Paths Through Revolution

How different people shaped the Revolutionary Period

6-12.US1.12 "Explain the contributions of key historical figures during the Revolutionary Period, including, but not limited to: • Molly Pitcher • Betsy Ross • Mercy Otis Warren • Phillis Wheatly • Chief Cornstalk • Joseph Brant • Marquis de Lafayette..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline what each named person did, and circle words that show when a claim is uncertain so you can explain each contribution carefully.

Many Ways to Shape a Revolution

1 Revolutionary history includes work far beyond battlefields. During the Battle of Monmouth in 1778, a woman remembered as Molly Pitcher carried water to soldiers and, according to later accounts, helped fire a cannon when her husband fell. The name may refer to Mary Ludwig Hays, but parts of the story remain uncertain. Betsy Ross sewed flags for the new nation, although the famous claim that she made its first flag is not proven. Mercy Otis Warren wrote plays and essays criticizing British rule. Phillis Wheatley, an enslaved poet, published poems whose skill challenged claims that Black people lacked intelligence.

2 Native leaders faced a different choice: how to protect their peoples' lands as war spread west. Chief Cornstalk, a Shawnee leader, had fought Virginia settlers before the Revolution. During the war, he sought to keep peace with Americans, but American militia members killed him at Fort Randolph in 1777. Joseph Brant, a Mohawk leader, sided with Britain and led fighters against American forces and settlements. He believed a British victory could help defend Haudenosaunee lands from American expansion. Their paths differed, yet both men acted amid growing pressure on Native homelands.

3 Two European officers helped the American army in distinct ways. The Marquis de Lafayette, a young French nobleman, joined the Continental Army and commanded troops. In 1781, his forces helped trap British troops in Virginia before the British surrender at Yorktown. Baron Friedrich von Steuben, a Prussian officer, taught soldiers at Valley Forge how to march, handle weapons, and follow a shared system of training. His drills helped turn scattered units into a more organized army. Across the war, people contributed through fighting, training, writing, sewing, and protecting their communities. Some familiar stories are well documented, while others need careful checking.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Molly Pitcher and Baron Friedrich von Steuben help soldiers in different ways? Include what is uncertain about Molly Pitcher's story.

2. How did the writing of Mercy Otis Warren and Phillis Wheatley contribute in different ways?

3. How did Chief Cornstalk and Joseph Brant respond differently to the war, and what concern did they share?

4. What did Betsy Ross and the Marquis de Lafayette each contribute? Which familiar claim about one of them is not proven?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Choose one person from each paragraph. In four or five sentences, explain each person's contribution and connect the three contributions to one idea about the Revolutionary Period.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADES 6-12 · 6-12.US1.12

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline what each named person did, and circle words that show when a claim is uncertain so you can explain each contribution carefully. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Molly Pitcher and Baron Friedrich von Steuben help soldiers in different ways? Include what is uncertain about Molly Pitcher's story.	**Molly Pitcher carried water and, according to later accounts, helped fire a cannon, though parts of her story are uncertain. Von Steuben trained soldiers to follow shared drills, making the army more organized.**
2	How did the writing of Mercy Otis Warren and Phillis Wheatley contribute in different ways?	**Warren's plays and essays criticized British rule. Wheatley's published poems showed skill that challenged claims that Black people lacked intelligence.**
3	How did Chief Cornstalk and Joseph Brant respond differently to the war, and what concern did they share?	**Cornstalk sought peace with Americans, while Brant sided with Britain and led fighters. Both acted amid pressure on Native homelands.**
4	What did Betsy Ross and the Marquis de Lafayette each contribute? Which familiar claim about one of them is not proven?	**Ross sewed flags, and Lafayette commanded troops whose forces helped trap British troops before Yorktown. The claim that Ross made the first flag is not proven.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Mercy Otis Warren used plays and essays to criticize British rule. Joseph Brant led fighters on Britain's side because he hoped a British victory would protect Haudenosaunee lands. Baron Friedrich von Steuben trained Continental soldiers to work as a more organized army. Together, their stories show that writing, efforts to protect land, and military training all shaped the Revolutionary Period.

Accept accurate explanations grounded in the passage. Students should distinguish documented contributions from the uncertain stories about Molly Pitcher and Betsy Ross.