recently, however, Adams has been brought back into significance with the famous David McCullough novel called John Adams, which was turned into a popular seven-part film.

**1. Which of the following reveals that John Adams was more concerned with justice than politics?**

- A. He wrote powerful speeches against the Stamp Act
- B. He defended British soldiers charged with murder in the Boston Massacre
- C. He was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives
- D. He helped draft the Declaration of Independence

**2. John Adams is often called “incorruptible”. Which is the following illustrates someone who is “incorruptible?”**

- A. Someone who signs the Declaration of Independence
- B. Someone who gives away government secrets
- C. Someone who fought against the British
- D. Someone who refuses to do something against the law, even if it helps him or her

**3. In contrast to his political life during the Revolution, the John Adams presidency was...**

- A. very successful.
- B. somewhat successful.
- C. unsuccessful.
- D. uneventful.

**4. What happened in the life of John Adams between 1801 and 1812?**

- A. John Adams was president
- B. John Adams was out of politics
- C. John Quincy Adams became president
- D. Thomas Jefferson and John Adams sent letters to each other

**5. What does “corresponding” mean in the following sentence?**

In 1812, however, he began corresponding with Thomas Jefferson, and the two former presidents sent letters to each other for fourteen years about politics, government, and philosophy.

- A. building
- B. protesting
- C. visiting
- D. communicating

**6. What was ironic about the day John Adams died?**

- A. It was also the day Thomas Jefferson died
- B. It was the day that John Quincy Adams became president
- C. It was the day Thomas Jefferson died and the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence
- D. Thomas Jefferson died just hours after him.

**7. Which of the following best describes John Adams?**

- A. He has always been regarded as one of America's great founding fathers
- B. Because he had major disagreements with other founding fathers such as Benjamin Franklin, he was long considered a villain in American history
- C. Because of the novel written by David McCullough, John Adams is no longer considered a founding father
- D. Because of the novel written by David McCullough, John Adams is once again considered one of America's great founding fathers



## **AMERICAN REVOLUTION Reading Comprehension**

The first battle of the American Revolution occurred at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1775. The American colonists were angry about numerous taxes issued by the British king. In 1776, the colonists issued the Declaration of Independence, a document written by Thomas Jefferson that outlined America's intention to become a new country separate from England. England wanted to maintain control of America and vowed to fight the colonists. The war lasted eight long years. The Americans won many important battles such as those at Saratoga and Yorktown. Many American heroes emerged such as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin. Finally, in 1781, the British surrendered at Yorktown, Virginia, and a new nation was born two years later.

**1.) The first battle of the American Revolution occurred at \_\_\_\_\_, Massachusetts.**

**2.) Why did the war happen?**

- a.) Colonists were angry about their bad living conditions.
- b.) England attacked the colonists.
- c.) Colonists were angry about having to pay so many taxes.
- d.) Colonists wanted to have more land.

**3.) Which of the following was not true about the Declaration of Independence?**

- a.) It said that the colonists wanted their own country.
- b.) It said that England wanted a separate country.
- c.) It said the colonists wanted to be separate from England.
- d.) It was written by Thomas Jefferson.

**4.) The Revolutionary War lasted \_\_\_\_\_ years.**

**5.) Which of the following was NOT an important battle won by the colonists?**

- a.) Yorktown
- b.) Saratoga
- c.) Washington

**6.) Which of the following was not an American hero who emerged from the war?**

- a.) Thomas Jefferson
- b.) George Washington
- c.) Benjamin Franklin
- d.) Abraham Lincoln

**7.) What happened first?**

- a.) The Declaration of Independence
- b.) The Revolutionary War
- c.) 1783
- d.) Many taxes were issued against the colonists.

**8.) What happened last?**

- a.) The Battle of Lexington
- b.) The Declaration of Independence
- c.) Many taxes were issued against the colonists.
- d.) The Americans won important battles at Saratoga and Yorktown.

**9.) Which of the following is NOT true?**

- a.) The British surrendered at Saratoga in 1783.
- b.) The British vowed to fight the colonists.
- c.) Colonists won important battles at Yorktown and Saratoga.
- d.) In 1783, a new nation was born.

**10.) Which of the following is NOT true?**

- a.) The British were defeated in the war against the colonists.
- b.) The first battle of the American Revolution occurred before the Declaration of Independence was written.
- c.) The first battle occurred at Lexington in 1776.
- d.) The Declaration of Independence was written before 1783.

## **Benedict Arnold Reading Comprehension**

Benedict Arnold was born on January 14, 1741, in Norwich, Connecticut. He was one of five children, though only he and his sister survived to adulthood. While his family was fairly wealthy when he was a child, bad business decisions by his father plunged the family deep into debt. His father became an alcoholic, and Benedict was forced to drop out of school. At age 15, he ran away and joined the Connecticut Militia where he helped fight against the French in the Seven Years' War. After the war, Benedict's mother and father died within two years of each other.

After the deaths of his parents, Benedict moved to New Haven and helped restore the family's good name. He became a successful and enterprising pharmacist and soon made enough money to partner with a friend to buy three trading ships. Benedict and his partner established a profitable West Indies trade, and he often traveled throughout the Western Hemisphere conducting his business. In 1767, Benedict married Margaret Mansfield. The couple had three sons together, but Margaret died in 1775.

In 1775, Connecticut was stirring with the idea of revolution. Benedict Arnold was chosen Captain of the Governor's 2nd Company of Connecticut Guards. The guards joined the revolution after the Battles of Lexington and Concord and marched to Massachusetts. On the way, Benedict formulated a plan to seize Fort Ticonderoga (in New York) and its cannons for the fledgling Continental Army. He convinced the Massachusetts Committee of Safety to fund the expedition and was named colonel in the Massachusetts Militia. On May 10, 1775, Benedict, along with Ethan Allen, led a successful raid and occupation of Fort Ticonderoga. They also seized Fort George and Crown Point. The raids yielded much ammunition for the Continental Army. At least 100 cannons were transported all the way back to Boston for the purposes of defending the city. Nevertheless, while Arnold was in command of the forts, the Continental Congress sent Benjamin Hinman to take command from him. Benedict started to feel unappreciated.

After an unsuccessful raid on the city of Quebec, Benedict was promoted to Brigadier General, though he was passed over for other promotions (which fueled his resentment). Nevertheless, he played a pivotal role in preventing the escape of British General John Burgoyne and his soldiers in the 1777 Battle of Saratoga. The battle, which historians agree was the turning point of the war, helped convince French forces to team up with the Patriots to defeat the British. Benedict, however, was deprived of credit for his part in the battle because of personal disputes with Major General Horatio Gates.

By 1780, Benedict was very bitter toward the Continental Congress. Appointed as the commander of the fort at West Point, New York, he offered to hand it over to British forces for a large sum of money. Arnold's plan, however, was discovered, and he quickly swore allegiance to the British. He commanded British forces in several small-scale battles, but they would soon back out of the war, much to his contempt. By 1783, America was free and Benedict could never go back. Ironically, Benedict Arnold was also passed over for several promotions in the British Army because he was not trusted. In the years after the war, he made many unwise business decisions in England and in Canada. He died in 1801, virtually penniless. He is said to have prayed to God for forgiveness for betraying the Patriot cause in the moments before his death. He is even said to have requested to be buried in the uniform of a Continental soldier. He is buried in England.

Today, Benedict Arnold is the most famous traitor in American history. Despite his brilliance as an American general, he will be forever remembered as the man who gave the British the fort at West Point.

**1.) Based on the first paragraph, how would you describe Benedict Arnold's childhood?**

- a.) Easy
- b.) Creative
- c.) Fun
- d.) Difficult

**2.) Before Benedict fought in the Revolutionary War, he was a(n)...**

- a.) Pharmacist
- b.) Lawyer
- c.) Doctor
- d.) Student

**3.) Benedict Arnold did not...**

- a.) Formulate a plan to raid Fort Ticonderoga
- b.) Convince the Massachusetts Committee of Safety to fund the raid of Fort Ticonderoga
- c.) Become Captain of the Governor's 2nd Company of Massachusetts Guards
- d.) Marry Margaret Mansfield in 1767

**4.) Why did Benedict Arnold feel disrespected after Fort Ticonderoga?**

- a.) He was given poor soldiers.
- b.) His command was taken away.
- c.) He had to share credit with Ethan Allen.
- d.) He was not elected to the Continental Congress.

**5.) What does the word "pivotal" mean in the following line:**

Nevertheless, he played a **pivotal** role in preventing the escape of British General John Burgoyne and his soldiers in the 1777 Battle of Saratoga.

- a.) Minor
- b.) Challenging
- c.) Important
- d.) Difficult

**6.) Which of the following did Benedict Arnold not participate in?**

- a.) The seizure of Fort Ticonderoga
- b.) The Battle of Saratoga
- c.) A raid on Quebec
- d.) The Continental Congress

**7.) How did Benedict Arnold get along with Horatio Gates?**

- a.) They seemed to get along.
- b.) The passage doesn't say.
- c.) We can infer he got along poorly with Gates.
- d.) We can infer he got along well with Gates.

**8.) How did Benedict Arnold betray his country?**

- a.) He was angry at the Continental Congress.
- b.) He offered an important fort to the enemy.
- c.) He fought for credit with other American generals.
- d.) None of the above.

**9.) Which of the following best summarizes how Benedict Arnold will be remembered?**

- a.) A great American general who led the Patriots to victory at Saratoga.
- b.) A bitter American general who never thought he got enough credit.
- c.) A man who became a great success after a troubled childhood.
- d.) A traitor whose accomplishments don't matter after he offered West Point to the British.

**10.) Which is NOT true?**

- a.) Benedict Arnold made better business decisions at the end of his life than at the beginning.
- b.) Benedict Arnold did help the Patriot cause in some regard.
- c.) Benedict Arnold could never return to America.
- d.) Benedict Arnold is not considered a hero in America or England.

**Crispus Attucks**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Crispus Attucks was thought to be the first person of African-American descent to be killed in the American Revolution. He died on March 5, 1770, during the Boston Massacre.

Crispus Attucks was born sometime in 1723 in or near Framingham, Massachusetts. His cultural heritage is the subject of much debate. Some historians believe Attucks was of African and Native American descent. Although his mother was a slave, it is not clear whether Attucks was considered a free black man, or, was a runaway slave himself. Although details of his life are largely unknown, Attucks spent many years as a sailor and working the docks of various colonial ports. Historians who claim he was a runaway slave believe he used the name "Michael Johnson" to elude capture.

Following the 1768 issuance of the Townshend Act, and the subsequent unrest in Boston, British soldiers patrolled Boston's streets, leading to resentment and bitterness among the citizens. On the night of March 5, 1770, tensions finally boiled over when a British soldier assaulted a Boston man who was harassing him. Tensions quickly escalated as a mob of Bostonians gathered with ice chunks, bottles, and other objects. Several British soldiers were cornered. When someone within the mob hurled a club at a soldier, gunshots rang out. When the mob finally dispersed, five Bostonians were left dead including Crispus Attucks, who was thought to be the first killed.

While Attucks and the other dead were hailed as heroes in Boston, future president John Adams thought otherwise. Adams blamed Attucks for trying to be the "hero of the night" and by helping to fan the flames of the riot with his "mad behavior." Adams defended the British soldiers in the ensuing trial and most were acquitted of wrongdoing, having acted in self-defense. Attucks was buried with the four others who died during the Boston Massacre in the Granary Burying Ground, where many other Boston heroes such as Samuel Adams and John Hancock are buried.

Long after his death, Crispus Attucks remains a hero and symbol of freedom. Schools, parks, roads, and theaters across America bear his name.

**1. What is DEFINITELY known about Crispus Attucks?**

- A. He was a runaway slave
- B. He was of African and Native descent
- C. His exact birthdate
- D. His mother was a slave

**2. Why may have Crispus Attucks used a different name?**

- A. Because he was of Native descent
- B. Because he may have been eluding capture
- C. Because he was trying to fit into Boston society
- D. Because details of his life are largely unknown

**3. Which of the following best describes the Boston Massacre?**

- A. The Boston Massacre was a situation that quickly escalated until the cornered Bostonians fired at British soldiers
- B. The Boston Massacre was a situation in which five British soldiers were killed
- C. The Boston Massacre was an instance in which the British fired into an innocent and unarmed mob of Bostonians
- D. The Boston Massacre was a situation that quickly escalated until the cornered soldiers fired at the Bostonians

**4. What event happened first?**

- A. Crispus Attucks was killed
- B. A club was hurled at a British soldier
- C. The mob of Bostonians dispersed
- D. March 4, 1770

**5. Which of the following best describes the mood of the third paragraph?**

- A. tense
- B. celebratory
- C. uncertain
- D. historic

**6. John Adams... (circle all that are true)**

- A. did not view Crispus Attucks as a hero.
- B. defended British soldiers charged in the Boston Massacre.
- C. would eventually become a president.
- D. defended members of the Boston mob charged in the Boston Massacre.

**7. To which of the following questions would “ after a British soldier assaulted a Bostonian” be the answer?**

- A. What happened after the club was hurled at a British soldier?
- B. When did the mob disperse?
- C. How did the Boston Massacre start?
- D. Why was a Bostonian harassing a British soldier?

## **BOSTON MASSACRE Reading Comprehension**

The situation in Boston grew more intense by the day. Local skirmishes between townspeople and British soldiers (redcoats) increased in frequency as did belligerence toward British soldiers. Rumors abounded throughout the city about possible attacks by soldiers or by the Sons of Liberty.

On Monday night, March 5, 1770, an American (patriot) began harassing a redcoat named John Goldfinch standing guard. Another redcoat nearby, named Hugh White, joined Goldfinch to defend him. White became agitated with the harassment and struck the patriot in the face with his musket. As the patriot cried out in pain, a mob of fifty or so Bostonians gathered. Goldfinch retreated to the nearby Custom House and pointed his musket toward the angry crowd.

The mob began throwing chunks of ice at White and shouted, "Kill him!" Meanwhile, other mobs were forming on Boston's streets. Those mobs began pelting other redcoats with chunks of ice. British officers on the scene ordered soldiers back to their barracks, and several had to be subdued by officers to prevent them from firing into the angry crowd. The mob surrounding Hugh White, however, grew until he was surrounded by over 400 angry Bostonians. White's shouts for reinforcements were answered by British Captain Thomas Preston and several other soldiers who entered the emotional mob.

Preston tried to march the British soldiers from the Custom House back to the main guard, but his path was blocked by the mob of patriots. Despite his demands for the dispersal of the crowd, the mob responded with more insults and ice chunks. When the British justice of the peace tried to read the Riot Act, which would subject all members of the mob to prosecution once it was read, the mob forced him to retreat by throwing snowballs and ice chunks at him.

The mob continued to provoke the soldiers and challenged them to fire. Members of the mob grew more and more violent and began striking the muskets and bayonets of the redcoats with clubs. Despite his attempts to prevent bloodshed, Captain Preston was losing control of his soldiers who were growing increasingly threatened by the angry mob. Suddenly, someone in the crowd hurled a club, which hit British soldier Hugh Montgomery and knocked him to the ground. Montgomery rose and fired into the crowd. Hearing the shot, the mob lunged at Preston and his men, wielding their clubs at them. For the next few minutes, the scene became a chaotic battle in which Preston's men fired into the crowd to avoid being beaten. The soldiers were able to fend off the mob which soon dispersed. When it did disperse, the bodies of several patriots lay dead or wounded on the ground. Preston and his soldiers formed a defensive line with guns drawn to protect themselves from another assault.

Later that evening, Preston and his soldiers were arrested and accused of murder. In the ensuing trial, almost all were acquitted (judged not guilty), as the deaths had occurred in self-defense. Additionally, Parliament repealed the Townshend Act and removed all taxes except for the tax on tea. Despite the anger in Boston over the massacre, American merchants began importing British goods again and the push for independence seemed to fizzle.

**1.) Who was the redcoat captain?**

- a.) Hugh White
- b.) John Goldfinch
- c.) Hugh Montgomery
- d.) Thomas Preston

**2.) What word probably DOES NOT describe the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) tense
- b.) scary
- c.) violent
- d.) jubilant

**3.) Which of the following was not USED in the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) chunks of ice
- b.) bows and arrows
- c.) muskets
- d.) bayonets

**4.) Which of the following BEST describes why the Boston Massacre occurred in the first place?**

- a.) John Goldfinch began harassing a redcoat.
- b.) Almost all redcoats involved were acquitted (judged to be not guilty) of crimes.
- c.) An isolated skirmish between a patriot and a couple of redcoats.
- d.) The redcoats began pelting the approaching mob with ice chunks.

