Victory and Borders

How leaders, allies, and a peace treaty shaped a new nation

SS24.6.9 "Summarize the reasons for the colonies' victory in the War for Independence. 9a Evaluate the political and military contributions to the American Revolution of Founding Fathers, including their efforts to mobilize support..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three actions by leaders that helped the colonies win. Then circle two details about the boundaries set by the peace treaty.

Winning a War, Shaping a Country

1 Winning independence took more than winning battles. In 1776, many colonists still disagreed about breaking from Britain. John Adams argued for independence in the Continental Congress, helping leaders unite behind the decision. Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, which explained why the colonies claimed the right to govern themselves. These political efforts gave people a shared purpose and helped the Congress ask them to support the war. Still, words alone could not stop British troops. The new nation needed an army that could survive long enough to win.

2 George Washington commanded the Continental Army. Rather than risk losing it in every fight, he sometimes retreated and kept his soldiers together for another day. After an American victory at Saratoga in 1777, Benjamin Franklin helped secure a formal alliance with France in 1778. French money, soldiers, and ships strengthened the American war effort. In 1781, Washington and French general Rochambeau led forces against the British at Yorktown. A French fleet blocked British escape by sea. The British surrender there made peace talks more likely, though the war did not officially end that day.

3 In the Treaty of Paris of 1783, Britain recognized the United States as independent. The treaty set its western boundary at the Mississippi River. Its territory stretched from the Atlantic Ocean toward that river, with the Great Lakes and British Canada to the north and Spanish Florida to the south. The agreement gave the new country room to grow, but the land was not empty. Native nations lived across lands named in the treaty, yet they did not take part in these talks. Western land claims would bring new disputes.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Jefferson's work and Franklin's work help the colonies in different ways?

2. Why was Washington's choice to keep his army together an important part of the war effort?

3. How did the victory at Saratoga help the colonies beyond the battlefield?

4. How did the treaty's western boundary create both an opportunity and a challenge for the United States?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label explaining how the colonies won and how the peace treaty shaped the new country. Include one political action, one military or diplomatic action, one treaty boundary, and one challenge that followed.

ANSWER KEY

Victory and Borders

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.9

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline three actions by leaders that helped the colonies win. Then circle two details about the boundaries set by the peace treaty. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Jefferson's work and Franklin's work help the colonies in different ways?	**Jefferson drafted a declaration that explained the case for independence and helped give colonists a shared purpose. Franklin helped secure the French alliance, which brought money, soldiers, and ships.**
2	Why was Washington's choice to keep his army together an important part of the war effort?	**Retreating at times kept the army from being lost, so it could continue fighting.**
3	How did the victory at Saratoga help the colonies beyond the battlefield?	**After Saratoga, Franklin helped secure a formal alliance with France. French aid strengthened the American war effort.**
4	How did the treaty's western boundary create both an opportunity and a challenge for the United States?	**The Mississippi River boundary gave the United States room to grow. Native nations already lived on lands named in the treaty but were left out of the talks, making new disputes likely.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, which helped give colonists a shared purpose. Washington kept his army together, and French ships helped block British escape at Yorktown. The Treaty of Paris set the Mississippi River as the western boundary of the United States. Native nations lived on lands named in the treaty but were left out of the talks, so western land claims could bring disputes.

Accept other accurate political, military, and diplomatic contributions supported by the passage. For the open task, look for four sentences that connect a reason for victory to a treaty boundary and a later challenge.