

Revolutionary Women

Trace how women's roles expanded and shaped the Patriot cause.

SS.5.A.5.4 "Examine and explain the changing roles and impact of significant women during the American Revolution."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each woman's role or action, and circle the result or impact of that action. Your marks will help you explain how women's roles changed during the Revolution.

New Roles in a Revolution

- ① During the Revolution, many women first supported the Patriot cause from home. They made homespun cloth, avoided British goods, and managed farms or shops while men were away. These jobs mattered because boycotts hurt British trade and families still needed food and income. As the war continued, some women stepped into public, political, or military work that had usually been limited to men.
- ② Abigail Adams managed her family's Massachusetts farm and business when her husband served in Congress. In letters to him, she asked lawmakers to "remember the ladies" when making new laws. Her request did not change the laws then, but it recorded a written argument that women deserved fairer treatment. In Philadelphia, Esther DeBerdt Reed organized women to collect money for the Continental Army. The group used the funds to provide shirts for soldiers.
- ③ Deborah Sampson took an even less usual role. In 1782, she dressed as a man, used the name Robert Shurtliff, and joined the Continental Army. She was wounded in battle and served until illness led to her discovery in 1783. Women could not officially enlist, so Sampson had hidden her identity. Her service showed that women could take military risks, even though the army restricted their participation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 How did women's roles change as the war continued? Use two details from the first paragraph.

2 What did Esther DeBerdt Reed do, and how did her work help the Continental Army?

3 Compare Abigail Adams's role with Deborah Sampson's role. How did each woman affect the Patriot cause or ideas about women?

4 What restriction did Deborah Sampson face, and what did she do because of it?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose Abigail Adams, Esther DeBerdt Reed, or Deborah Sampson. Write three sentences explaining her role, how it went beyond the usual roles for women, and one impact of her actions.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each woman's role or action, and circle the result or impact of that action. Your marks will help you explain how women's roles changed during the Revolution. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did women's roles change as the war continued? Use two details from the first paragraph.	Women moved beyond supporting the cause from home. Some took public, political, or military roles that had usually been limited to men.
2	What did Esther DeBerdt Reed do, and how did her work help the Continental Army?	She organized women to collect money for the Continental Army. The money was used to provide shirts for soldiers.
3	Compare Abigail Adams's role with Deborah Sampson's role. How did each woman affect the Patriot cause or ideas about women?	Adams used letters to argue that women deserved fairer treatment, while Sampson served in the Continental Army disguised as a man. Adams recorded a written argument about women's rights, and Sampson showed that women could take military risks.
4	What restriction did Deborah Sampson face, and what did she do because of it?	Women could not officially enlist in the army. Sampson hid her identity by dressing as a man and using the name Robert Shurtliff.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Esther DeBerdt Reed moved into public work when she organized women in Philadelphia to collect money for the Continental Army. Instead of only supporting the cause at home, she led a group effort in the community. Their funds provided shirts for soldiers, so her work helped the army.

Accept responses that accurately explain a woman's role, show how it expanded beyond common home-based work, and state a passage-based impact. Students may use different wording for public, political, military, or community roles.