**5.) Which of the following best describes the meaning of "reinforcements" in the following sentence?**

White's shouts for **reinforcements** were answered by British Captain Thomas Preston and several other soldiers who entered the emotional mob.

- a.) Additional help
- b.) Additional uniforms
- c.) More ice chunks
- d.) An escape route



**6.) Which of the following best describes the cause and effect of the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) Cause - An isolated skirmish between a patriot and a couple of redcoats.  
Effect - The Boston Massacre
- b.) Cause - The justice of the peace reading the Riot Act.  
Effect - The mob of people becomes more violent
- c.) Cause - An isolated skirmish between a patriot and a couple of redcoats.  
Effect - Parliament repeals many of the hated taxes, and the push for independence in Boston slows down.
- d.) Cause - Several patriots are killed in the mob.  
Effect - Parliament repeals many of the hated taxes, and the push for independence in Boston slows down.

**7.) Why were the British officials acquitted (judged to be not guilty) after the Boston Massacre?**

- a.) There was not enough evidence.
- b.) They were defending themselves.
- c.) The British agreed to repeal many of the hated taxes.
- d.) The British hated the patriots.

**8.) What happened first?**

- a.) The justice of the peace attempted to read the Riot Act.
- b.) Hugh Montgomery fired into the crowd.
- c.) Someone hurled a club at Hugh Montgomery.
- d.) Several members of the mob were found dead.

**9.) What happened second?**

- a.) The justice of the peace attempted to read the Riot Act.
- b.) Hugh Montgomery fired into the crowd.
- c.) Someone hurled a club at Hugh Montgomery.
- d.) Several members of the mob were found dead.

**10.) What word would best describe the feelings of Thomas Preston as the situation escalated?**

- a.) worried
- b.) desperate
- c.) unhappy
- d.) sad

## **Boston Tea Party and Intolerable Acts**

Despite the peace that temporarily reigned in Boston, the Sons of Liberty were continually trying to find ways to keep Parliament's power over them in check. Furthermore, the tax on tea became more and more irritating.

In 1773, Parliament authorized the Tea Act. Within the Tea Act, Parliament granted the East India Company a monopoly (the only business in a specific trade or product) over the American tea trade. Although the monopoly decreased the price of tea, Americans realized that Parliament was only regulating American trade and had the power to interfere in American business whenever it suited them. Public protest of the Tea Act grew quickly through the colonies. Fearing a revolt, several ships carrying tea destined for New York and Philadelphia returned to England without unloading tea.

On December 16, 1773, the Sons of Liberty, led by Samuel Adams, planned to show Parliament how they felt about the Tea Act. They boarded the British ship *Dartmouth* docked in Boston Harbor, dressed up as Indians, and dumped the entire load of tea into the water. This event came to be known as the Boston Tea Party.

The historical significance of the Boston Tea Party is recognized more in the British response than in the event itself. As a result of the Boston Tea Party, Parliament passed the following laws designed to punish the Americans.

- 1.) The Boston Harbor Bill: This bill closed the harbor to all commercial traffic until Americans paid for the tea they dumped.
- 2.) The Administration of Justice Act: This act required the extradition (transfer) of all royal officials charged with capital crimes in America to courts in Great Britain.
- 3.) Massachusetts Government Act: This act ended self-rule in the colonies and made all elected officers in America subject to British appointment.
- 4.) Quartering Act: This was simply a new version of the 1765 Quartering Act which required Americans to provide accommodations (housing, food, clothing, etc.) to British soldiers if necessary.
- 5.) Quebec Act: This act extended the Canadian border (British territory) into the Ohio River Valley and eliminated lands that were claimed by Massachusetts, Virginia, and Connecticut.

These acts were called the Intolerable Acts in America and resulted in the formation of the Continental Congress.

**1.) Why did Americans oppose the Tea Act?**

- a.) It made tea more expensive.
- b.) It made tea cheaper.
- c.) It showed that parliament could interfere with American trade.
- d.) The quality of tea had decreased.

**2.) What is a monopoly?**

- a.) When all the tea is gone
- b.) When there is only one business in a specific trade
- c.) The Sons of Liberty
- d.) When all businesses fail

**3.) What does "authorized" mean in the following sentence:**

In 1773, Parliament authorized the Tea Act.

- a.) Found an author for
- b.) Passed or allowed
- c.) Wrote
- d.) Defended

**4.) In which of the following sentences is the word "authorized" used correctly?**

- a.) The league authorized several new rules for the upcoming season.
- b.) Many writers authorized their books in the form of a journal.
- c.) I authorized my little brother when he was picked on.
- d.) The winter will be authorized soon.

**5.) Why did tea destined for New York and Philadelphia return to England?**

- a.) The tea tax was too high.
- b.) People refused to drink the tea.
- c.) A revolt was possible.
- d.) The ports were closed.

**6.) Which of the following is NOT true?**

- a.) The Sons of Liberty dressed up as Indians and threw the entire load of tea aboard the Dartmouth into Boston Harbor.
- b.) The Boston Tea Party resulted in the passage of the Intolerable Acts.
- c.) The Intolerable Acts resulted in the cancellation of the Continental Congress.

**7.) Which of the following reflects the Quartering Act?**

- a.) This act closed Boston Harbor to all commercial traffic.
- b.) This act required all royal officials charged with crimes in America to be judged for those crimes in Great Britain.
- c.) This act required American citizens to open their homes to British soldiers.
- d.) This act eliminated American land claims in the Ohio River Valley.

**8.) Which of the following reflects the Quebec Act?**

- a.) This act closed Boston Harbor to all commercial traffic.
- b.) This act required all royal officials charged with crimes in America to be judged for those crimes in Great Britain.
- c.) This act required American citizens to open their homes to British soldiers.
- d.) This act eliminated American land claims in the Ohio River Valley.

**9.) What happened second?**

- a.) Parliament authorized the Tea Act.
- b.) The Intolerable Act
- c.) The Boston Tea Party
- d.) The Formation of the Continental Congress

**10.) What happened third?**

- a.) Parliament authorized the Tea Act.
- b.) The Intolerable Acts
- c.) The Boston Tea Party
- d.) The Formation of the Continental Congress

**Behind the Scenes: Boston Tea Party**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

In what came to be known as the Boston Tea Party, members of the Sons of Liberty, dressed as Indians, boarded three British tea ships, confiscated 342 chests of tea, and proceeded to unceremoniously dump them into Boston Harbor. The Sons of Liberty were protesting the virtual monopoly granted by Parliament (British Government) to the East India Company (a British company) over the American tea trade. The event described above is familiar to most Americans, but the details of the Boston Tea Party are likely unfamiliar.

The “Destruction of the Tea,” as it was called until the 1830s, was one of the most carefully planned acts of rebellion in American history. While it’s true that the Sons of Liberty dropped over 92,000 pounds of tea worth nearly two million dollars in today’s money into Boston Harbor, they were very careful not to damage the ships or private property. According to the reports of the time, there was no visible damage to the three ships other than a single broken padlock. The padlock, in fact, was replaced by the Sons of Liberty the following day. Furthermore, there were no reports of anything stolen or looted from the ships other than the tea. Several opportunistic Boston citizens were reprimanded or taken into custody by the leaders of the raid for trying to fill their pockets with the discarded tea for their own purposes. Interestingly, the participants in the Boston Tea Party followed the “tea party” by cleaning the decks of the ships and putting back in place anything that was moved during the raid! That said, the vast quantities of tea dumped into the harbor fouled the water and floated in great mats for days to come. To prevent looters from trying to salvage the tea from the water, members of the Sons of Liberty would sail out into the harbor and attempt to sink the tea with clubs and oars. Despite their reputation as bloodthirsty vigilantes who reveled in tarring and feathering hapless tax collectors or loyalists, not one person was killed or injured by the Sons of Liberty in the Boston Tea Party.

Following the raid, participants in the Boston Tea Party knew they could be severely punished if their identities were discovered. Although there are 116 people documented to have participated in the Boston Tea Party, many more remained anonymous for fear of punishment. Following the “party” many participants fled Boston immediately. Only one man, named Francis Akeley, was caught and imprisoned by the British.

**1. Which of the following best describes why the Sons of Liberty staged the Boston Tea Party?**

- A. They didn't want the British tea ships in Boston Harbor
- B. They wanted to use the tea for their own purposes
- C. They were angry at the British
- D. They were protesting an act by Parliament that affected the American tea trade

**2. Which of the following assertions does the author make?**

- A. Most people know nothing about the Boston Tea Party
- B. Few people know why the Boston tea Party happened
- C. Most people don't know the details of the Boston Tea Party
- D. Most people don't know how much tea was dumped into the harbor

**3. The Sons of Liberty...**

- A. carefully planned the details of the Boston Tea Party.
- B. carelessly planned the details of the Boston Tea Party.
- C. used violence to intimidate people during the Boston Tea Party.
- D. destroyed private property during the Boston Tea Party.

**4. Which of the following does the author seem surprised about?**

- A. That members of the Sons of Liberty tried to sink floating tea to prevent looters from trying to steal it
- B. That Francis Akeley was arrested and imprisoned
- C. That over 92,000 pounds of tea were dumped into the harbor
- D. That the Sons of Liberty actually cleaned the decks of the British ships after the Boston Tea Party

**5. Which was NOT true?**

- A. There were likely many more participants in the Boston Tea Party than those that were actually documented
- B. According to the author, the Sons of Liberty did not live up to their violent reputation in the Boston Tea Party
- C. Francis Akeley was the only person actually imprisoned as a result of his actions in the Boston Tea Party
- D. The tea destroyed by the Sons of Liberty would be worth tens of millions of dollars today

- 6. To which of the following questions would “many participants fled Boston immediately” be the answer?**
- A. What happened after the Boston Tea Party?
  - B. Where did the Sons of Liberty go after the Boston Tea Party?
  - C. What happened to participants of the Boston Tea Party who were identified?
  - D. Why did the organizers of the Boston Tea Party try to escape Boston?
- 7. Which of the following were referred to as “opportunistic” in the second paragraph?**
- A. The organizers of the Boston Tea Party
  - B. Those who reported about the Boston Tea Party
  - C. Those who attempted to steal tea during the Boston Tea Party
  - D. The Sons of Liberty

Following the Battle of Lexington and Concord, Patriot militiamen had blocked the British from sending reinforcements or supplies to their forces within the city by land. The British, however, could still access Boston through its harbor. On May 25, 1775, British generals William Howe, John Burgoyne, and Henry Clinton arrived in Boston via its harbor to plan strategy for breaking the siege. Part of the plan called for the fortification of high ground around Boston that included Bunker Hill and Dorchester Heights.

On June 15, Patriot forces learned of the British plan and rushed to fortify both Bunker and Breed's Hill on the Charlestown Peninsula before the British. The Charlestown Peninsula was a narrow strip of land that extended about a mile into Boston Harbor. In preparation for the battle, the British generals underestimated the resolve of the Patriots and voted to stage a direct assault on the Patriots to dislodge them from the hills for the purposes of taking the peninsula. General Burgoyne, in fact, referred to the militia as "untrained rabble."

At 3:00 in the afternoon on June 17, the British began their initial assault on Breed's Hill, which was summarily repulsed by Patriot gunners. With the British marching four men deep and several hundred across, they made for easy targets and hundreds fell dead or wounded in the matter of hours. The British reorganized and again attempted to assault the Patriot position, but the outcome was much the same as the first disaster. By this time, the armies of both sides were in disarray. The British, however, reorganized for a third assault, which was designed to focus on the fortifications of Breed's Hill. Again, Patriot gunners poured gunfire into the British lines, felling hundreds. As the fighting went on, however, the Patriots on Breed's Hill ran out of ammunition which invited hand-to-hand combat inside the fortifications. Here, the British had a major advantage with their muskets and bayonets. At this point, the Patriots were forced to flee and staged a brilliant retreat, preventing most soldiers from being captured by the British. Despite the carnage, however, the British had achieved their objective of controlling the Charlestown Peninsula.

The Battle of Bunker Hill is considered a pyrrhic British victory. "Pyrrhic" means costly. British forces suffered well over 1,000 casualties, compared to about 450 Patriot casualties. Of the British casualties, 81 were officers.

Following the Battle of Bunker Hill, British generals proved more cautious in their approach to assaulting fortified Patriot positions. It also led to the realization that the British would need more military firepower, and hence, led to the hiring of more than 30,000 Hessian (German) soldiers to supplement their own army. For the Patriots, the stand at Bunker Hill increased confidence and morale and proved that its untrained militias would not wither against the powerful British army.

- 1. How did the British generals first plan to break the Patriot siege of Boston?**
  - A. The British wanted to fortify the high ground around Boston
  - B. The British determined the best plan of attack was to stage a direct assault on the Patriots
  - C. The British staged a complicated series of military maneuvers to confuse the Patriots
  - D. The British planned to bombard the Charlestown Peninsula from the sea
  
- 2. Which of the following might be an accurate way that the British generals would describe the Patriot militia?**
  - A. "The Patriot militiamen are among the best soldiers we've seen."
  - B. "The Patriots are a clever bunch and probably have tricks up their sleeves."
  - C. "The disgraceful bunch of dirty Yankees haven't a chance against us."
  - D. "When pushed to their limit, these Massachusetts boys will fight to their deaths."
  
- 3. Which of the following expressions best describes the British strategy to take Breed's Hill?**
  - A. Don't make a mountain out of a molehill
  - B. If first you don't succeed, try, try again
  - C. Put your money where your mouth is
  - D. Beggars can't be choosers
  
- 4. Why did the British third attempt to take Breed's Hill ultimately succeed?**
  - A. Too many Patriots had been killed or wounded
  - B. The Patriots ran out of ammunition
  - C. The British had taken the Charlestown Peninsula
  - D. The passage doesn't say
  
- 5. Despite the loss of the Charlestown Peninsula... (select all that apply)**
  - A. most Patriots were able to escape the battlefield.
  - B. the British would resolve to hire 30,000 Hessian soldiers.
  - C. the battle proved that the Patriots of Massachusetts could take a stand against the British army.
  - D. the Patriots continued to block access to Boston by land.



**6. Which of the following best describes the aftermath of the battle?**

- A. Although the British suffered over a thousand casualties, they proved victorious in the battle because they met their objective.
- B. Although the Patriots suffered hundreds of casualties, they proved victorious in the battle because they proved they could fight the British army
- C. Although the British met their objectives, they lost the battle because they suffered over 1,000 casualties
- D. Although the Patriots ultimately gave up Charlestown Harbor, they lost the battle because they suffered over 450 casualties.

**7. What question is NOT answered in the passage?**

- A. How did the British approach to the Patriots change after the Battle of Bunker Hill?
- B. Why did the British hire 30,000 Hessian soldiers?
- C. How many Patriots officers were killed at the Battle of Bunker Hill?
- D. Did most of the Patriot soldiers escape or were they captured?

Second Continental Congress Printable Reading Comprehension

Name \_\_\_\_\_

On May 10, 1775, the Continental Congress met for the second time in Philadelphia. Unlike the circumstances during which the first Congress was held, the American Revolution had begun and American soldiers, known as “minutemen” had been killed. The delegates to the Second Continental Congress chose John Hancock, a wealthy Massachusetts merchant and chief financial contributor to the Sons of Liberty, as president. While Georgia refused to send a delegate to the First Continental Congress, it eventually agreed to send one this time.

The Second Continental Congress made decisions like an actual government. It authorized the production of paper money and named Benjamin Franklin Postmaster General (in charge of the Post Office). Most importantly, it authorized the creation of the Continental Army and George Washington as Commander-in-Chief. It would become the legislative branch of the war effort that would sign treaties, make declarations, and appoint ambassadors. By 1777, the Continental Congress adopted the Articles of Confederation - a temporary (and inadequate) set of laws that would be replaced ten years later by the United States Constitution.

Some delegates of the Second Continental Congress still wished to avoid war, most notably John Dickinson from Pennsylvania. They sent a petition known as the Olive Branch Petition to Parliament to express their wish for peace and to appeal to the king to respect their rights. At the same time, the British had intercepted a letter from John Adams stating his belief that war was inevitable and that the United States should have already built up its military. Subsequently, the Olive Branch Petition was rejected by England, and King George hired 30,000 German troops to fight alongside the British in war against America.

On July 2, 1776, the Second Continental Congress approved the measure to declare independence from England. Two days later, the actual Declaration of Independence was approved.

