Beyond the Battlefield

Hardship and sacrifice during the War for Independence

SS24.6.8a "Explain how the War for Independence created hardship and required sacrifice by colonists on the home front as well as by soldiers."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two hardships people faced at home, circle two hardships soldiers faced, and draw an arrow from one home-front sacrifice to a soldier's need it helped meet.

What the War Cost

1 During the War for Independence, fighting did not stay on battlefields. When men joined the Continental Army or local militia, many farms and shops lost workers. At home, other family members had to plant crops, tend animals, and keep businesses running with fewer hands. A harvest could take longer or produce less food. Some families also sheltered people who had fled from fighting nearby. These tasks took time and supplies that households might otherwise have used for themselves. Supporting the war meant more work even for people who never carried a musket.

2 In the winter of 1777 to 1778, the Continental Army camped at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. Soldiers needed food, warm clothing, and shoes, but supplies often arrived too slowly. Some men marched or stood guard with damaged shoes; others faced hunger and bitter cold. Disease spread in crowded camp conditions and killed many soldiers. Training and guard duty continued despite these hardships. Staying in the army meant giving up comfort, safety, and time with family. Their service kept an army in the field, but it came at a heavy personal cost.

3 The needs of soldiers also shaped choices at home. Families could send blankets, sew shirts, or sell grain to supply the army, leaving less for their own households. At times, officials took supplies for military use and promised payment, which could add to a family's strain. Meanwhile, the Continental Congress printed paper money to pay war costs. As more bills circulated, the money lost value, and food became harder for families to afford. A blanket or sack of flour could help a soldier survive while its loss made life harder for someone at home.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could a family member joining the army make life harder for the people who stayed home?

2. How did paying for the war with paper money create a hardship for families?

3. Why did staying with the army at Valley Forge require sacrifice from soldiers?

4. How could sending a blanket to the army help a soldier but cause hardship at home?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write two short diary entries, one from a family member at home and one from a Continental soldier. Use two sentences in each entry to explain a different sacrifice caused by the war, and connect the entries through a shared need for food or clothing.

ANSWER KEY

Beyond the Battlefield

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.8a

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two hardships people faced at home, circle two hardships soldiers faced, and draw an arrow from one home-front sacrifice to a soldier's need it helped meet. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could a family member joining the army make life harder for the people who stayed home?	**The farm or shop lost a worker, so others had to do more work. A harvest could take longer or produce less food.**
2	How did paying for the war with paper money create a hardship for families?	**As more paper money circulated, it lost value, making food harder for families to afford.**
3	Why did staying with the army at Valley Forge require sacrifice from soldiers?	**Soldiers faced shortages of food, clothing, and shoes, along with cold and disease. They also spent time away from their families.**
4	How could sending a blanket to the army help a soldier but cause hardship at home?	**The blanket could keep a soldier warm, but the family that sent it would have one less blanket for its own use.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I sent our spare blanket to the army, so my sister and I must share one in our cold room. Soldiers need it to stay warm while they serve.
The blanket a family sent helps me sleep in our freezing camp. I must stay away from my family because the army needs soldiers for the war.

Accept historically plausible home-front and soldier sacrifices with a clear link to the war. The two entries should contain two sentences each and share a need for food or clothing.