Words and Victory

How different leaders helped the American Revolution

6-12.US1.11 "Explain the contributions of leaders throughout the American Revolution, including, but not limited to George Washington, Thomas Paine, Patrick Henry, John Adams, Ben Franklin, and Thomas Jefferson."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one action taken by each named leader. Circle words that show how each action helped the push for independence or the war.

More Than One Kind of Leadership

1 In 1775, colonists were still arguing about whether they should break from Britain. In Virginia, Patrick Henry spoke to fellow lawmakers and urged them to prepare to fight. His words helped press the colony toward armed resistance, though his speech did not declare independence. A year later, Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, a pamphlet that argued ordinary people should reject rule by a king. It was written in direct language and circulated widely, bringing the case for independence beyond meeting rooms. Henry pushed leaders to act; Paine gave many readers reasons to support a complete break.

2 Words also shaped decisions inside the Continental Congress. In 1776, John Adams argued strongly for independence and helped build support among other delegates. He served on the committee assigned to draft a declaration, but Thomas Jefferson wrote its first draft. Jefferson's text explained why the colonies were separating from Britain and stated that people have rights that governments must protect. Congress edited the draft and approved the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. Adams's work in debate helped win votes, while Jefferson's writing presented the decision and its principles to the world.

3 Declaring independence did not mean the war was won. Benjamin Franklin served as an American diplomat in France, where he helped secure a formal alliance in 1778. France supplied money, troops, and ships that strengthened the American war effort. George Washington, commander of the Continental Army, kept his forces together through years of shortages and defeats. In 1781, he led American forces to Yorktown, where they joined French troops and ships to trap a British army. Its surrender was a major turning point, although the war ended officially with a peace treaty in 1783. Diplomacy and command both mattered.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine push people toward independence in different ways?

2. How did John Adams's work in Congress differ from Thomas Jefferson's work on the Declaration?

3. Why did Benjamin Franklin's work in France matter to the American war effort?

4. How did George Washington's leadership and French help contribute to the outcome at Yorktown?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A visitor claims the Revolution was won only on the battlefield. Write a four-sentence reply about George Washington and one leader from the first or second paragraph. Explain what each contributed and why both kinds of work mattered.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADES 6-12 · 6-12.US1.11

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one action taken by each named leader. Circle words that show how each action helped the push for independence or the war. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Patrick Henry and Thomas Paine push people toward independence in different ways?	**Henry urged Virginia lawmakers to prepare to fight, pushing leaders toward armed resistance. Paine's widely read pamphlet gave ordinary readers reasons to support independence.**
2	How did John Adams's work in Congress differ from Thomas Jefferson's work on the Declaration?	**Adams argued for independence and built support among delegates. Jefferson wrote the first draft of the Declaration, explaining the separation and the principle of people's rights.**
3	Why did Benjamin Franklin's work in France matter to the American war effort?	**Franklin helped secure an alliance with France, which supplied money, troops, and ships for the American war effort.**
4	How did George Washington's leadership and French help contribute to the outcome at Yorktown?	**Washington kept the Continental Army together and led American forces to Yorktown. American and French forces trapped a British army there and forced its surrender.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Winning battles mattered, but the colonies also needed to explain why they sought independence. Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence, stating their reasons for separating from Britain and principles about people's rights. George Washington commanded the Continental Army and helped secure the British surrender at Yorktown. Jefferson's writing gave the fight a public purpose, while Washington's leadership helped make independence possible in practice.

Accept other accurate explanations of how the leaders' actions advanced independence. Students should not claim that Henry declared independence or that the surrender at Yorktown officially ended the war.