**1. Which of the following is NOT true about the Second Continental Congress?**

- A. It had already met once before
- B. Delegates from all 13 colonies attended
- C. George Washington was chosen as President of the congress
- D. Some delegates still believed that peace with England was the best path

- 2. In which of the following ways was the Second Continental Congress different from the First Continental Congress? Select all that apply.**
- A. The Second Continental Congress was held in Philadelphia
  - B. Georgia sent delegates to the Second Continental Congress
  - C. The American Revolution was already underway at the Second Continental Congress
  - D. The Second Continental Congress made decisions like an actual government
- 3. Which was not a function of the Second Continental Congress?**
- A. Making treaties with other nations
  - B. Appointing ambassadors to nations
  - C. Authorizing the Continental Army
  - D. Adopting the United States Constitution in 1777
- 4. According to the passage, which two events happened simultaneously?**
- A. The interception of the John Adams letter and the hiring of 30,000 Hessian soldiers
  - B. The Olive Branch Petition and interception of the John Adams letter
  - C. The Olive Branch Petition and the hiring of 30,000 Hessian soldiers
  - D. The Continental Congress approved the measure to declare independence from England and the issuance of the Declaration of Independence
- 5. Which pair had contrasting thoughts on the best course of action?**
- A. George Washington and John Hancock
  - B. George Washington and John Adams
  - C. John Hancock and Benjamin Franklin
  - D. John Adams and John Dickinson
- 6. What happened last?**
- A. The Declaration of Independence was issued
  - B. The Second Continental Congress met
  - C. July 5, 1776
  - D. The Articles of Confederation was adopted

**7. Below is a definition for a word in this passage. What is the word?**

a formal written request, typically one signed by many people, appealing to authority with respect to a particular cause.

- A. petition
- B. treaty
- C. declaration
- D. delegate

For its first 160 years of existence, the colonies that made up England's North American empire acted more as individual nations than as united colonies. Hence, when tensions with England increased, and the onset of war seemed more and more likely, there was hardly a "national" army to fight the British. At the time, individual colonies relied on their local militias for defense. These militias consisted of citizens, farmers, and laborers who doubled as "soldiers" with weapons. Such militias had little formal military training.

Following the Battles of Lexington and Concord in 1775, a colonial army consisting of 26 regiments was formed on orders from the Massachusetts Provincial Congress. Smaller forces were raised throughout New England and New York. The Continental Congress authorized the creation of the Continental Army with these regiments on June 14, 1775. The next day, Congress appointed George Washington as Commander-in-Chief of the army. Although many disliked the idea of a permanent national army, it was deemed necessary in the wake of the British threat.

Throughout the war the Continental Army experienced major problems. Not only were the soldiers in the army inexperienced, but they lacked adequate weaponry, clothes, shoes, and food. Not surprisingly, desertions were frequent and morale was extremely low. Disease, starvation, and hypothermia plagued the Continental Army at its winter quarters at Morristown in early 1777, and at Valley Forge during the winter of 1777-1778. Nearly one in six soldiers wintering at Valley Forge died of Typhoid, Dysentery, and Pneumonia because of the unsanitary conditions and contaminated food. Nutrition was non-existent and the only food that many soldiers ate for months at a time was known as firecake - a simple mixture of flour and water cooked over a fire until it became solid.

Despite the dreadful conditions and desertions, the Continental Army remained relatively intact under the leadership of George Washington. With the arrival of Baron von Steuben at Valley Forge in 1778, the army learned military tactics, formations, training, and discipline, and gradually became a military force that could effectively fight the British in combat. In its first action after Valley Forge, the vastly improved army fought the British to a draw at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse. Combined with French forces, the Continental Army would stage a successful siege of the British at Yorktown in 1781, which would prove the last major battle of the war.

- 1. Prior to the Revolutionary War, England's North American colonies...**
  - A. were united.
  - B. acted in each other's best interests.
  - C. acted more like individual nations than as a single unit.
  - D. raised a national army.
  
- 2. Which of the following best describes "soldiers" prior to the Revolutionary War?**
  - A. Most of the soldiers were just farmers and laborers with weapons
  - B. Most of the soldiers were well-trained and had military experience
  - C. Most of the soldiers had experience with the Continental Army
  - D. Most of the soldiers were in well-trained militias that had experience fighting in wars
  
- 3. When was George Washington appointed Commander-in-Chief?**
  - A. Before Congress authorized the Continental Army
  - B. The day after the Battle of Lexington and Concord
  - C. June 14, 1775
  - D. The day after Congress authorized the Continental Army
  
- 4. If the third paragraph served as the entire passage, which of the following could be its title?**
  - A. The Growth of the Continental Army
  - B. George Washington: America's Greatest Leader
  - C. The Continental Army: Methods of Survival at Valley Forge
  - D. The Dreadful Suffering of the Continental Army
  
- 5. At Valley Forge... (Select all that are true)**
  - A. the Continental Army was trained by Baron von Steuben.
  - B. the British attacked the Continental Army.
  - C. nearly one in six soldiers died of disease.
  - D. some soldiers had nothing to eat but firecake.

**6. Which of the following best describes the Continental Army after the winter of 1777-1778?**

- A. The army was weakened from the dreadful winter and was not strong enough to continue
- B. The army was significantly improved and defeated the British at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse
- C. The army was significantly improved and fought the British to a draw at the Siege of Yorktown
- D. The army was significantly improved and fought the British to a draw at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse.

**7. What question is not answered in the passage?**

- A. What was the last major battle of the Revolutionary War?
- B. How did soldiers make firecake?
- C. Why did some oppose the formation of a permanent army?
- D. Where was the Continental Army in the winter months of 1777?

The Conway Cabal was the only major political threat to George Washington during the Revolutionary War. The “cabal,” or secret political group, consisted of several senior military officers who aimed to supplant George Washington as Commander-in-Chief. Thomas Conway, for whom the group is named, wrote several letters to the Second Continental Congress and others criticizing George Washington.

In late 1776 and 1777, the Continental Army had experienced a series of significant setbacks, first in disastrous battles in and around New York City, and later at Brandywine Creek and Germantown near Philadelphia. Following the Battle of Brandywine Creek, British forces occupied Philadelphia, causing Congress to flee west to York, Pennsylvania. As Washington took up winter quarters with the Continental Army at Valley Forge, and as conditions there deteriorated for the army, some members of Congress began questioning whether Washington was fit for Commander-in-Chief. Some pointed to Horatio Gates, who took credit for the Patriot victory at Saratoga, as a possible replacement.

Thomas Conway, who served as the army’s inspector general at the time, and who served under Washington in the Philadelphia campaign, wrote a letter to Congress criticizing Washington and lobbying for his own promotion. Washington opposed the promotion of the Irish-born Conway, whom he considered arrogant. He also thought Conway’s promotion would anger those within his ranks that had served longer. In addition, Conway wrote a letter to Horatio Gates that alluded to Washington as a poor general and that it would be better served with Gates in charge. Washington received word of the letter, which caused him to believe his subordinate generals were seeking to supplant him. Washington became so famously annoyed by the sniping and letters that he threatened to resign from the army if it continued. Much to Washington’s chagrin, Congress would actually promote both Conway and Gates to the Board of War. Gates was named president of the Board of War and Washington’s relationship with both men took turns for the worse.

Eventually, however, because most of Washington’s contemporaries fully supported him, Congress reluctantly was forced to give full public support for Washington, short-circuiting any plots to remove Washington from command.

In the end, Conway resigned from the army and was later injured in a duel by a Washington supporter. Horatio Gates remained in the army, but his reputation was permanently marred. Gates would nearly be charged with cowardice after the Battle of Camden, which effectively ended his military career.



- 1. Which of the following best describes the Conway Cabal?**
  - A. A group of military officers who wanted promotions
  - B. A group of military officers who favored the British
  - C. A group of military officers who favored the removal of George Washington
  - D. A group of military officers who were arrogant
  
- 2. What was the effect(s) of the Patriot defeat at the Battle of Brandywine Creek? Select all that apply.**
  - A. Congress fled west to York
  - B. The British were able to occupy Philadelphia
  - C. The Continental Army spent the winter at Valley Forge
  - D. George Washington was replaced as Commander-in-Chief
  
- 3. Why did some members of Congress begin questioning Washington's leadership?**
  - A. Because of the brutal winter of 1777-1778 at Valley Forge
  - B. Because Horatio Gates claimed victory at Saratoga
  - C. Because of a disastrous series of battles in New York and near Philadelphia
  - D. Because they thought George Washington would serve better elsewhere
  
- 4. Why did Washington oppose the promotion of Thomas Conway?**
  - A. He thought it would anger officers that had served longer
  - B. He thought Conway to be a poor leader
  - C. He thought he was a better military officer than Conway
  - D. He preferred Horatio Gates
  
- 5. Select all of the following that are true.**
  - A. Thomas Conway was nearly charged with cowardice after the Battle of Camden
  - B. Washington believed that the letters he learned about represented an attempt to supplant him
  - C. Horatio Gates wrote a letter suggesting Conway would be better as Commander-in-Chief
  - D. Despite their feelings about George Washington, both Horatio Gates and Thomas Conway were promoted to the Board of War

**6. Which of the following is another way to say the sentence below without losing meaning?**

Much to Washington's chagrin, Congress would actually promote both Conway and Gates to the Board of War.

- A. Washington was pleased that Congress promoted Conway and Gates to the Board of War.
- B. Washington wanted to discuss the promotion of Conway and Gates to the Board of War.
- C. Washington was jealous of the promotion of Conway and Gates to the Board of War.
- D. Washington opposed the promotion of Conway and Gates to the Board of War.

**7. What was the effect of the Conway Cabal?**

- A. The Continental Army was ultimately weakened by the controversy
- B. The only real effect were the negative outcomes for Conway and Gates
- C. George Washington became a member of the Continental Congress
- D. The military career of Horatio Gates ended

## **Declaration of Independence Reading Comprehension**

The main purpose of America's Declaration of Independence was to explain to foreign nations why the colonies had chosen to separate themselves from Great Britain. The Revolutionary War had already begun, and several major battles had already taken place. The American colonies had already cut most major ties to England and had established their own congress, currency, army, and post office. On June 7, 1776, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Richard Henry Lee voiced a resolution that the United States should be completely free of England's influence, and that all political ties between the two countries should be dissolved. Congress agreed and began plans to publish a formal declaration of independence and appointed a committee of five members to draft the declaration.

Thomas Jefferson was chosen to draft the letter, which he did in a single day. Four other members—Roger Sherman, Robert Livingston, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams—were part of the committee to help Jefferson. In the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson explained that a body of people has a right to change governments if that government becomes oppressive (unfair and controlling). He further explained that governments fail when they no longer have the consent of the governed. Since Parliament clearly lacked the consent of the American colonists to govern them, it was no longer legitimate.

The Declaration was presented to the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 2, 1776. It was approved with a few minor changes. Of the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, John Hancock, of Massachusetts, was the first.

**1.) Why was the Declaration of Independence written?**

- a.) For the colonists
- b.) For the British
- c.) For the kings
- d.) For other nations

**2.) Which of the following HAD NOT taken place before the Declaration of Independence was written?**

- a.) Battles
- b.) America had named a president.
- c.) The Revolutionary War
- d.) American had cut most ties with England.

**3.) In the following sentence, what does the word "influence" mean:**

Richard Henry Lee voiced a resolution that the United States ought to be completely free of England's **influence**.

- a.) battle
- b.) royal family
- c.) under the effect of
- d.) money

**4.) Which of the following is an accurate description of what Thomas Jefferson described in the Declaration?**

- a.) That the King of England owes the colonists money.
- b.) That America will win the war against England.
- c.) People have the right to fair government.
- d.) The colonists have no rights.

**5.) According to Jefferson, when do governments fail?**

- a.) When they no longer have the consent of the people.
- b.) When they fight wars.
- c.) When they issue taxes.
- d.) When they owe money.

**6.) Which of the following is NOT a reason the Declaration of Independence was written?**

- a.) Parliament lacked consent of the American people.
- b.) Parliament was unfair.
- c.) Parliament taxed the Americans.
- d.) Parliament had failed the American people.

**7.) The Continental Congress...**

- a.) agreed to the Declaration with a few changes.
- b.) totally and completely agreed with the Declaration.
- c.) disagreed with the Declaration.
- d.) agreed with the Declaration but made major changes.

**8.) Which of the following describes an illegitimate government according to the Declaration?**

- a.) A government that taxes its people.
- b.) A government that oppresses its people.
- c.) A government that has the consent of its people.
- d.) A government run by the people.

**9.) The British were...**

- a.) likely to agree to the Declaration.
- b.) likely to disagree to the Declaration.
- c.) likely to agree to the Declaration with a few minor changes.
- d.) likely to agree to the Declaration with a few major changes.

**10.) Which of the following is FALSE?**

- a.) Congress established a taxing system before the Declaration of Independence.
- b.) Congress established a post office before the Declaration of Independence.
- c.) Congress established an army before the Declaration of Independence.
- d.) Richard Henry Lee voiced the resolution that American should dissolve its ties to England.

## **FORT TICONDEROGA Reading Comprehension**

Fort Ticonderoga was a small, dilapidated British fort maintained by the British at the southern tip of Lake Champlain in upstate New York. It was a strategically important fort in the French and Indian War and was then known as Fort Carillon.

Although it was manned by only 48 British soldiers, American forces recognized its geographic importance and its cache of cannons, guns, and other weapons. Fort Ticonderoga was located in a strategically important route between the colonies and England's northern provinces (today Canada). The Massachusetts Committee of Safety authorized a secret mission that would be led by Colonel Benedict Arnold to seize the fort. Arnold helped in the effort to recruit 400 soldiers.

As Arnold's mission traveled north, he learned that Connecticut had also planned a mission to seize the fort that was led by Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys from Vermont. When Arnold finally reached Allen, the two worked out an agreement to share command of the mission. On May 10th, 1775, Allen, Arnold, and 83 soldiers raided Fort Ticonderoga. The British soldiers, sleeping inside the fort, offered no resistance. No one was killed in the raid. After the surrender, as many as four hundred additional American soldiers arrived at the fort, promptly destroying it in search of liquor. Arnold was infuriated by the lack of discipline and regard by the Green Mountain Boys. Several of them became so sick of Arnold that they apparently drew their swords. Ethan Allen would take credit for the entire operation.

On May 11, Arnold led the seizure of nearby Fort Crown Point, which yielded more weapons and cannons. The first of Arnold's many perceived snubs occurred when he was relieved of command of the fort by Benjamin Hinman, who had come with 1,000 troops to help rebuild it.

Despite Arnold's disappointment, the weapons obtained from the seizures of Forts Ticonderoga and Crown Point would prove extremely useful to the American cause. Commander in Chief of Continental forces George Washington put Colonel Henry Knox in charge of transporting the weapons for the defense of Boston. Knox and his men dragged 59 cannons on ox-drawn sleds over 300 miles from Fort Ticonderoga, through Albany, N.Y., and the mountains of Massachusetts, to Boston. The trip took 56 days. The entire load weighed more than 60 tons. When the cannons arrived in Boston, Washington ordered them positioned atop Dorchester Heights, overlooking the British fleet in the harbor below. On the night of March 4, 1776, Dorchester Heights would be fortified by 1,200 soldiers and the cannons were moved into place—all of which went unnoticed by the British. The British, astonished by the enormity of the work completed by the Patriots, were eventually forced to leave Boston and sail back to British territory in Halifax, Nova Scotia (Canada).

**1.) Where was Fort Ticonderoga?**

- a.) Massachusetts
- b.) Connecticut
- c.) Boston
- d.) New York

**2.) Why was Fort Ticonderoga important?**

- a.) It was located along an important communication route between the Northern colonies and Southern colonies
- b.) There were cannons, guns, and other weapons stored there.
- c.) Hundreds of British troops were stationed there.
- d.) Secret plans were hidden there.

**3.) Who or what authorized the seizure of the fort?**

- a.) the Green Mountain Boys
- b.) the Massachusetts Committee of Safety
- c.) Parliament
- d.) Benedict Arnold

**4.) Why was Benedict Arnold angry after the seizure of Fort Ticonderoga?**

- a.) He thought people were killed needlessly.
- b.) He thought the Green Mountain Boys showed a lack of discipline.
- c.) The British soldiers disrespected him.
- d.) He thought the Green Mountain Boys deserved more credit.

