Victory Beyond Battle

Trace how battles, alliances, and government shaped independence.

8.C.2 "Examine key military and diplomatic events of the Revolutionary War that resulted in an independent nation. Summarize the effectiveness of the Articles of Confederation as the first national system of government for the purpose of..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two military victories and their effects, circle forms of foreign aid, and number the steps from the first victory to independence in order.

How a Victory Became Independence

1 In 1777, British forces had more money, trained soldiers, and ships than the Americans. Yet the American victory at Saratoga stopped a British army and helped convince France that the rebellion could succeed. Benjamin Franklin had sought French help in Paris. In 1778, France signed treaties with the United States and entered the war. French loans, weapons, troops, and naval power strengthened the American cause. Saratoga mattered not only because an army won a battle, but because that win helped turn a foreign power into an ally.

2 The alliance did not solve every American problem. Under the Articles of Confederation, the first national system of government, Congress could ask states for soldiers and money but could not tax them directly. States sometimes supplied too little, and soldiers faced shortages. Congress also borrowed money, including from France and private lenders, to keep the war going. At Yorktown in 1781, Washington's army and French troops trapped a British army while a French fleet blocked escape by sea. The surrender made British leaders more willing to negotiate peace.

3 Military success and peace were not the same thing. In the Treaty of Paris in 1783, Britain recognized the United States as independent and ceded its claims to territory as far west as the Mississippi River. American Indians who lived on those lands were not parties to the treaty, and many continued to defend their homelands. The agreement expanded what the United States claimed, not who actually controlled every community there. The Revolution's outcome grew from connected events: a battlefield win gained an ally, an alliance helped win a siege, and diplomacy secured recognition.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the victory at Saratoga change the Americans' chances of gaining foreign help?

2. Compare one British resource advantage with one source of American strength during the war.

3. How did Congress help conduct the war under the Articles of Confederation, and what limit made that work harder?

4. Why did the surrender at Yorktown not, by itself, make the United States independent?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label arguing whether battlefield victories or foreign help mattered more to independence. Use Saratoga and Yorktown as evidence, explain one limit of the Articles of Confederation, and distinguish the surrender at Yorktown from the Treaty of Paris.

ANSWER KEY

Victory Beyond Battle

GRADE 8 · 8.C.2

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two military victories and their effects, circle forms of foreign aid, and number the steps from the first victory to independence in order. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the victory at Saratoga change the Americans' chances of gaining foreign help?	**Saratoga helped convince France that the Americans could succeed, leading to a French alliance and military and financial aid.**
2	Compare one British resource advantage with one source of American strength during the war.	**Britain had more money, trained soldiers, and ships. The Americans gained French loans, weapons, troops, and naval support.**
3	How did Congress help conduct the war under the Articles of Confederation, and what limit made that work harder?	**Congress requested soldiers and money from states and borrowed funds. It could not tax states directly, so supplies sometimes fell short.**
4	Why did the surrender at Yorktown not, by itself, make the United States independent?	**Yorktown made Britain more willing to negotiate. Britain formally recognized U.S. independence in the Treaty of Paris in 1783.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Foreign help mattered more to independence because American victories alone did not supply the resources needed to finish the war. Saratoga persuaded France to become an ally, and French troops and a fleet helped Washington force the British surrender at Yorktown. Under the Articles of Confederation, Congress could request money from states but could not tax them directly, leaving soldiers short of supplies. Yorktown weakened Britain's will to fight, while the Treaty of Paris formally recognized the United States as independent.

Accept either position in the museum label if the student supports it with accurate connections among Saratoga, French aid, and Yorktown. The response must also identify a limit of the Articles and distinguish a military surrender from formal recognition of independence.