A Nation Recognized

Read how a peace treaty changed the United States

5.C.4.4.G "Summarize the significance of the Treaty of Paris (1783) on the United States of America's status as a free nation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the sentence that tells the biggest change in the United States' status. Circle one treaty detail that shows why the agreement mattered, and put a star beside a problem it did not solve.

More Than a Battlefield Victory

1. In 1781, American and French forces won a major victory over a British army at Yorktown. Yet a battlefield victory did not by itself settle the war or make Britain accept the United States as independent. Leaders still needed a written peace agreement. American and British representatives signed the Treaty of Paris on September 3, 1783. It officially ended the war between Britain and the United States.

2. The treaty said that Britain recognized the United States as a free, independent nation. Britain could no longer claim to rule the states as colonies. The agreement also described the new nation's borders, which reached west to the Mississippi River. With its independence recognized, the United States could make its own laws and deal with other countries as a nation, rather than as part of Britain's empire.

3. Imagine hearing the news in a town that had lived through years of fighting. The treaty meant the people there belonged to a country whose independence its former ruler had accepted. It did not solve every problem. Native nations were not included in the talks, even though the new borders crossed their lands. Still, the treaty marked a turning point: the United States had won British recognition of its independence.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why was the victory at Yorktown not enough to settle the United States' status as a free nation?

2. What was the most important change in the United States' status under the treaty?

3. How did the treaty's description of borders help show that the United States was a nation?

4. Why would it be incomplete to say that the treaty settled every problem on the new nation's land?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence museum label about why the Treaty of Paris mattered. Explain what changed about the United States, include one treaty detail, and name one problem the treaty did not solve. Use your own words.

ANSWER KEY

A Nation Recognized

GRADE 5 · 5.C.4.4.G

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the sentence that tells the biggest change in the United States' status. Circle one treaty detail that shows why the agreement mattered, and put a star beside a problem it did not solve. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why was the victory at Yorktown not enough to settle the United States' status as a free nation?	**Winning at Yorktown did not end the war or make Britain accept U.S. independence. The treaty did both.**
2	What was the most important change in the United States' status under the treaty?	**Britain recognized the United States as a free, independent nation instead of claiming to rule it as colonies.**
3	How did the treaty's description of borders help show that the United States was a nation?	**It described the land of the independent United States, including a western border at the Mississippi River.**
4	Why would it be incomplete to say that the treaty settled every problem on the new nation's land?	**Native nations were left out of the talks, although the borders crossed their lands.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Treaty of Paris made Britain accept the United States as an independent country. It also set a western border at the Mississippi River. But Native nations had no say in the talks, even though the borders crossed their lands.

Accept summaries that identify British recognition of U.S. independence as the central change. Students may use the end of the war or the borders as supporting details, but should not claim the treaty settled the rights of Native nations.