**5.) Which of the following best describes the British soldiers in the fort during the seizure?**

- a.) They fled the fort.
- b.) They fought valiantly.
- c.) They didn't fight at all.
- d.) They defeated the Americans.

**6.) Where were the weapons seized from Fort Ticonderoga used?**

- a.) Boston
- b.) Connecticut
- c.) Fort Crown Point
- d.) Vermont

**7.) What does the word “yielded” mean in the following sentence?**

On May 11, Arnold led the seizure of nearby Fort Crown Point, which **yielded** more weapons and cannons.

- a.) provided
- b.) nullified
- c.) destroyed
- d.) traveled

**8.) Which of the following is NOT true?**

- a.) It took 56 days to get the weapons to Boston.
- b.) The cannons were dragged on ox-drawn sleds.
- c.) Benedict Arnold was in charge of transporting the weapons to Boston.
- d.) The entire load weighed over 60 tons.

**9.) Why did the British leave Boston?**

- a.) They were outnumbered.
- b.) They needed reinforcements.
- c.) There was nothing left to accomplish there.
- d.) Their fleet was threatened by the cannons on Dorchester Heights.

**10.) When was Fort Crown Point seized?**

- a.) 1776
- b.) After the cannons were dragged to Boston.
- c.) Before Fort Ticonderoga was seized.
- d.) Before Henry Knox was put in charge of transporting the weapons to Boston.

## **GEORGE WASHINGTON Reading Comprehension**

George Washington was born on February 22, 1732, in Westmoreland County, Virginia, although he grew up near Fredericksburg. In his childhood and adolescence, he studied math and surveying. When he was 16, he went to live with his brother, Lawrence, in Mount Vernon.

George was scarred with smallpox before the age of 20 but inherited his brother's land (including Mount Vernon) when Lawrence died in 1752.

Washington's military career began in 1753, when he was sent into Ohio country. In 1754, he battled the French and was forced to surrender Fort Necessity (near present-day Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania). He continued as an officer in Ohio country and served under the British general Edward Braddock when their army was ambushed by the French in 1755. Once again, Washington tasted defeat after their surrender of Fort Duquesne to French forces. Washington helped take Fort Duquesne back in 1758.

Washington was married to Martha Custis in 1759. Washington managed the family and estate until he took command of the Virginia troops just before the American Revolution. He was made commander of the Continental Army on June 15, 1775.

Washington proved himself an excellent leader and won several decisive battles during the Revolution. As an advocate of a federal government, Washington became chairman of the Constitutional Convention and helped in getting the Constitution ratified. In 1789, he was inaugurated as America's first president.

Washington was re-elected in 1792, but refused a third term. On December 14, 1799, 17 days before the new century, Washington died of acute laryngitis.



**1.) When was George Washington born?**

- a.) after February 24
- b.) before February 20
- c.) after February 26
- d.) before February 23

**2.) George Washington couldn't be scarred with smallpox at which age?**

- a.) 16
- b.) 17
- c.) 19
- d.) 21

**3.) In which of the following years was George Washington successful in battle?**

- a.) 1750
- b.) 1753
- c.) 1758
- d.) 1755

**4.) George Washington married Martha \_\_\_\_\_.**

**5.) What happened first?**

- a.) George Washington inherited his brother's land.
- b.) Washington's military career began.
- c.) Washington was married.
- d.) He went to live with Lawrence.

**6.) What does advocate mean?**

- a.) opponent
- b.) supporter
- c.) creator
- d.) player

**7.) Which of the following was George Washington not involved in?**

- a.) Surrender of Fort Duquense
- b.) Constitutional Convention
- c.) Revolutionary War
- d.) Boston Tea Party

**8.) Washington became chairman of what?**

- a.) Constitutional Convention
- b.) American Revolution
- c.) Virginia
- d.) French forces

**9.) What happened last?**

- a.) Washington was inaugurated as first president.
- b.) Washington refused a third term.
- c.) 1794
- d.) The new century

**10.) Which of the following is not true?**

- a.) Washington was an excellent leader.
- b.) Washington won several decisive battles during the American Revolution.
- c.) Washington died after the new century.
- d.) Washington died before the new century.

## The Story of Nathan Hale

Nathan Hale was born in Coventry, Connecticut, on June 6, 1755. At age 14, he enrolled at Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. While at Yale, he became close friends with Benjamin Tallmadge, a fellow Yale student who would later become George Washington's head of intelligence during the Revolutionary War. Hale graduated from Yale with honors and became a schoolteacher in nearby East Haddam and later in New London. When the war began, he joined the Connecticut militia and became a first sergeant. In 1776, he was promoted to captain in the Continental Army's 7th Connecticut Regiment.

In August and September of 1776, during the Battle of Brooklyn Heights, Hale volunteered to spy on British troop movements. Disguised as a schoolteacher, he was captured by British forces near present-day Queens following the torching of New York City. British officials, suspicious of Hale's schoolteacher facade, pretended to be Patriots and succeeded in convincing him to reveal his espionage (spy) activities. He was then questioned by British General William Howe. After interrogating Hale, Howe felt he had uncovered enough evidence and Hale was hanged the following day. According to eyewitness accounts, Hale's composure in the moments before his execution was astounding. His final words, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country," have been immortalized forever. Today, statues of Nathan Hale can be seen at the Nathan Hale Homestead, Yale University, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and Andover Academy in Massachusetts.

### 1. Which of the following was NOT true about Nathan Hale?

- A. He went to Yale University
- B. He would become George Washington's head of intelligence
- C. He was a schoolteacher
- D. He was in the Continental Army's 7<sup>th</sup> Connecticut Regiment

### 2. Nathan Hale agreed to...

- A. spy on the Patriots during the Battle of Brooklyn Heights
- B. convince the British he was a spy for the Patriots
- C. convince the Patriots he as a spy for the British
- D. spy on the British during the Battle of Brooklyn Heights

**3. What does interrogating mean in the following sentence?**

After **interrogating** Hale, Howe felt he had uncovered enough evidence and Hale was hanged the following day.

- A. Destroying
- B. Questioning
- C. Lying about
- D. Tricking

**4. Which of the following best mirrors Hale's famous quote?**

*"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country,"*

- A. I wish I have never been a spy
- B. I wish more people lost their lives for their country
- C. I wish I had more than one life I could fight with
- D. I wish I did not decide to lose my life for my country

**5. Why were people astounded before Hale was executed?**

- A. They were so sad
- B. Nathan Hale was so calm
- C. They did not believe he was a spy
- D. There was no evidence against him

**6. What is the main difference between the first and second paragraphs?**

- A. The first paragraph tells about Hale's childhood and the second paragraph tells about his adult life
- B. The first paragraph describes his childhood and the second paragraph describes how he was captured as a spy
- C. The first paragraph tells about how he became involved in the Revolutionary War and the second paragraph tells how he was captured as a spy.
- D. The first paragraph tells about the history of Yale University and the second paragraph tells about how he was captured as a spy.

**7. Which question is NOT answered in the story above?**

- A. Where did Nathan Hale serve as a schoolteacher?
- B. Who decided there was enough evidence against Nathan Hale?
- C. Were there people who witnessed the execution?
- D. Who recorded Hale's famous last words?

## Federalists v Republicans

The Federalist Party was America's first political party, formed chiefly by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton during his tenure in George Washington's cabinet. The Federalist Party believed in strong central Government, a national banking system and good relations and trade with England. The Federalist Party quickly gained strength throughout New England and in the urban areas of the middle states.

Those who opposed the Federalist Party would become known as Republicans or Jeffersonians. Led by Thomas Jefferson, Republicans favored an agricultural economic base rather than one based on banking and opposed the idea of strengthening ties with Great Britain. Republicans dominated the politics of the Southern states and much of America's farmlands.

The partisan politics that emerged in the 1700's threatened to tear the new country apart as Both Hamilton and Jefferson were key members of George Washington's cabinet. Washington tried unsuccessfully to mediate between the two, but was known to favor Hamilton's view on politics above anyone else. As a result, Jefferson would resign as Secretary of State in 1793, after he unsuccessfully introduced legislation in Congress that would have effectively dissolved Hamilton's position as Secretary of the Treasury. Republicans would win back the seat of power in 1801 with the election of Thomas Jefferson as President and the subsequent splitting of the Federalist Party. The Federalist Party would be virtually dissolved after expressing opposition to the War of 1812 and completely gone by 1825.

### 1. Which of the following was NOT supported by Federalists?

- A. America should have good relations with England
- B. American should have a strong central government
- C. America's economy should be based on agriculture
- D. American should have a national banking system

### 2. George Washington...

- A. was known to favor Hamilton's thoughts on politics.
- B. appointed Jefferson to Secretary of Treasury.
- C. appointed Hamilton to Secretary of State.
- D. usually agreed with Thomas Jefferson.

**3. What was the effect of the election of Thomas Jefferson?**

- A. The Republicans became weaker
- B. The Federalists split
- C. The War of 1812 started
- D. Jefferson resigned as Secretary of State

**4. Which of the following is accurate?**

- A. The Federalists were popular in the South and the Republicans were popular in New England and the urban areas
- B. The Federalists were dissolved when Thomas Jefferson was elected president
- C. Republicans were formed before the Federalists
- D. Republicans rejected strengthening ties with England

**5. What does “mediate” mean in the sentence below?**

Washington tried unsuccessfully to mediate between the two, but was known to favor Hamilton’s view on politics above anyone else.

- A. bridge differences
- B. choose
- C. disagree
- D. judge

**6. “Opposition to the War of 1812” is the answer to which question?**

- A. Why did the Federalist Party split?
- B. Why was Thomas Jefferson elected president?
- C. Why did Thomas Jefferson resign from Washington’s cabinet?
- D. What was the main reason the Federalists dissolved?

**7. Why did Thomas Jefferson resign from Washington’s cabinet?**

- A. Washington was not a Republican
- B. Washington seemed to favor the politics of Alexander Hamilton
- C. He felt Washington was a bad president
- D. Because the Federalist Party would split

## **John Hancock Reading Comprehension**

John Hancock was raised by his uncle in Boston, Massachusetts. His uncle sent him to Harvard University and made him a partner in his shipping company. When his uncle died in 1764, John became one of Boston's most wealthy citizens.

In 1765, John was elected to the office of Boston Selectmen. He quickly joined Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty and became a strong opponent of the Stamp Act, a tax levied against the colonists by Great Britain. In 1768, John was appointed as a representative of the Massachusetts legislature. He soon gained the reputation as a strong advocate of American independence. In fact, it was John's shipping company that enabled the financing and smuggling of goods that supported the region's resistance to the British. In 1774, one year after Great Britain levied the Intolerable (Coercive) Acts against the colonists, John was elected president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress, a new Massachusetts legislature which had the authority to call for troops in the wake of a British threat. The British subsequently charged Hancock with treason. In 1775, British troops would march to Lexington with the orders to capture John Hancock. It was during this march that the first shots of the American Revolution were fired. John, along with Samuel Adams, ultimately escaped.

Later in 1775, John was appointed president of the Second Continental Congress. It was John Hancock who commissioned George Washington as commander in chief of the Continental Army. On July 4, 1776, John Hancock became the first American to sign the Declaration of Independence. His large, flamboyant signature was by far the most visible of all signatures. According to legend, Hancock signed the document in such a way so that King George III of England could see the signature without his eyeglasses.

Throughout the Revolution, the Americans relied on John's ability to raise funds and supplies for the Continental Army. In 1780, he was elected governor of Massachusetts, a post he held for nine terms. John died in 1793. Today, counties in ten different states are named in his honor. In addition, the tallest building in Boston is named the John Hancock Building.

**1.) How does the passage imply that John Hancock became wealthy?**

- a.) He made good investments.
- b.) He inherited his uncle's shipping company.
- c.) He owned a lot of land.
- d.) He went to Harvard University.

**2.) Which of the following was not true about John Hancock?**

- a.) He used his shipping company to smuggle goods to help the rebels.
- b.) He supported the Stamp Act.
- c.) He was a member of the Sons of Liberty.
- d.) He supported independence.

**3.) What happened in 1768?**

- a.) John's uncle died.
- b.) John was elected as Boston Selectmen.
- c.) John was elected president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress.
- d.) John was elected as a representative in the Massachusetts legislature.

**4.) Why was John Hancock charged with treason?**

- a.) Because he spoke out against the Intolerable Acts.
- b.) Because he was elected president of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress.
- c.) Because he was elected as Boston Selectman.
- d.) Because he supported the Stamp Act.

**5.) John Hancock was charged with treason by the British. Treason can be defined as an act of disloyalty toward the government. Which of the following is an act of treason?**

- a.) Fighting in a war against another country.
- b.) Making laws that aren't popular with the people.
- c.) Charging someone with a crime they didn't commit.
- d.) Taking steps to disrupt the functioning of the government.

**6.) If John Hancock were to write a list of his life accomplishments, which of the following would NOT be on the list?**

- a.) President of the United States
- b.) President of the Second Continental Congress
- c.) President of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress
- d.) Representative of the Massachusetts of legislature

**7.) Why is John Hancock's signature so large on the Declaration of Independence?**

- a.) Because he had poor eyesight.
- b.) Because he had poor handwriting.
- c.) Because he wanted the King of England to see his signature clearly.
- d.) He was in a hurry.

**8.) What does the word "subsequent" mean in the following sentence:**

The British subsequently charged Hancock with treason.

- a.) Unfairly
- b.) Next or then
- c.) Surely
- d.) Quietly

**9.) Why was John Hancock important to the American cause?**

- a.) He was a great general who won many battles.
- b.) He signed the Declaration of Independence.
- c.) He escaped from the British after the Battles of Lexington and Concord.
- d.) He helped raise funds for the Continental Army and used his shipping business as a way to get supplies.

**10.) Which of the following statements could NOT be applied to John Hancock?**

- a.) A man dedicated to the Patriot cause.
- b.) A man who served in the governments of the state of Massachusetts and the United States.
- c.) A man who has buildings, cities, and states named in his honor.
- d.) A man who signed the Declaration of Independence with a signature larger than anyone else.

During the Revolutionary War, British military forces hired about 30,000 German soldiers, known as Hessians. The word “Hessian” came from the German states of Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Hanau, where some of the “Hessians” came from.

Germany was much different in 1776 than it is today. Then, it was made up of various states, each of which was ruled by a landgrave (prince). Men who lived within each state were often forced into the landgrave’s army at an early age. The landgrave could increase his fortune by renting out these armies to foreign powers in their times of need. The individual soldier had no say in the matter. Payment for the soldiers was sent directly to each state’s landgrave. In this way, the fate of Hessian soldier is sometimes compared to the practice of slavery, although the soldiers were paid well.

The “Hessians” that fought in the Revolutionary War gained a reputation for savagery and were greatly feared amongst the ranks of Continental soldiers. Curiously, several diaries gathered from Hessian soldiers in the field, revealed that they, in fact, were horrified by the way the British soldiers destroyed civilian property and executed prisoners. Despite their military prowess, British soldiers also feared and mistrusted the Hessians, and thus treated them badly.

While the Hessians fought in every battle of the Revolutionary War, they are best remembered in America for their defeat at the hands of George Washington and his soldiers on December 26, 1776. In the battle, Washington’s men crossed the icy Delaware River on Christmas night and marched nine miles to Trenton, staging an ambush on the sleeping Hessians. Many of Washington’s men lacked shoes and the soldiers were said to have left a trail of blood all the way to Trenton. In all, Washington captured about 1,000 Hessian soldiers, who were paraded through the streets in an effort to raise the morale of the beleaguered Patriot cause. Captured German soldiers were sent to area farms to work as farm hands. Other Hessian soldiers were sent to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where they were treated well. Many of the Hessians sent to Lancaster stayed permanently rather than returning to their dreadful existence in Germany. Of the 30,000 Hessian soldiers that fought in America, approximately 3,000-5,000 stayed to live in the United States.

**1. Why was the life of a Hessian soldier comparable to that of a slave?**

- A. Because Hessian soldiers had to fight without payment
- B. Hessian soldiers were forced into the military and rented out to foreign powers
- C. Hessian soldiers were forced to wear shackles and chains
- D. Hessian soldiers were disliked by both American and British soldiers



**2. Which of the following IS NOT true about Hessian soldiers?**

- A. They had a reputation for savagery
- B. About 1,000 Hessians were captured by General Washington at the Battle of Trenton
- C. Only 3,000-5,000 Hessian soldiers decided to return to Germany
- D. About 30,000 Hessian soldiers fought alongside the British in the Revolutionary War

**3. Which of the following is an example of irony?**

- A. Captured Hessian soldiers were paraded through the streets to improve the morale for those supporting the Patriot cause
- B. Although the Hessians earned a reputation for savagery, many were appalled by the British practices of destroying property and executing prisoners
- C. Even though they were good soldiers, Hessian soldiers were mistrusted by British soldiers
- D. Hessian soldiers were often forced into the military at an early age

**4. Define “prowess” in the following sentence?**

Despite their military prowess, British soldiers also feared and mistrusted the Hessians, and thus treated them badly.

