Battles That Changed Everything

Trace how military events changed the course of the Revolution.

6-12.US1.10 "Analyze the impact of major military events on the American Revolution, including but not limited to Lexington and Concord, Bunker Hill, Saratoga, Trenton, and Yorktown."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the names of five military events, treating Lexington and Concord as one set of clashes. Circle one effect of each event, then draw a line connecting each name to its effect.

From First Shots to Surrender

1. In April 1775, British troops marched from Boston toward Concord, Massachusetts, to seize colonial military supplies. At Lexington, colonial militia faced them, and shots were fired. Fighting continued at Concord and along the road back to Boston. These clashes at Lexington and Concord turned a growing political dispute into open war, drawing more colonists into armed resistance. In June, colonial forces built defenses on Breed's Hill near Boston. British troops captured the hill in the battle called Bunker Hill, but suffered heavy losses. Those losses showed that defeating colonial fighters would cost Britain far more than its commanders had expected.

2. By late 1776, the Continental Army was losing ground, and many soldiers' enlistments were about to end. On December 26, George Washington led his troops across the Delaware River and surprised Hessian soldiers fighting for Britain at Trenton, New Jersey. The victory gave the struggling army a lift and encouraged some soldiers to keep serving. In 1777, American forces defeated a British army at Saratoga, New York. This victory convinced France that the Americans had a real chance to win. France then entered the war as an American ally, sending money, troops, and naval support.

3. In 1781, British general Charles Cornwallis moved his army to Yorktown, Virginia, where he expected help by sea. American and French troops surrounded his position on land, while a French fleet blocked British ships from reaching him. Cornwallis surrendered in October. Yorktown ended major fighting in the colonies and pushed British leaders toward peace talks, although the war did not officially end until a treaty was signed in 1783. The battles had different kinds of impact: some drew people into the fight, some strengthened an army, and others changed which nations fought or whether Britain could win in America.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill affect the war in different ways?

2. Why did the victory at Trenton matter to the Continental Army beyond winning one battle?

3. How did the American victory at Saratoga change who fought in the war?

4. How did the surrender at Yorktown affect Britain's plans for the war?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose Trenton or Saratoga. Imagine that American forces lost that battle. In three or four sentences, predict one likely change to the war and support your prediction with two details from the passage.

ANSWER KEY

Battles That Changed Everything

GRADES 6-12 · 6-12.US1.10

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the names of five military events, treating Lexington and Concord as one set of clashes. Circle one effect of each event, then draw a line connecting each name to its effect. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Lexington and Concord and Bunker Hill affect the war in different ways?	**Lexington and Concord turned the dispute into open war. British losses at Bunker Hill showed that defeating colonial fighters would be costly.**
2	Why did the victory at Trenton matter to the Continental Army beyond winning one battle?	**It lifted the struggling army and encouraged some soldiers to keep serving.**
3	How did the American victory at Saratoga change who fought in the war?	**It convinced France that the Americans could win, and France entered the war as their ally.**
4	How did the surrender at Yorktown affect Britain's plans for the war?	**It ended major fighting in the colonies and pushed British leaders toward peace talks.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If American forces had lost at Saratoga, France might not have joined the war as an ally. The passage says the victory at Saratoga convinced France that the Americans could win. It also says a French fleet blocked British ships from reaching Cornwallis at Yorktown. Without that fleet, Britain might have been able to help Cornwallis, delaying an American victory.

Accept predictions about either battle if they explain a plausible effect on the war and use two accurate passage details. Predictions need not claim that a different outcome was certain.