Choices and Turning Points

Trace how people's choices and wartime events shaped independence.

5.C.4 "Examine the struggles of the Revolutionary War and ultimate victory to gain independence. Explain how the colonists were divided toward the growing call for independence by identifying various points of view and motivations..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two reasons people chose sides, circle one advantage for each army, and number Saratoga, France joining the war, and Yorktown in the order they happened. Use your marks to trace how choices and events shaped the war.

From Divided Colonies to Independence

1. In 1777, families did not all agree about independence. Patriots wanted to govern themselves. Loyalists feared losing British protection and trade. Some enslaved people sought freedom by joining British forces, while others supported Patriots. American Indian Nations made different choices as they tried to protect their lands. Women also took sides, supplying armies, gathering news, or defending their communities. Each choice carried risks.

2. Britain had more people, a strong navy, and trained troops. The Patriots knew the land and followed George Washington, but they had less money and fewer supplies. Washington's surprise attack at Trenton in 1776 showed that his army could win. In 1777, American victories at Saratoga convinced France that the Patriots could succeed. France then agreed to join the war against Britain.

3. In 1781, the Articles of Confederation set up a loose alliance of states under Congress. Congress could direct the war and deal with other countries, but it struggled to raise money. French soldiers and ships helped trap British General Cornwallis at Yorktown that year. His surrender ended major fighting. In the 1783 Treaty of Paris, Britain recognized the United States as an independent nation.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why might a Patriot and a Loyalist have disagreed about independence?

2. The Patriots had fewer supplies than Britain. How did Washington's action at Trenton show that they could still win?

3. How could Congress help fight the war under the Articles of Confederation, and what made that work difficult?

4. Trace the path from Saratoga to independence. How did France's actions help?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a three-sentence letter from a Loyalist in 1777 to a Patriot neighbor after Saratoga. Explain why you remain loyal, recognize why Saratoga might give your neighbor hope, and predict how help from France could affect the war.

ANSWER KEY

Choices and Turning Points

GRADE 5 · 5.C.4

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two reasons people chose sides, circle one advantage for each army, and number Saratoga, France joining the war, and Yorktown in the order they happened. Use your marks to trace how choices and events shaped the war. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why might a Patriot and a Loyalist have disagreed about independence?	**A Patriot wanted the colonies to govern themselves, while a Loyalist feared losing British protection and trade.**
2	The Patriots had fewer supplies than Britain. How did Washington's action at Trenton show that they could still win?	**Washington used a surprise attack to win at Trenton despite the Patriots' disadvantages.**
3	How could Congress help fight the war under the Articles of Confederation, and what made that work difficult?	**Congress could direct the war and deal with other countries, but it struggled to raise money.**
4	Trace the path from Saratoga to independence. How did France's actions help?	**The victories at Saratoga convinced France the Patriots could succeed. France joined the war, and its soldiers and ships helped trap Cornwallis at Yorktown. Britain later recognized United States independence in the Treaty of Paris.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear neighbor, I still support Britain because its protection and trade help my family. I know the victories at Saratoga make you think your army can succeed. If France joins you, its soldiers and ships could make it much harder for Britain to win.

Accept other passage-supported reasons for choosing sides. For the letter, look for a Loyalist viewpoint, Saratoga's effect on Patriot hopes, and a plausible prediction about French help.