- A. decisions
- B. supplies
- C. talents
- D. mysteries

**5. The Hessians...**

- A. played a major role in the British military during the Revolutionary War.
- B. played a major role in the American military during the Revolutionary War.
- C. played a minor role in the British military during the Revolutionary War.
- D. fought in some battles of the Revolutionary War.

**6. Which of the following best describes the events that occurred at Trenton?**

- A. The Hessians ambushed Washington’s army but were ultimately defeated
- B. The Hessians ambushed and defeated George Washington’s army on the day after Christmas in 1776
- C. Washington and his men crossed the icy Delaware River and marched nine miles to Trenton before ambushing the Hessians on Christmas Eve in 1776
- D. Washington’s men ambushed and defeated the Hessians after a nine-mile march to Trenton on the day after Christmas in 1776

**7. If the entire passage was limited to the second paragraph, what could be its title?**

A. Germany in 1776

B. Military tactics used by Hessian soldiers

C. Armies for Rent: How Landgraves Became Rich Lending Fighters

D. The Hessian Soldier: Fighting for Freedom

## **Thomas Jefferson Reading Comprehension**

Thomas Jefferson was born April 13, 1743, in Albemarle County, Virginia. When he was 14, he inherited his father's estate and slaves. Soon after, Jefferson attended the College of William and Mary.

In 1769, when he was just 26, Jefferson was elected to the Virginia House of Representatives. The following year, he married Martha Wayles Skelton. In 1772, Jefferson began building his home, Monticello.

As a member of the Second Continental Congress, Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence in 1776. In 1779, he was elected as governor of Virginia. Although he resigned in 1781, during his term as governor, Jefferson wrote his famous Statute for Religious Freedom. Jefferson's writings also formed the basis of the Ordinances of 1784, 1785, and 1787. From 1785–1789, Jefferson served as minister to France. In 1789, George Washington appointed him secretary of state.

Due to political differences concerning the role of the government with other cabinet members, Jefferson resigned as secretary of state in 1793. Jefferson next ran for president but was defeated in 1796 by John Adams. Nevertheless, he was appointed vice president. Although Jefferson and Aaron Burr received equal electoral votes for presidency, Jefferson was elected president by the House of Representatives in 1800. During Jefferson's presidency, both the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark Expedition occurred. Jefferson served two presidential terms. He later established the University of Virginia. He died on July 4, 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Coincidentally, John Adams died on the same day.

**1.) When was Thomas Jefferson born?**

- a.) 1734
- b.) 1743
- c.) 1473
- d.) 1762

**2.) Which of the following documents was Thomas Jefferson not involved with?**

- a.) Declaration of Independence
- b.) Statute on Religious Freedom
- c.) Ordinance of 1784
- d.) Ordinance of 1786

**3.) Thomas Jefferson served as minister to what country? \_\_\_\_\_**

**4.) Why did Thomas Jefferson resign as secretary of state?**

- a.) Political differences between cabinet members.
- b.) He was about to be president.
- c.) He had to write the Declaration of Independence.
- d.) He was fired.

**5.) Which of the following did Thomas Jefferson not serve as before he was president?**

- a.) vice president
- b.) governor
- c.) senator
- d.) secretary of state

**6.) When was Thomas Jefferson defeated in the presidential election?**

- a.) Before he wrote the Declaration of Independence.
- b.) Before he was minister to France.
- c.) After he was minister to France.
- d.) 1792

**7.) The \_\_\_\_\_ Purchase occurred during Jefferson's presidency.**

**8.) What happened last?**

- a.) Jefferson was elected president.
- b.) Jefferson founded the University of Virginia.
- c.) The Lewis and Clark Expedition
- d.) John Adams died.

**9.) When did Jefferson write the Statute for Religious Freedom?**

- a.) While he was governor
- b.) When he was 26
- c.) While he was vice president
- d.) Before he wrote the Declaration of Independence

**10.) What does "inherited" mean?**

- a.) Given away in a will
- b.) Received from a will
- c.) Taken over
- d.) Destroyed

## **MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE Reading Comprehension**

Marquis de Lafayette was born in France on September 10, 1757. Lafayette is most remembered for his role as a major-general for the Continental Army under General George Washington during the American Revolutionary War.

During the American Revolution, Lafayette served admirably in many battles like the Battle of Brandywine and the Battle of Rhode Island. During this time, Lafayette also returned to France for a short period to try and negotiate for French support for the American Revolution. After returning from his trip to France, General Lafayette helped to block British troops at Yorktown from reaching General Washington's Continental Army, allowing General Washington to better prepare his troops for battle against the British Army.

In 1778, Lafayette once again returned to France to assist the French king. Lafayette tried to encourage King Louis XVI to follow America's examples of freedom and government brought on by the American Revolution. King Louis XVI respected Lafayette and soon brought forth changes to the French government such as the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Rights of Citizens," which closely resembled the Constitution of the United States. Lafayette was then made a commander in chief by the king to aide his country in its own French Revolution.

In 1792, the French Revolution turned and Marquis de Lafayette was captured while trying to escape back to the United States. Lafayette became a prisoner of war for more than five years. In 1797, Napoleon Bonaparte assisted in getting Lafayette released from prison. Lafayette never fully agreed with the French government under the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte, and his supporters and refused to participate in its sessions.

In 1824, American President James Monroe invited Lafayette to return and visit the United States once again. While on his tour of the United States, General Lafayette visited all twenty-four states in the Union. Lafayette soon returned to France and was offered and then declined the dictatorship of France.

Lafayette died 10 years later and was buried in France on May 20, 1834. In 2002, General Lafayette was given American citizenship. America wanted to honor his contribution as a soldier and general in the Revolutionary War.

- 1.) **What does the passage imply about how Lafayette felt about the American government?**
- a.) He thought it should be more like the French government.
  - b.) He was impressed by it.
  - c.) He thought it would never work.
  - d.) He did not trust it.
- 2.) **Marquis de Lafayette served under \_\_\_\_\_ in the American Revolutionary War.**
- a.) Napoleon Bonaparte
  - b.) King Louis XVI
  - c.) James Madison
  - d.) George Washington

- 3.) **During this time, Lafayette also returned to France for a short period to try and negotiate for French support for the American Revolution.**

What does the word "negotiate" mean in the sentence above?

- a.) take
  - b.) forgive
  - c.) demand
  - d.) come to an agreement about something
- 4.) **What happened first in this selection?**
- a.) Lafayette fought in the American Revolutionary War.
  - b.) Lafayette fought in the French Revolution.
  - c.) Lafayette visited the United States in 1824.
  - d.) Lafayette became an American citizen.

- 5.) **What question is answered in the third paragraph?**
- a.) When was Lafayette born?
  - b.) When was Lafayette captured and sent to prison for five years?
  - c.) When did Lafayette return to France to help the French King Louis XVI?
  - d.) How old was Lafayette when he was made a general?

- 6.) **Which of the following is not true?**
- a.) Lafayette was a general in the American Revolutionary War
  - b.) Lafayette was a commander in chief during the French Revolution.
  - c.) Lafayette is buried in America.
  - d.) Lafayette returned to France by the time the French Revolution had begun.

- 7.) **What does the word "citizenship" mean in the last paragraph?**
- a.) A special ship that traveled from America to France.
  - b.) Money and rewards
  - c.) The act of being a citizen.
  - d.) A plaque that says he served in the Revolutionary War.

- 8.) Lafayette fought to help his country during the French Revolution, but...**
- a.) he died in a battle during the French Revolution.
  - b.) he was taken as a prisoner of war and stayed in prison for over 5 long years.
  - c.) he returned to America and became a citizen.
  - d.) he decided to become the nation's dictator anyway.

- 9.) Which question is NOT answered in the second paragraph?**
- a.) What battles did Lafayette participate in during the American Revolution?
  - b.) How did Lafayette's support help George Washington at Yorktown?
  - c.) Why did Lafayette return to France?
  - d.) When was Lafayette thrown in jail?

- 10.) What is the theme of the second paragraph?**
- a.) How Lafayette helped France
  - b.) How Lafayette helped America win its independence
  - c.) How Lafayette was very famous in America
  - d.) How Lafayette was honored in America

## **BATTLES OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD Reading Comprehension**

Following resolutions made by the Continental Congress, armed conflict seemed imminent. King George, who declared the colonies in a state of rebellion, had authorized the deliverance of British soldiers to reinforce those who had occupied Boston since 1768. General Thomas Gage was sent to Boston to disarm the colonists and arrest the leaders of the rebellion, namely John Hancock and Samuel Adams. After learning of the existence of a large colonial arsenal in Concord, about 20 miles northwest of Boston, General Gage sent a detachment of 700 troops under Colonel Francis Smith to march to Concord for the purposes of seizing and destroying artillery and ammunition. The colonists, however, already knew their weapons were in jeopardy and had moved most of them to secret locations before the arrival of the redcoats.

As British troops mobilized in Boston, Dr. Joseph Warren alerted members of the Sons of Liberty—Paul Revere and William Dawes. Dawes promptly rode to Concord to warn Hancock, and Adams and Revere rode through the countryside yelling, “The regulars are coming” or “The regulars are out.” By dawn, about 70 armed minutemen (Massachusetts militia) had gathered in the Lexington town common awaiting the arrival of the redcoats. Gage’s own wife, Margaret Kemble Gage, is thought to have given Warren information about her husband’s planned raid in sympathy to the Revolution.

When the British arrived on the scene, someone fired a shot that would become known as “The Shot Heard Round’ the World.” To this day, historians disagree on which side fired first, or if the shot came from a spectator. Nevertheless, the redcoats subsequently unleashed devastating volleys before charging the minutemen with their bayonets. As the redcoats marched on to Concord, eight minutemen were killed and ten wounded. As the march continued, the numbers of minutemen arriving from surrounding towns swelled and the substantial militia retreated to a ridge about a mile from Concord across the North Bridge. Meanwhile, British troops had occupied Concord, destroyed several cannons, and burned leftover ammunition. A gun battle erupted as the two sides crossed at the North Bridge. In a stunning turn of events, the minutemen held the bridge, forcing the redcoats to retreat. As the redcoats exited Concord on their way back to Boston, hundreds or even thousands of farmers and other colonial workers had positioned themselves behind trees, rocks, in pastures, under bridges, and in places they could not be seen by the redcoats, firing at them as they marched on. Desperate redcoats, frustrated by an enemy they could not see and in revenge for the brutal scalping of one of their dead, sometimes pillaged houses and communities along the way, killing dozens of colonists. Colonial militias, however, continued to snipe away the lines of redcoats. By the time they finally had made it back to Boston, 73 redcoats were killed and 174 were wounded. The American Revolution had officially begun.



- 1.) **When did British troops begin their occupation of Boston?**
- a.) 1768
  - b.) Following resolutions made by the Continental Congress
  - c.) During the search for weapons
  - d.) After the Battles of Lexington and Concord

- 2.) **What does “in jeopardy” mean in the following sentence?**

The Colonists, however, already knew their weapons were in **jeopardy** and had moved most of them to secret locations before the arrival of the redcoats.

- a.) safe
  - b.) damaged
  - c.) destroyed
  - d.) threatened
- 3.) **Which of the following was NOT a reason General Gage was sent to Boston?**
- a.) To disarm the colonists
  - b.) To arrest Samuel Adams
  - c.) To arrest John Hancock
  - d.) To arrest Benjamin Franklin

- 4.) **Which of the following best describes Margaret Kemble Gage?**

- a.) Concerned for the colonists
- b.) Concerned for herself
- c.) Concerned for her husband
- d.) Concerned for no one

- 5.) **Why was the first shot of the Revolutionary War known as the “Shot Heard Round’ the World?”**

- a.) It changed the course of world history.
- b.) Many people lost their lives.
- c.) The cannons fired were very loud.
- d.) Shots occurred all around the world.

- 6.) **Who fired the first shot?**

- a.) No one knows
- b.) A spectator
- c.) The British
- d.) The Patriots

- 7.) **What happened as the redcoats marched on to Concord?**

- a.) The militia grew.
- b.) The Americans were defeated.
- c.) The minutemen fled.
- d.) None of the Above.

- 8.) **Which of the following happened first?**

- a.) Minutemen gathered on the Lexington Town Common.
- b.) The confrontation at the North Bridge
- c.) The American Revolution had begun.
- d.) The redcoats marched from Concord back to Boston.

- 9.) **Which of the following best describes the redcoats as they marched back to Boston?**

- a.) vulnerable
- b.) confident
- c.) hungry
- d.) bored

- 10.) **Which of the following is NOT true?**

- a.) 73 redcoats were killed by the time they made it back to Boston.
- b.) The Ride of Paul Revere was nothing but a legend.
- c.) The colonists had prepared for the confiscation of their weapons by the British.
- d.) Many redcoats were killed by minutemen who hid behind rocks and trees.

**Loyalists Printable Reading Comprehension**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

During the time of the American Revolution, many residents of the colonies were unsure whether the idea of separating from England was a wise one. Some were strictly opposed to it. These individuals were called Loyalists. Loyalists, called “Tories” by Patriots, opposed the Revolution for many reasons:

1. They believed in the sanctity of their shared cultural heritage with the British and had a strong sense of duty and loyalty toward the British Crown.
2. They may have benefitted from the Trans-Atlantic trade with England and were worried that war could threaten their livelihood.
3. They were worried that an independent nation would be reduced to anarchy and chaos.
4. They thought the British military would simply crush any rebellion and additional punishments would follow.
5. They believed that Parliament was the legitimate authority over the colonies and that acts of rebellion amounted to insubordination.
6. They enjoyed being part of the British Empire, considered the most powerful in the world.
7. African-American slaves living in the 13 colonies were promised freedom by the British for joining the cause.

Throughout the Revolutionary War, individuals and groups identified as Loyalists were persecuted by Patriots. Loyalists were subject to personal attacks, imprisonment, harassment, and seizure of their property. Many were forced to flee. Some fled to Loyalists strongholds such as New York City, while others fled to Canada or the West Indies. While many such people started their lives anew, others eventually returned to America where they were treated harshly at first, but eventually re-integrated into society.

**1. Which of the following best describes how people felt about the Revolutionary War?**

- A. They strongly supported war against England
- B. They did not support war against England
- C. They supported the British Empire
- D. Some people supported war while others opposed it

**2. What were “Tories?”**

- A. Those who remained loyal to England
- B. Those who supported war with England
- C. Those who weren’t sure what side to choose
- D. Those who decided to leave America forever

**3. Which of the following statements would a Loyalist disagree with?**

- A. “The British Empire is the most powerful in the world!”
- B. “We are subjects of the king and should respect his authority!”
- C. “Do not let your business with England blind you from its disregard for our rights!”
- D. “The British army will simple crush the ragtag Patriots!”

**4. Read the sentence below. Which of the choices would be an example of the underlined word?**

They believed that Parliament was the legitimate authority over the colonies and that acts of rebellion amounted to insubordination.

- A. Yelling at your teacher
- B. Forgetting your homework
- C. Falling from the monkey bars
- D. Talking out of turn

**5. After the Revolutionary War...**

- A. Loyalists were forgiven immediately.
- B. Most Loyalists became Patriots.
- C. Many loyalists would return to America.
- D. Loyalists could only live in England.

**6. Which of the following questions is not answered in the final paragraph?**

- A. Where was a loyalist stronghold in the 13 colonies?
- B. How were Loyalists treated in America?
- C. How were Loyalists who returned to America initially treated?
- D. How were people identified as Loyalists?

**7. Which statement is NOT true?**

- A. Loyalists frequently harassed Patriots, took their property, and forced many to flee
- B. Loyalists had a strong sense of duty to the British crown
- C. African-American Loyalists were promised freedom for their service to the British
- D. Loyalists believed that America, as an independent nation, could not peacefully exist.

Following the winter and spring at their encampment at Valley Forge, the Continental Army was trained and refreshed. Commander-in-Chief of Continental forces, George Washington, had learned that British forces had planned to evacuate Philadelphia and return to New York in fear of a naval blockade. The 100-mile march from Philadelphia to New York would occur largely through the state of New Jersey. Washington saw the evacuation as a perfect opportunity to strike at the British to prevent them from reaching New York.

