

Revolutionary Turning Points

Trace the issues, choices, and results that shaped American independence.

8.4.C "explain the issues surrounding important events of the American Revolution, including declaring independence; fighting the battles of Lexington and Concord, Saratoga, and Yorktown; enduring the winter at Valley Forge..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each problem or decision leaders faced, then circle words that tell what changed because of it.

Choices in a Revolution

- ① In 1775, conflict grew from a political argument into war. British troops marched to Lexington and Concord to seize and destroy colonial military supplies. Local militia members resisted, but they faced trained British soldiers and did not know whether other colonies would support them. The fighting showed that compromise was becoming less likely. In 1776, delegates to the Continental Congress faced another difficult choice: declare independence or try again to settle with Britain. The Declaration of Independence united many Patriots around self-government, yet it also committed the colonies to a dangerous war.
- ② In 1777, the American victory at Saratoga changed the war's international problem. American forces defeated a British army in 1777, convincing France that the Patriots could be useful allies against Britain. French aid brought money, soldiers, naval power, and supplies, but the alliance widened the conflict. During the winter of 1777-1778, Washington's army camped at Valley Forge. Many soldiers lacked adequate food, clothing, and shelter, while disease spread through camp. Keeping the army together mattered because a defeated or deserted army could not use future help from France.
- ③ By 1781, French naval support and American and French troops helped trap Lord Cornwallis's British army at Yorktown, Virginia. Cornwallis surrendered, making it difficult for Britain to continue an expensive war far from home. The surrender did not automatically create peace, however. Negotiators still had to decide whether Britain would recognize United States independence and where the new nation's boundaries would lie. In the Treaty of Paris of 1783, Britain recognized the United States as independent and accepted boundaries reaching the Mississippi River. The treaty ended war, but the nation had to govern and defend its territory.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What problem did the fighting at Lexington and Concord reveal, and what difficult choice did Congress face in 1776?

2 How did the American victory at Saratoga change the war's international situation?

3 Why was the winter at Valley Forge a serious issue for Washington's army?

4 After Yorktown, what two major issues did negotiators settle in the Treaty of Paris of 1783?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write four sentences comparing two Revolutionary events from the passage. For each event, explain the issue leaders faced and how the event affected the war or the new nation.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each problem or decision leaders faced, then circle words that tell what changed because of it. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What problem did the fighting at Lexington and Concord reveal, and what difficult choice did Congress face in 1776?	The fighting showed that compromise was becoming less likely. Congress had to choose whether to declare independence or try again to settle with Britain.
2	How did the American victory at Saratoga change the war's international situation?	It convinced France that the Patriots could be useful allies against Britain. France then provided money, soldiers, naval power, and supplies.
3	Why was the winter at Valley Forge a serious issue for Washington's army?	Many soldiers lacked enough food, clothing, and shelter, and disease spread through camp. The army had to stay together so it could use future help from France.
4	After Yorktown, what two major issues did negotiators settle in the Treaty of Paris of 1783?	They settled whether Britain would recognize United States independence and where the new nation's boundaries would be. Britain recognized independence and accepted boundaries reaching the Mississippi River.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Declaring independence forced the colonies to accept the risks of war instead of seeking another settlement. The decision gave many Patriots a common goal of self-government. At Saratoga, the issue was whether foreign nations would view the Patriots as a serious force. The American victory encouraged France to become an ally, providing resources that strengthened the war effort.

Accept clear explanations that connect each event to a problem, choice, or condition and then to a result. For the open response, accept any two passage events if both explanations are accurate and include effects.