When Battles Changed

Trace how four victories changed the Revolutionary War

8.C.2.3.B "Summarize the impact of key military turning points of the Revolutionary War, including the victories at Boston, Trenton, Saratoga, and Yorktown."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one important result of each victory in the passage. Number the results 1 through 4 in the order the victories happened to trace how the war changed.

Four Victories, Changing Possibilities

1. In early 1776, British troops held Boston while American forces surrounded the city. American cannon, brought from Fort Ticonderoga, were placed on Dorchester Heights above the harbor. Unable to hold the city safely, the British evacuated Boston in March. Americans gained control of an important port, but the British army escaped to fight elsewhere. That December, Washington's troops crossed the Delaware River on the night of December 25 and surprised a Hessian garrison at Trenton the next morning. The victory lifted American morale after defeats and showed that Washington's army could still strike back.

2. In October 1777, British general John Burgoyne surrendered his army after the American victory at Saratoga in New York. This was more than a battlefield gain: France saw that the Americans might win and agreed to an open alliance in 1778. French money, troops, and warships strengthened the American cause. The victory also weakened a British plan to cut off New England from the other colonies. Saratoga changed the war's scale, bringing a powerful European country into the fight against Britain and giving American forces support they could not provide alone.

3. In 1781, American and French troops trapped a British army at Yorktown, Virginia, while French warships prevented its escape by sea. British general Charles Cornwallis surrendered in October. Yorktown removed a major British army from the fight and made continuing the war in America less appealing to British leaders. It did not end the war that day, but serious peace talks followed. In 1783, Britain recognized United States independence in the Treaty of Paris. Taken together, these victories show a shift from protecting American resistance to gaining a foreign ally and forcing Britain toward peace.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the victory at Boston help the Americans, and why did it not end the war?

2. What changed for the American cause after the victory at Trenton?

3. How did the victory at Saratoga change the support Americans had in the war?

4. How did the victory at Yorktown push the war toward peace without ending it that day?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum caption about two of these victories. Explain a different effect of each victory, then show how those effects together changed the American war effort.

ANSWER KEY

When Battles Changed

GRADE 8 · 8.C.2.3.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one important result of each victory in the passage. Number the results 1 through 4 in the order the victories happened to trace how the war changed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the victory at Boston help the Americans, and why did it not end the war?	**Americans gained control of an important port, but the British army escaped and could fight elsewhere.**
2	What changed for the American cause after the victory at Trenton?	**The victory raised morale after defeats and showed that Washington's army could still strike back.**
3	How did the victory at Saratoga change the support Americans had in the war?	**It helped convince France to form an open alliance, which brought money, troops, and warships to the American cause.**
4	How did the victory at Yorktown push the war toward peace without ending it that day?	**A major British army surrendered, making the war less appealing to British leaders. Serious peace talks followed.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The victories at Trenton and Saratoga changed what Americans could hope for. Trenton raised morale after defeats and showed that Washington's army could fight back. Saratoga later persuaded France to form an open alliance, bringing troops and warships to the American cause. Together, renewed confidence and foreign support made the American war effort stronger.

Accept captions using any two victories if they accurately explain each victory's effect and connect those effects. For the marking job, look for one underlined result per victory, numbered in chronological order.