On the blistering afternoon of June 28, 1778, Washington ordered a detachment of 5,000 men to strike at the British rear guard as they departed Monmouth Courthouse, New Jersey, on their way to New York. The strike was initiated to delay the British until the main American force could engage them. Patriot General Charles Lee was in charge of the initial attack, which failed miserably and resulted in a disorganized retreat. An enraged General Washington reportedly reprimanded Lee before taking command of the retreating soldiers. Placing himself in the line of fire among the retreating Continentals, Washington rallied the soldiers who regrouped and held the British in check until the main American force could arrive. The battle raged throughout the entire day with neither side gaining a decisive advantage. Only the arrival of dusk silenced the muskets and cannon. Although Washington wanted to resume the battle in the darkness, British forces had withdrawn from the area to continue their march to New York City. Patriot forces suffered approximately 500 casualties in the battle while British forces suffered as many as 1,000. Dozens, if not, hundreds of soldiers died of heat stroke rather than from combat. The battle is historically seen as a tactical draw, although the Patriots did not stop the British march to New York. The Patriots, did however, prove they could successfully battle the British in open combat.

Monmouth was the last major battle waged in the Northern Theater. British forces would soon turn their attention to the Loyalist-friendly southern colonies.

**1. Why were British forces marching to New York?**

- A. To escape the Continental Army
- B. To attack and capture New York
- C. To sail back to England
- D. They feared a naval blockade in Philadelphia

- 2. Why did Washington make the decision to strike at the rear guard of the British army?**
- A. He wanted to surprise them
  - B. He thought he could attack the British where they were weakest
  - C. He put Charles Lee in charge of initiating the attack
  - D. He wanted to delay the British so that the main part of his army could attack them
- 3. Which of the following is not true about Washington's initial attack?**
- A. It involved a detachment of 5,000 soldiers
  - B. It would occur in New York
  - C. It would be led by Charles Lee
  - D. The attack failed miserably and resulted in retreat
- 4. As the day moved on, which of the following best describes the scene?**
- A. The Americans gained the advantage
  - B. The British gained the advantage
  - C. Neither side gained an advantage
  - D. The British began to retreat
- 5. What was Washington's main objective at Monmouth Courthouse?**
- A. To prevent the British from marching to New York
  - B. To prove his army could succeed in a fight against the British
  - C. To save his soldiers from heat stroke
  - D. To withdraw from the battlefield and continue the fight for a second day
- 6. What is not true about Monmouth Courthouse?**
- A. It was last major battle to occur in the north during the Revolutionary War
  - B. During the battle, George Washington placed himself in the line of fire to rally the retreating Continentals
  - C. The battle raged on through the night and only the coming of the morning silenced the guns and cannons
  - D. The battle is historically seen as a draw
- 7. Why did the British change strategies after Monmouth Courthouse?**
- A. They thought they would have better luck in New York
  - B. They thought they would have better luck in the southern colonies
  - C. They thought they had already defeated the Patriots in the Northern Theater
  - D. They wanted to get away from George Washington and the newly trained Continental Army

## **Battles in New York Reading Comprehension**

After the British Pyrrhic (costly) victory at Bunker Hill in 1775, British General William Howe decided a lethal blow needed to be delivered to the Patriot cause. Howe proposed to launch an attack on New York City using tens of thousands of troops. He began mobilizing the massive fleet in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Meanwhile, American Commander in Chief George Washington had ordered General Charles Lee to prepare for the defense of the city. That June, Howe and 9,000 troops set sail for New York. Howe's army was to be met in the city by additional regiments of German and British troops. Reinforcements from Halifax led by Howe's brother would follow them.

Howe's initial fleet arrived in New York Harbor and began landing troops on Staten Island. On August 27, 1776, British forces engaged the Americans at the Battle of Brooklyn Heights (also called the Battle of Long Island). Howe's army successfully outflanked Washington's, eventually causing the Patriots, after some resistance, to withdraw to Manhattan under the cover of darkness, thereby avoiding a potentially costly siege at the hands of the British.

After failed peace negotiations, the British Army next struck at Lower Manhattan, where 12,000 British troops quickly overtook the city. Most of the Continental Army had retreated to defensible positions at Harlem Heights and then to White Plains, well north of the city, but some soldiers remained at Fort Mifflin in Manhattan. Howe's army chased Washington and the Continental Army into positions north of White Plains before returning to Manhattan. In Manhattan, Howe set his sights on Fort Mifflin, the last Patriot stronghold in Manhattan. In the furious, three-pronged attack, British forces easily took the fort, capturing nearly 3,000 American prisoners and at least 34 cannons in the process. Most of the prisoners were taken to squalid British prison ships where all but 800 or so died of disease or starvation. General Washington, now at Fort Mifflin, directly across the Hudson River from Fort Mifflin, witnessed the events that happened.

Following the fall of Fort Mifflin, British forces ferried up the Hudson River in barges toward Fort Mifflin. Washington ordered the evacuation of the fort's 2,000 soldiers across the Hackensack River at New Bridge Landing. Washington would lead his army clear across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. Following the events in and around New York City, the outlook was bleak for the Continental Army. Morale in the army was extremely low, enlistments were ending, and desertions were commonplace. Even General Washington admitted his army's chances of success were slim. Meanwhile, General Howe ordered his army into their winter quarters that December and established several outposts from New York City south to New Brunswick, New Jersey.

**1.) Where was Howe's massive fleet mobilized for the attack on New York?**

- a.) Boston
- b.) Canada
- c.) New York
- d.) New Jersey

**2.) Which of the following would NOT participate in Howe's attack on New York?**

- a.) German soldiers
- b.) Soldiers led by Howe's brother
- c.) British soldiers
- d.) General Charles Lee

**3.) What happened at the Battle of Brooklyn Heights?**

- a.) The Americans withdrew.
- b.) The British withdrew.
- c.) George Washington was captured.
- d.) A costly siege

**4.) Why were Patriot forces at Harlem Heights?**

- a.) It was a position they thought they could defend.
- b.) Washington's headquarters were located there.
- c.) They were hiding from the British.
- d.) They were about to surrender.

**5.) Which of the following was NOT true about Fort Washington?**

- a.) It was the last Patriot stronghold in Manhattan.
- b.) It was attacked by General Howe and British soldiers.
- c.) It had been completely evacuated by George Washington.
- d.) British forces easily took the fort.

**6.) What does the adjective "squalid" mean as written in the following sentence:**

Most of the prisoners were taken to squalid British prison ships where all but 800 or so died of disease or starvation.

- a.) Dangerous
- b.) Crowded
- c.) Unsanitary
- d.) Honored

**7.) How did George Washington likely feel watching the events at Fort Washington?**

- a.) Proud
- b.) Honored
- c.) Desperate
- d.) Dizzy

**8.) Why did George Washington evacuate Fort Lee?**

- a.) Because the British would likely attack it.
- b.) There were no more supplies inside.
- c.) He needed to try to rescue the prisoners.
- d.) They had just defeated the British at Fort Washington.

**9.) Where would Washington's army eventually end up?**

- a.) New York
- b.) New Jersey
- c.) Fort Lee
- d.) Pennsylvania

**10.) Which of the following best expresses the effects of the Battles in New York?**

- a.) The Patriots were in a good position.
- b.) The outlook was very bleak for the success of the Patriots.
- c.) Morale within the army increased.
- d.) The size of the army grew.



## Thomas Paine and Common Sense Reading Comprehension

Thomas Paine was born in England in 1737. He was the son of uneducated English farmers. In his early years, he served as an apprentice in his father's corset-making business but eventually served as a merchant seaman before starting his own corset business. In 1759, Paine married Mary Lambert, who would soon die during childbirth.

After the death of his wife, Paine moved around England and took several different jobs such as a servant, tax collector, and teacher. In 1771, Paine married Elizabeth Ollive, his landlord's daughter. It was during this time, while living in Lewes, East Sussex, that he became involved in local politics. In 1772, he published his first political work, known as *The Case of the Officers of Excise*, which championed better pay and working conditions for tax collectors. That same year, Paine met Benjamin Franklin, who encouraged him to move to America and wrote him a recommendation to do so. Paine arrived in Philadelphia on November 30, 1774, just days after obtaining a legal separation from his second wife. Upon his arrival in America, he was near death from typhoid, which had claimed the lives of five other passengers on the ship.

Although it took six weeks for Paine to recover from the trip to America, he quickly made his mark on American politics and sentiments. On January 10, 1776, he anonymously published *Common Sense*, a pro-independence pamphlet that would galvanize the colonists against the British and that would greatly influence the expediency of the Declaration of Independence. Paine's pamphlet quickly spread through the colony's literate population and became the international voice of the pro-independence colonies. *Common Sense* would quickly become the top-selling publication of the 18th century. That same year, he penned *The Crisis*, which greatly helped to inspire the Continental Army. Below is a famous quote from *The Crisis*:

“These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier  
and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink  
from the service of their country; but he that stands it now,  
deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.  
Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we  
have this consolation with us, that the harder the  
conflict, the more glorious the triumph.”

During and after the Revolution, Paine worked in France on French-American foreign affairs. It was during this time that he began to advocate the French Revolution. On January 29, 1791, he published *The Rights of Man*, a pamphlet encouraging the French Revolution and criticizing European monarchies. At first, he was seen as a great asset to the revolutionaries of France and was appointed to the French Convention and was named an honorary French citizen. However, as powers shifted in revolutionary France, Paine quickly became unpopular, was arrested, and scheduled to be executed (though he escaped execution by chance). During his incarceration, Paine penned *The Age of Reason*, a pamphlet that condemned organized religion. This pamphlet ultimately alienated many of his former supporters and resulted in his virtual ostracism from politics upon his return to America. Paine died in New York City in 1809. According to record, only six people came to his funeral.

**1.) Which of the following did Thomas Paine NOT do in his early years?**

- a.) Go to war
- b.) Work as an apprentice
- c.) Run a business
- d.) Serve on a boat

**2.) What did Thomas Paine's first publication support?**

- a.) Education for all
- b.) The war for independence
- c.) Better pay for tax collectors
- d.) Marriage

**3.) Based on the passage, in what condition was Thomas Paine's health when he arrived in Philadelphia?**

- a.) He was in good health.
- b.) He was in okay health.
- c.) He was in bad health.
- d.) He was near death.

**4.) When did Thomas Paine publish *Common Sense*?**

- a.) Before he arrived in America
- b.) Before he obtained a legal separation from his second wife
- c.) After he recovered from typhoid
- d.) 1791

**5.) Which of the following would best describe the main idea of *Common Sense*?**

- a.) America should seek peace with England.
- b.) America should fight to become an independent nation.
- c.) Americans should support their king.
- d.) Obtaining freedom will be easy.

**6.) Which of the following would describe Paine's "sunshine patriot" as in the following lines:**

The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country...

- a.) Someone who likes warm weather
- b.) Someone who fights to the death
- c.) Someone who is inspirational
- d.) Someone who fights only when it is easy

**7.) Where was Thomas Paine after the Revolution?**

- a.) France
- b.) Philadelphia
- c.) England
- d.) None of the above

**8.) Which of the following best describes how the French felt about Thomas Paine?**

- a.) At first he was a nuisance, then an asset.
- b.) They always considered him a nuisance.
- c.) At first he was an asset, then a nuisance.
- d.) They always considered him an asset.

**9.) Which of Thomas Paine's pamphlets angered his former supporters?**

- a.) *The Age of Reason*
- b.) *Common Sense*
- c.) *The Case of the Officers of Excise*
- d.) *The Crisis*

**10.) Which happened last?**

- a.) Paine published *The Age of Reason*
- b.) Paine was nearly executed.
- c.) 1810
- d.) Paine's funeral

Mary Ludwig Hayes McCauly was born on October 13, 1744, in a town near Trenton, New Jersey. She later moved to Pennsylvania. When she was only a young teenager, she married William Hayes, a barber. Hayes would join the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

Mary McCauly is best known today for the role that she played in the 1778 Battle of Monmouth (N.J.) as a Continental Army camp follower and original “Molly Pitcher”. Like many women of the day she carried pitchers of waters for thirsty soldiers or for their smoldering cannons. She probably earned the nickname from soldiers on the battlefield shouting “Molly! Pitcher!” Molly was a common nickname for women named Mary.

Mary earned her legendary status during the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse. After her husband collapsed from the 100-degree heat, or from being wounded, Mary bravely took over as the gunner and continued to fire the cannon herself throughout the scorching day. According to legend, a British cannonball flew between her legs and tore her skirt, to which she responded, “well, that could have been worse.”

After the Revolutionary War came to a close, both William and Mary settled in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. After William Hayes’ death, Mary married Revolutionary War veteran John McCauly. In 1822, Mary Ludwig Hayes McCauly was awarded a Revolutionary War pension by the Pennsylvania State Legislature for her service at the Battle of Monmouth. “Molly Pitcher” died on January 22, 1832, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In 1876, a special marker was laid on her grave commemorating her service as “Molly Pitcher” in the Revolutionary War. Mary’s story may or may not be partly folklore. Some historians believe her story is the composite of several “Molly’s” who helped on the battlefields of the Revolutionary War.

**1. Which of the following is not true about Molly Pitcher?**

- A. Her real name was not Molly
- B. She was married as a teenager
- C. She was married twice
- D. She was wounded at the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse

**2. The story of Molly Pitcher...**

- A. Is definitely about Mary McCauly
- B. is probably all folklore
- C. may partly be folklore
- D. has been proven to be completely true

**3. Which of the following the passage suggest about the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse?**

- A. The Battle of Monmouth Courthouse was a victory for the Continental Army
- B. The Battle of Monmouth Courthouse occurred on a very hot day
- C. The Battle of Monmouth Courthouse was a defeat for the Continental Army
- D. Most of the soldiers on the battlefield were women

**4. When did “Molly” move to Carlisle Pennsylvania?**

- A. Toward the beginning of the Revolutionary War
- B. Toward the end of the Revolutionary War
- C. In 1822
- D. After the death of William Hayes

**5. What is another way to write the sentence below without losing meaning?**

Some historians believe her story is the composite of several “Molly’s” who helped on the battlefields of the Revolutionary War.

- A. It is most likely that Molly Pitcher’s story was made to inspire other women to help on the battlefields of the Revolutionary War
- B. Some historians believe that Molly Pitcher’s story is actually the combined story of multiple “Molly Pitchers” during the Revolutionary War
- C. Some historians believe Molly Pitcher and Mary McCauly were different people
- D. Some historians believe Molly Pitcher helped on many battlefields

**6. What question is answered in the final paragraph?**

- A. Who was Molly’s second husband?
- B. How did Molly show bravery in the Battle of Monmouth Courthouse?
- C. When did John McCauly die?
- D. Where was Molly Pitcher buried?

**7. Which of the following best describes how Mary got her nickname?**

- A. It was most likely because Mary was nearly hit by a cannonball
- B. It was most likely because Mary showed bravery on the battlefield
- C. It was most likely from the shouts of soldiers who needed water
- D. It was because those who were named Mary were nicknamed Molly

## **BATTLE OF SARATOGA Reading Comprehension**

In 1777, British war generals devised a plan to bring a quick end to the war: They would effectively sever New England from the rest of the colonies by taking control of New York City, Albany, and the Hudson River. First, British General John Burgoyne would lead 8,000 troops from Canada. Barry St. Leger would direct his troops east from Lake Ontario, and General Howe would move his troops north from New York City, where all three would meet at Albany to destroy the Rebel armies.

General Howe, however, had different plans. Howe brought his army south from New York and invaded the Patriot capital of Philadelphia. Although he succeeded in capturing the city and forcing Congress to flee to York, Pennsylvania, he decided to camp his army in the capital for the winter rather than proceeding with the plan and marching to Albany. Furthermore, stubborn Patriot resistance under the infamous General Benedict Arnold kept St. Leger from making it to Albany, and Burgoyne's progress was slowed by excess baggage and entire groves of trees felled by the Patriots to make his travels even more difficult. Low on supplies, Burgoyne sent a detachment to capture an American supply base at Bennington, Vermont. The detachment was defeated by John Stark and the Green Mountain Boys, causing Burgoyne to withdraw to Saratoga, N.Y.

