Victory That Changed Minds

Read how a battlefield victory changed French support.

5.C.4.4.C "Explain that the Battles of Saratoga are considered a turning point with regards to securing French support for the revolution."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a sentence showing why France hesitated, circle a sentence showing what Saratoga proved, and write 1 and 2 beside sentences showing French support before and after the battles.

Why Saratoga Mattered

1 In 1777, American soldiers fought Britain for independence. France was Britain's rival and had quietly sent some supplies to the Americans. But French leaders had not agreed to fight beside them. They wondered whether the new United States could defeat a powerful British army. If the Americans could show that they might win, France might take a bigger risk and join their war.

2 That fall, British General John Burgoyne led an army through New York. American forces stopped his advance in two battles near Saratoga. After losing many soldiers and running low on supplies, Burgoyne surrendered his army on October 17, 1777. This was more than a victory in one place. It showed that American forces could defeat a large British army, not just avoid one.

3 News of Saratoga reached France across the Atlantic Ocean. The victory helped convince French leaders that the Americans had a real chance to win. In 1778, France signed an alliance with the United States and openly entered the war against Britain. France later sent soldiers, warships, money, and supplies. That change in support is why the Battles of Saratoga are called a turning point in the Revolution.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why had French leaders not agreed to fight beside the Americans before Saratoga?

2. How did Burgoyne's surrender give French leaders a reason to reconsider?

3. Why did news of Saratoga matter beyond the fighting in New York?

4. How did French support change after Saratoga, and why is that change called a turning point?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a French leader in 1778. Write a three-sentence message to another leader explaining why France should now help the Americans openly, how that would differ from earlier help, and why Saratoga changed your mind.

ANSWER KEY

Victory That Changed Minds

GRADE 5 · 5.C.4.4.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a sentence showing why France hesitated, circle a sentence showing what Saratoga proved, and write 1 and 2 beside sentences showing French support before and after the battles. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why had French leaders not agreed to fight beside the Americans before Saratoga?	**They were unsure whether the United States could defeat Britain's powerful army.**
2	How did Burgoyne's surrender give French leaders a reason to reconsider?	**It showed that American forces could defeat a large British army.**
3	Why did news of Saratoga matter beyond the fighting in New York?	**It helped convince French leaders that the Americans could win, which helped lead to an alliance.**
4	How did French support change after Saratoga, and why is that change called a turning point?	**France moved from quietly sending supplies to joining the war openly as an ally. Saratoga helped bring about that change.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before Saratoga, we sent supplies quietly because we were unsure the Americans could win. Burgoyne's surrender showed that their army could defeat a large British force. We should now join them openly and send warships and soldiers to help fight Britain.

Accept responses that connect Burgoyne's surrender to greater French confidence and distinguish quiet aid before Saratoga from an open alliance afterward. Students need not claim Saratoga was the only reason France joined the war.