Burgoyne's army soon became trapped in Saratoga, blocked in the south by Patriot General Horatio Gates' army. Howe's army remained in Philadelphia, and St. Leger's army was defeated at Fort Stanwix. On October 7, 1777, Burgoyne made a desperate attempt to attack the larger Patriot force at Saratoga which now comprised the armies of both Gates and Arnold. Despite initial success at Freeman's Farm, Burgoyne's army would be routed by Arnold's at Bemis Heights. Beset by a lack of supplies and horrendous casualties, Burgoyne had no choice but to surrender.

The Patriot victory at Saratoga is often seen as the turning point in the war. Not only did it renew the morale of the American public, but it convinced potential foreign partners, such as France, that America could win the war and that it might be in their best interests to send aid. In February of 1778, with the help of Benjamin Franklin and his charisma while minister to France, the United States and France signed a treaty of alliance. As a result, France sent generals, troops, ships, supplies, and money to America to help in the war effort. France declared war on England. Spain would declare war on England in 1779.

- 1.) **How did British generals try to devise a “quick” end to the war?**
  - a.) By taking Philadelphia
  - b.) By advancing on Boston
  - c.) By cutting New England off from the rest of the colonies
  - d.) By winning the Battle of Saratoga
- 2.) **John Burgoyne would be the answer to which of the following questions?**
  - a.) What British general invaded Philadelphia?
  - b.) What British general was supposed to lead his 8,000 troops from Canada?
  - c.) What general would direct his troops from Lake Ontario?
  - d.) What general led the Patriot army at Saratoga?
- 3.) **Which of the following most closely resembles the British plan?**
  - a.) The armies of Howe, St. Leger, and Burgoyne would meet at New York City.
  - b.) The armies of Howe, St. Leger, and Burgoyne would meet at Philadelphia.
  - c.) The armies of Howe, St. Leger, and Burgoyne would meet at Albany.
  - d.) None of the Above
- 4.) **Which of the following generals failed to follow the plan?**
  - a.) Arnold
  - b.) Howe
  - c.) Burgoyne
  - d.) St. Leger
- 5.) **Howe’s decision to advance on Philadelphia...**
  - a.) resulted in the city’s capture.
  - b.) contributed to the British defeat.
  - c.) resulted in the flight of Congress.
  - d.) all of the above
- 6.) **Which of the following WAS NOT a reason that General Burgoyne’s army was ultimately defeated?**
  - a.) His army failed to ever reach Albany.
  - b.) The other two armies failed to join forces with him.
  - c.) His progress was slowed by excess baggage.
  - d.) His detachment was unable to garner supplies in Vermont.
- 7.) **Which of the following is an example of cause and effect?**
  - a.) Cause: Burgoyne’s detachment was defeated.  
Effect: His army withdraws to Saratoga.
  - b.) Cause: Congress flees to York.  
Effect: Burgoyne is defeated.
  - c.) Cause: Congress flees to York.  
Effect: Howe invades Philadelphia.
  - d.) Cause: Burgoyne surrenders.  
Effect: No reinforcements come to Burgoyne’s aid.
- 8.) **Why is Saratoga often seen as the turning point in the war?**
  - a.) Philadelphia was in the hands of the British.
  - b.) It convinced France to sign a treaty of alliance with America.
  - c.) The war would soon be over.
  - d.) It convinced Ben Franklin to go to France.
- 9.) **What is an “alliance?”**
  - a.) A party
  - b.) A gift
  - c.) A punishment
  - d.) A friendship
- 10.) **After the Battle of Saratoga, which of the following was NOT at war with England?**
  - a.) France
  - b.) Canada
  - c.) Spain
  - d.) America

The Sons of Liberty was a secret organization founded in response to the 1765 Stamp Act that required colonists to pay a tax on printed documents. The Stamp Act was issued to help the British recoup the financial burden incurred for prosecuting the French and Indian War. The origins of the Sons of Liberty is unclear, but the organization worked in both Boston and New York. Its purpose was to protect the rights of colonists and to protest British taxes. Samuel Adams is often credited with founding the Sons of Liberty. The motto of the Sons of Liberty was “no taxation without representation.”

The first known protest organized by the Sons of Liberty occurred on August 14, 1765. Under the “Liberty Tree,” a popular meeting place for the Sons of Liberty, supporters hung an effigy of tax collector Andrew Oliver from the tree. Those in attendance took turns punching it and stomping on it. Before long, the effigy was dragged through the streets of Boston while bystanders cheered and jeered. The mob next struck at Oliver’s home, which was thoroughly destroyed. Oliver resigned his position as a tax collector three days later. On August 26, the Sons of Liberty destroyed the home of the unpopular lieutenant governor, Thomas Hutchinson.

As the path to war became clear, the Sons of Liberty used mob rule and intimidation as powerful weapons against British agents and Loyalists. In some cases, members of the Sons of Liberty were reported to have tarred and feathered perceived enemies such as tax collectors and customs officers. Tarring and feathering involved pouring hot pine tar on a person before covering them in feathers. Although certainly painful and embarrassing, tarring and feathering was not fatal.

The Sons of Liberty are best known for staging the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 1773, in protest of the Tea Act, which allowed a British company a monopoly over the tea trade. In the Boston Tea Party, members of the Sons of Liberty dressed up as Indians, boarded a British tea vessel called Dartmouth, and flung its entire load of tea into Boston Harbor. The “party” and the resulting Intolerable Acts passed by Parliament as a punishment, were among the primary causes of the coming war.

**1. What the purpose of the Sons of Liberty? (Select all that apply)**

- A. To collect taxes from colonists
- B. To protect the rights of the colonists
- C. To protest taxes
- D. To use violence to intimidate their enemies

**2. For which of the following questions would “Andrew Oliver” be the answer?**

- A. What was the name of the lieutenant governor of Massachusetts in 1765?
- B. Who is credited with founding the Sons of Liberty?
- C. What British official was tarred and feathered?
- D. Who resigned his position as tax collector on August 17, 1765?

**3. What was the effect of the 1765 Stamp Act?**

- A. The passing of the Intolerable Acts
- B. The Boston Tea Party
- C. The formation of the Sons of Liberty and widespread violence
- D. The prosecution of the French and Indian War

**4. What does “effigy” mean in the following sentence?**

Before long, the effigy was dragged through the streets of Boston while bystanders cheered and jeered.

- A. Model
- B. Target
- C. Replacement
- D. Idol

**5. Which of the following is correct? (Select all that are true)**

- A. The cause of the Tea Act was the Boston Tea Party
- B. The effect of the Tea Act was the Intolerable Acts
- C. The effect of the Tea Act was the Boston Tea Party
- D. The effect of the Boston Tea Party was the Intolerable Acts

**6. How are the second and third paragraphs similar?**

- A. They both discuss methods used by the Sons of Liberty to intimidate enemies
- B. They both discuss methods in which people were injured
- C. They both discuss the role of the Sons of Liberty during the Revolutionary War
- D. They both discuss meeting places used by the Sons of Liberty

**7. What question is not answered in the passage?**

- A. What happened during the Boston Tea Party?
- B. Why did the British issue the Stamp Act?
- C. When did Andrew Oliver resign as a tax collector?
- D. How did the Intolerable Acts punish the colonists?



The French and Indian War proved extremely expensive. In fact, Prime Minister William Pitt nearly bankrupted Parliament to pay for fighting a war overseas. Parliament enacted the Sugar Act in 1764. The Sugar Act imposed new duties (taxes) on American commodities such as sugar, molasses, textiles, coffee and indigo. Unlike previous taxes, this tax was enforced and accused smugglers were prosecuted. American colonists were enraged by the Sugar Act because they did not think they should be taxed in the same way British residents were. For the first time, as the Virginia House of Burgesses asserted, the famous words, “no taxation without representation” were uttered. American colonists argued that they should not be subjected to taxes unless they had elected representatives in Parliament. To make matters worse, Parliament passed the Stamp Act on March 22, 1765. The Stamp Act required Americans to purchase tax stamps for any printed documents including newspapers, legal documents, marriage licenses and more. On March 24th, Parliament passed the Quartering Act which required Americans to provide housing and provisions to British soldiers. Colonists wondered why troops were being sent to America after the French and Indian War. Many believed the troops were sent over to suppress freedoms Americans had enjoyed.

Opposition to the Stamp Act was universal. In 1765, the Massachusetts General Court organized opposition to the Stamp Act. Representatives from nine colonies drafted a petition calling for the repeal of the Stamp Act. Street mobs, calling themselves the Sons of Liberty, destroyed royal offices in Massachusetts and New York. When the Stamp Act was to be officially implemented, on November 1, 1765, all stamp agents sent over from England had been intimidated into resigning their posts. Meanwhile, Americans increasingly imported goods illegally which caused British merchants and manufacturers to lose business. Some, such as Samuel Adams, began to call for independence because Parliament had exceeded its authority. In March of 1766, Parliament agreed to repeal the Stamp Act, but passed the Declaratory Act which reaffirmed their right to pass any law in America.

**1. Why did the British issue the Sugar Act?**

- A. To pay for paper documents which were expensive to make
- B. To tax the Americans on tea, sugar, and molasses
- C. To make sure the colonists knew that Parliament was in charge
- D. To help recover money used to pay for the French and Indian War

- 2. What did “no taxation without representation” really mean?**
- A. That the colonists would not pay taxes unless they had someone in Parliament on their side
  - B. That the colonists would not be taxed unless Parliament moved to America
  - C. That citizens living in England should not be taxed
  - D. That the colonists would never pay taxes to Parliament because they lived in the colonies rather than in England.
- 3. Which of the following might a colonist have asked after the passage of the Quartering Act?**
- A. Will we have to provide clothing and food to soldiers?
  - B. Why do we keep getting taxed when we have no representative in Parliament?
  - C. Now that the French and Indian War is over, why are more soldiers being sent?
  - D. How will the Quartering Act affect the Stamp Act?
- 4. What could be a synonym for “universal” as used in the first sentence of the second paragraph?**
- A. Total
  - B. Partial
  - C. Severe
  - D. Serious
- 5. What was the role of the Sons of Liberty?**
- A. To peacefully protest the various acts issued by Parliament
  - B. To violently protest the various acts issued by Parliament
  - C. To make the colonies independent from England
  - D. To compromise with Parliament
- 6. Although Parliament ultimately repealed the Stamp Act...**
- A. Parliament agreed that it has exceeded its authority and repealed all acts it had issued against the colonists.
  - B. it agreed that the colonies should become independent
  - C. it issued an act warning the colonists that it could make any law in America.
  - D. it waged war on the Sons of Liberty.
- 7. What question is not answered in the second paragraph?**
- A. What colonies signed the petition demanding repeal of the Stamp Act?
  - B. What was the Declaratory Act?
  - C. What happened to stamp agents in America?
  - D. Why did some Americans call for independence from England?

## **Noble Train of Artillery Reading Comprehension for Grades 4-6**

On May 10, 1775, Benedict Arnold, Ethan Allen, and the Green Mountain Boys, conducted a successful raid of Fort Ticonderoga. The bloodless raid yielded an incredible cache of weapons for the fledgling Patriot cause. There was a problem, however. Fort Ticonderoga was located in remote upstate New York, where the weapons were of little use. How could the Patriots transport the heavy weaponry 300 miles to break the British blockade of Boston Harbor?

That same year, Commander-in-Chief George Washington was put in charge of Patriot forces in Boston. Recognizing a need for heavy weaponry, Washington chose the 25-year-old bookseller, Henry Knox to lead the expedition to transport the weapons to Boston. On December 5, 1775, Knox reached Fort Ticonderoga. Knox's first assignment was to evaluate the weapons and to determine which would be transported. Knox chose 59 different weapons, including several large cannons called "Big Berthas." In all, the load of weapons was estimated to weigh 60 tons.

Much of what is known about Knox's journey comes from his largely incomplete and tattered diary. On December 17, Knox wrote to Washington that he was on his way to Boston and had procured 42 sleds and 80 "yoke" of oxen. By Christmas Day, Knox had crossed the icy Hudson River near Albany, although two feet of snow slowed his progress. It took an additional two weeks for Knox and his team to usher all of the cannons across the river. In the process, several cannons fell through the ice and were retrieved. Although details within Knox's diary are sketchy, he apparently crossed the Berkshire Mountains in western Massachusetts and reached Framingham, Massachusetts, on January 25. Knox had reached the outskirts of Boston at Cambridge two days later. The entire journey, dubbed "one of the most stupendous feats of logistics" in the Revolutionary War, took a total of ten weeks.

On March 4, 1776, Patriot soldiers occupied Dorchester Heights, a series of low hills overlooking Boston. Washington ordered the cannons captured from Fort Ticonderoga to be positioned on the heights, threatening the British fleet in the harbor below. Under the cover of darkness, 2,000 Patriot soldiers under the command of John Thomas, and supervised by George Washington, painstakingly moved cannons into place, built makeshift fortifications, cleared trees, and built rock-filled barrels that could be rolled down the hills in case of a British attack. Giant hay stacks were strategically placed to quiet the noise of the preparations.

When the British realized what had occurred, they made plans to attack the hill to dislodge the Patriots. Their plans, however, were thwarted by a powerful snowstorm, which gave British General William Howe time to reconsider this action. On March 17, 1776, General Howe instructed his soldiers and fleet to leave the city of Boston and its harbor. The British withdrew to Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Boston was safe for the time being.

- 1. What was the major problem at Fort Ticonderoga?**
  - A. British reinforcements threatened to attack
  - B. Fort Ticonderoga was in a remote part of New York
  - C. The weapons captured at Fort Ticonderoga had to be transported to Boston
  - D. It was impossible to break the British blockade at Boston
  
- 2. Which of the following WAS NOT a problem encountered by Henry Knox?**
  - A. British soldiers
  - B. Mountains
  - C. Icy rivers
  - D. Snowstorms
  
- 3. Which of the following best describes the journal of Henry Knox?**
  - A. Detailed and full of specific information
  - B. Pristine and meticulous
  - C. Vague, unfinished, and lacking details
  - D. Full of secrets and gossip
  
- 4. The “Noble Train of Artillery” has been called one of the most “stupendous feats of logistics” in the American Revolution. Which of the following conveys the intended meaning?**
  - A. “There is no way that could ever be done again.”
  - B. “This proves Henry Knox is a genius.”
  - C. “It was unbelievable that Knox was able to bring those weapons to Boston.”
  - D. “From a military standpoint, Knox’s accomplishments proved the Patriots could win the war.”
  
- 5. What was the effect of the Noble Train of Artillery?**
  - A. The British were forced to leave Boston
  - B. The Patriots became an independent
  - C. The British attacked the Patriots at Dorchester Heights
  - D. The Patriots attacked the British under the cover of darkness
  
- 6. What happened first?**
  - A. General Washington ordered the cannons positioned on Dorchester Heights
  - B. March 18, 1776
  - C. General Howe prepared to attack Dorchester Heights
  - D. A powerful snowstorm hit Boston

**7. What does “makeshift” mean in the sentence below?**

Under the cover of darkness, 2,000 Patriot soldiers under the command of John Thomas, and supervised by George Washington, painstakingly moved cannons into place, built makeshift fortifications, cleared trees, and built rock-filled barrels that could be rolled down the hills in case of a British attack.

- A. Complicated
- B. Strong
- C. Professional
- D. Temporary

## **Winter at Valley Forge Reading Comprehension**

During the 1700s and 1800s, major fighting during wars generally ceased for the winters, and armies took up winter encampments. As winter descended upon Pennsylvania in 1777, General George Washington chose Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, some eighteen miles west of Philadelphia as site of the winter encampment of the Continental Army. The area was far enough away from the British in Philadelphia to discourage surprise attacks, and its location between high hills and the Schuylkill River made it easily defensible.

The Continental Army, however, was in bad shape. Of the 12,000 soldiers, many lacked the supplies or clothing to survive the winter, and many others were starving at this point. At Valley Forge, defense lines were built along with over 1,000 huts to provide some relief from the brutal elements. Moisture from rain and melting snow made it impossible for many soldiers to stay dry and allowed for the spread of disease. The only reliable food that the soldiers received was a mixture of flour and water known as “firecake.” Occasionally, soldiers received meat and bread. Furthermore, many soldiers had inadequate supplies of clothing and were forced to endure the winter in tatters and without blankets. Many lacked shoes. Wounded soldiers often died from exposure to the elements. Unsanitary and crowded conditions led to the proliferation of diseases and sicknesses such as typhoid and pneumonia. Over 2,000 people died from such sicknesses.

On February 23, 1778, former German General Baron von Steuben arrived at Valley Forge to train the Patriots how to march in formation, fire guns quickly, use bayonets, and become soldiers. Though von Steuben spoke little English, he developed a training manual in French that would be translated on the grounds into English. Unlike many American generals, von Steuben worked directly with the soldiers, endearing him to the thousands suffering at Valley Forge. Von Steuben’s presence did much to improve the morale of the army during the bitter winter and also helped them develop into a more tactical, effective military machine, capable of fighting the British.

On June 19, 1778, the Continental Army left Valley Forge in pursuit of the British who were moving north to New York.

**1.) Why did General Washington choose Valley Forge as the site of his army's winter encampment?**

- a.) Its location made it easy to defend.
- b.) It was the only place where he wouldn't be attacked.
- c.) It was warmer than any other encampments.
- d.) It was close to a source of water.

**2.) Which of the following words would best describe the state of the Continental Army during the winter of 1777–1778?**

- a.) Powerful
- b.) Courteous
- c.) Weak
- d.) Determined

**3.) Which of the following was the LEAST LIKELY threat to soldiers encamped at Valley Forge?**

- a.) Disease
- b.) A British attack
- c.) Starvation
- d.) The cold weather

**4.) How did soldiers get pneumonia?**

- a.) From eating old firecake
- b.) From not getting enough meat
- c.) From the crowded and unsanitary conditions
- d.) From not having shoes

**5.) What does the word “proliferation” mean in the following sentence:**

Unsanitary and crowded conditions led to the **proliferation** of diseases and sicknesses such as typhoid and pneumonia.

- a.) Growth and spread
- b.) Amount
- c.) Effects
- d.) Storage

**6.) Which of the following words best describes pneumonia and typhoid at Valley Forge?**

- a.) Bothersome
- b.) Deadly
- c.) Tragic
- d.) Shameful

**7.) Baron Von Steuben taught the colonists...**

- a.) how to make better use of guns.
- b.) how to hide from the enemy better.
- c.) how to understand German.
- d.) All of the above

**8.) How was Baron von Steuben different from American generals?**

- a.) He never worked directly with soldiers.
- b.) He would go into battle with soldiers.
- c.) He worked directly with soldiers.
- d.) He liked the British.

**9.) What was probably the most important contribution made by Baron von Steuben?**

- a.) He taught the soldiers that their generals did not have to speak good English.
- b.) He taught the soldiers how to use bayonets.
- c.) He provided the soldiers with things to laugh about.
- d.) He helped transform the Continental Army into an army that could actually fight the British.

**10.) What happened last?**

- a.) Baron von Steuben arrived.
- b.) April 1778
- c.) The Continental Army began their pursuit of the British.
- d.) The Continental Army learned to fire guns faster and to use bayonets.

## Baron von Steuben Reading Comprehension for Grades 4-6

Baron Von Steuben was born on November 15, 1730 in Germany. From an early age, he was familiar with the military. His father was an engineer lieutenant in the Prussian army. Von Steuben himself joined the army when he was only 17 years old. He served in the army under Frederick the Great in the Seven Years War. In 1763, however, he was discharged from the army as a captain. No one knows why.

Baron Von Steuben worked for the German courts after his military service. He then tried unsuccessfully to join the ranks of the French and Austrian armies. When he heard that Benjamin Franklin was in France, he traveled there in hopes of offering his services to the Patriot cause. Franklin met with Von Steuben and took an immediate liking to him. He wrote Von Steuben a letter of recommendation and sent it to George Washington. Washington assigned Von Steuben to his winter quarters at Valley Forge.

At Valley Forge, Von Steuben's value to the Patriot cause was realized. He transformed the raw recruits and militia men into a well-disciplined fighting force. He taught badly needed military tactics, drill formations, command structure and line movements. The soldiers loved his style and broken English. Von Steuben was instrumental in raising the army's morale at the horrible conditions of Valley Forge. While his main contributions to the Patriot cause were at Valley Forge, he also served with Nathaniel Greene and the southern army, and was a divisional commander under George Washington at the Yorktown campaign. He served in the American army until 1784. He died November 28, 1794.

### 1. What happened in 1763?

- A. Von Steuben fought in the Seven Years War
- B. Von Steuben joined the army
- C. Von Steuben was removed from the army
- D. Von Steuben traveled to America

### 2. What is not true about Baron von Steuben?

- A. He joined the army at the age of 17
- B. He tried to join both the French and British armies
- C. His father was an engineer lieutenant in the Prussian army
- D. He impressed Benjamin Franklin



- 3. How did Baron von Steuben prove valuable to the Patriot cause?**
- A. He taught George Washington how to be a better general
  - B. He taught the Continental Army military tactics
  - C. He was a spy for the Continental Army
  - D. His main contribution to the Continental Army was as a divisional commander at Yorktown
- 4. The definition of "endear" is to "cause to be loved or liked." Which of the following sentences in the passage reflects the fact that von Steuben "endeared" himself to the soldiers?**
- A. The soldiers loved his style and broken English.
  - B. He served in the American army until 1784.
  - C. He transformed the raw recruits and militia men into a well-disciplined fighting force
  - D. At Valley Forge, Von Steuben's value to the Patriot cause was realized.
- 5. Apart from Valley Forge...**
- A. Von Steuben contributed little to the Patriot cause.
  - B. Von Steuben joined the Prussian army.
  - C. Von Steuben participated in other battles for the Patriot cause.
  - D. Von Steuben joined the French military.
- 6. Which of the following best describes Baron von Steuben?**
- A. An American soldier who helped George Washington at Yorktown
  - B. A former German captain who helped George Washington at Yorktown
  - C. A former German captain who was important in the Revolutionary War
  - D. A former German captain who was important in training the Continental Army
- 7. What is another way to write the following sentence without losing its meaning?**

Von Steuben was instrumental in raising the army's morale at the horrible conditions of Valley Forge.

- A. Von Steuben was successful in helping to defeat the British at Valley Forge
- B. Von Steuben was an important reason the army felt confident at Valley Forge
- C. Von Steuben was successful in helping to keep many sick soldiers from dying at Valley Forge
- D. Von Steuben played an important role in helping the Continental Army defend Valley Forge in the winter of 1777-1778

George Washington

Name \_\_\_\_\_

In 1776, America and England were at war. George Washington was made leader of the new American army, which was called the Continental Army. The Continental Army, however, had no fighting experience and few supplies. Throughout the war, Washington's army suffered from food and clothing shortages. Some soldiers, many of whom were just teenagers, lacked shoes or blankets to sleep with at night. Soldiers in the army were often freezing cold, sick, and suffering from disease.

Despite the many problems and setbacks, and after six long years of fighting, Washington led the Continental Army to victory over the English and America became a free nation. It seemed an impossible fight. The English army was considered the most powerful in the world, but Washington had somehow led his army to victory.

America would be forever grateful to George Washington. He'd be called "father of our country." He'd be America's first president and would have cities, a state, monuments, colleges, highways, and parks named after him. His face is on our one-dollar bill and quarter.

**1. The Continental Army...**

- A. seemed like a powerful fighting force.
- B. seemed like it had no chance against the English army.
- C. was usually healthy and had plenty of food.
- D. was considered the most powerful army in the world.

**2. After six long years...**

- A. Washington led the English army to victory and American became free.
- B. Washington led the Continental Army to victory and America became free.
- C. Washington would have lots of things named after him.
- D. the English army became the most powerful in the world.

**3. Which of the following best describes the first paragraph?**

- A. It explains how the Continental Army won the war
- B. It explains how famous George Washington was
- C. It explains how the Continental Army was in bad shape
- D. It explains how powerful the English army was

**4. Why was Washington called the “father of our country?”**

- A. He was thought to be a great father
- B. He fought against the English
- C. He helped make America its own country
- D. He became very famous in America

## PHILLIS WHEATLEY Reading Comprehension

Phillis Wheatley was born in Gambia (in Africa) on May 8, 1753, and died in Boston on December 5, 1784.

When she was 7 or 8, she was sold as a slave to John and Susanna Wheatley of Boston. She was named after the ship that brought her to America, *The Phillis*.

The Poetry Foundation describes her sale:

*In August 1761, "in want of a domestic," Susanna Wheatley, ...purchased "a slender, frail female child ... for a trifle" ... The captain of the slave ship believed that the waif was terminally ill, and he wanted ... at least a small profit before she died. ... The family surmised the girl—who was "of slender frame and evidently suffering from a change of climate," nearly naked, with "no other covering than a quantity of dirty carpet about her"—to be "about seven years old ... from the circumstances of shedding her front teeth."*

(<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/bio/phillis-wheatley>)

Phillis was very intelligent. The Wheatley family taught her to read and write, and encouraged her to write poetry. Her first poem "On Messrs. Hussey and Coffin" was published when she was only twelve. In 1770, "An Elegiac Poem, on the Death of that Celebrated Divine, and Eminent Servant of Jesus Christ, the Reverend and Learned George Whitefield" made her famous. It was published in Boston, Newport, and Philadelphia.

When she was eighteen, Phillis and Mrs. Wheatley tried to sell a collection containing twenty-eight of her poems. Colonists did not want to buy poetry written by an African. Mrs. Wheatley wrote to England to ask Selina Hastings, Countess of Huntingdon, for help. The countess was a wealthy supporter of evangelical and abolitionist (anti-slavery) causes. She had poems on various subjects, religious and moral, published in England in 1773. This book made Phillis famous in England and the thirteen colonies. She wrote a poem for George Washington in 1775, and he praised her work. They met in 1776. Phillis supported independence for the colonies during the Revolutionary War.

After her master died, Phillis was emancipated. She married John Peters, a free black man, in 1778. She and her husband lost two children as infants. John would be imprisoned for debt in 1784. Phillis and her remaining child died in December of 1784 and were buried in an unmarked grave. Nevertheless, the legacy of Phillis Wheatley lives on. She became the first African-American and the first slave in the United States to publish a book. She proved that slaves or former slaves had a valuable voice in the Revolutionary era.

**1.) Who was George Whitefield?**

- a.) Phillis's husband
- b.) A military general
- c.) Somebody who Phillis admired greatly
- d.) A slave owner

**2.) Phillis finally became free...**

- a.) after her master died.
- b.) when she became wealthy.
- c.) when she published her poems in England.
- d.) after meeting the Countess of Huntingdon.

**3.) Phillis's first attempt at selling her poetry in America (the colonies) was...**

- a.) unsuccessful
- b.) imaginary
- c.) illegal
- d.) successful

**4.) The Wheatley family estimated the age of the slave girl they named "Phillis" by...**

- a.) the condition of her teeth.
- b.) her size.
- c.) her weight.
- d.) her color.

**5.) Which of the following is TRUE about Phillis Wheatley?**

- a.) She was the first African-American and slave to publish a book in the United States.
- b.) She was the first African-American and slave to be able to read and write
- c.) She was the first African-American slave to visit England.
- d.) She was the first African-American and slave to meet George Washington.

**6.) The slave owner who sold Phillis to the Wheatley family believed...**

- a.) she would soon recover from her illness.
- b.) she was very intelligent.
- c.) she was worth a lot of money.
- d.) she would soon die.

**7.) Where is Phillis Wheatley buried?**

- a.) Virginia
- b.) Africa
- c.) Boston
- d.) No one knows

**8.) What question is answered in last paragraph?**

- a.) Who did Phillis marry?
- b.) Why was Phillis a slave?
- c.) What did Phillis prove?
- d.) Where were Phillis's works published?

**9.) By the age of twelve, Phillis was...**

- a.) Married.
- b.) still not able to read or write.
- c.) no longer a slave.
- d.) a published poet.

**10.) It can be inferred from the passage that the Countess of Huntingdon...**

- a.) was surprised that Phillis could read and write.
- b.) didn't care about Phillis's poetry.
- c.) helped Phillis get her writings published.
- d.) believed in slavery.

## **BATTLE OF YORKTOWN Reading Comprehension**

By 1780, the Revolutionary War was raging in both the North and the South, and French forces had fully committed in the American effort to defeat the British. A major objective of the French–American forces was to liberate New York City, which had been occupied by the British. Initially, George Washington had wanted the combined forces to engage the British in New York City, but French General Comte de Rochambeau convinced him that the chance for success would be greater if the combined forces engaged British forces farther south in the Chesapeake Bay, where another French General, Comte de Grasse, could direct his massive fleet from its Caribbean post. Here, Washington’s land troops and French naval troops could encircle British forces under Charles Cornwallis, who were camped at Yorktown, Virginia. Meanwhile, when the decision was finally made, French and American land forces, which included 5,500 new French soldiers, had met near New York City to begin their movements to Virginia. Their meeting outside of New York confused British intelligence, which assumed they planned to liberate New York City. This prevented British General Henry Clinton and British forces occupying New York City from sending aid to Cornwallis in Virginia.

During September of 1781, the combined land forces of Rochambeau and Washington marched south. The plan was strictly confidential, and the generals kept their final destination secret from even the soldiers. American forces marched over 200 miles in a period of about two weeks. The plan worked perfectly. By the end of September, American land forces under Rochambeau and Washington had trapped Cornwallis’s army in the west, and Comte de Grasse’s naval forces had trapped Cornwallis from the east. A siege had begun. There would be no British reinforcements.

On October 6, 1781, Washington’s land troops began digging a trench that would be 2,000 yards long, running from Yorktown to the York River. The trenches were dug to allow the movement of larger artillery toward the British fortifications. Three days later, cannons and guns were dragged into place. By the afternoon, French and American guns were spraying bullets into the British defenses from land and water. The gunfire persisted all through the night, destroying British firepower. Many British soldiers began deserting. By October 12, French forces had destroyed a number of British frigates in the harbor. As the days dragged on for the British, trenches were dug closer and closer to the British fortifications. On October 14, American and French forces stormed two French fortifications (redoubts) successfully, with Alexander Hamilton leading the way for the Americans. Large guns were moved to the newly won locations, rendering all of the British defenses within range.

Cornwallis, desperate for reinforcements that would never reach him in time, hatched a plan to try to escape across the York River. Bad weather, however, disabled his transport boats, and Cornwallis was finally forced to surrender. On October 17, surrender negotiations began and were finalized two days later. As a result of the surrender, the Americans took more than 7,000 British troops prisoner, and the entire Revolutionary War had nearly come to an end. According to legend, as the British soldiers formally surrendered, their drummers and fifers played the tune to the *The World Turn’d Upside Down*. Yorktown would be the last major battle of the war.

**1.) Why did Rochambeau favor engaging the British in the Chesapeake Bay?**

- a.) Because there were more Patriot and French soldiers stationed there
- b.) Because the British had evacuated New York City
- c.) Because the British forces there were weak
- d.) Because another French fleet from the Caribbean Sea could join their forces

**2.) Why were the British confused?**

- a.) The British were expecting Washington to surrender.
- b.) Cornwallis was not supposed to be in Virginia.
- c.) They did not know the French had agreed to help the Patriots.
- d.) It seemed like the Patriots were going to try to liberate New York City.

**3.) What does the word “confidential” mean as used below?**

The plan was strictly confidential, and the generals kept their final destination secret from even the soldiers.

- a.) confident
- b.) secret
- c.) confused
- d.) illegal

**4.) When did the siege at Yorktown begin?**

- a.) When British reinforcements came.
- b.) When American forces had trapped Cornwallis from the east.
- c.) When American and French forces had trapped Cornwallis from the west and French naval forces had trapped him from the east.
- d.) When the British surrendered.

**5.) Why did Washington order trenches dug?**

- a.) To store food
- b.) To move artillery
- c.) To protect soldiers
- d.) To hide from the enemy

**6.) Which of the following words DOES NOT describe the Siege at Yorktown?**

- a.) violent
- b.) persistent
- c.) dangerous
- d.) unintentional

**7.) Based on the passage, which of the following best describes the definition of a siege?**

- a.) A situation on which a smaller army is attacked by a larger army.
- b.) A situation in which two countries combine forces against another.
- c.) A situation in which an army encircles or traps another army while attacking it.
- d.) A battle fought at sea.



**8.) What did the Battle of Yorktown ensure?**

- a.) America would become a free country.
- b.) The British would surrender.
- c.) The Revolutionary War would soon end.
- d.) All of the above.

**9.) Which of the following could NOT possibly be a title for this passage?**

- a.) The World Turn'd Upside Down
- b.) The Liberation of New York
- c.) The Surrender of Cornwallis
- d.) Details of the Siege at Yorktown

**10.) What happened last?**

- a.) July, 1781
- b.) 7,000 soldiers were taken prisoner
- c.) Americans and French successfully stormed the British redoubts.
- d.) Washington ordered trenches dug.