

A Safer Capital

Identify why Virginia leaders chose a new capital.

VS.5.c "identifying the reasons for the relocation of Virginia's capital from Williamsburg to Richmond; and"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each reason Virginia's leaders moved the capital, then number the two different reasons 1 and 2. This will help you separate the safety reason from the reason about Virginia's people.

Virginia Moves Its Capital

- ① During the American Revolution, Williamsburg was Virginia's capital. It stood in the eastern part of the colony, not far from waterways that British warships could use. British forces posed a wartime threat to the area. Virginia leaders worried that soldiers could attack the capital, disrupt the government, or capture important supplies and records they needed to run Virginia.
- ② Richmond lay farther west, on the James River. It was farther from the coast and harder for British ships to reach. Moving the capital there could make Virginia's government safer. Richmond was also nearer to many settlers who were moving west, so leaders believed its location better served the growing state as its population moved west over time.
- ③ In 1779, the Virginia General Assembly chose Richmond as the new capital. The government moved there in 1780. The move did not end the war, but it put the government in a safer place. The decision showed that leaders considered danger from Britain and the changing location of Virginia's people when they chose a place to govern the state during a difficult long war.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 What danger made Williamsburg a risky place for Virginia's capital?

2 What about Richmond's location made it safer from British ships?

3 How did Virginia's growing western population support moving the capital to Richmond?

4 What two concerns did Virginia leaders consider when choosing Richmond?

3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a three-sentence notice for Virginians in 1780 announcing the move to Richmond. State the decision, then explain one safety reason and one reason about Virginia's people.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each reason Virginia's leaders moved the capital, then number the two different reasons 1 and 2. This will help you separate the safety reason from the reason about Virginia's people. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What danger made Williamsburg a risky place for Virginia's capital?	British warships and forces could reach the area and attack the capital, disrupt the government, or capture supplies and records.
2	What about Richmond's location made it safer from British ships?	Richmond was farther from the coast and harder for British ships to reach.
3	How did Virginia's growing western population support moving the capital to Richmond?	Richmond was nearer to many settlers who were moving west, so it better served the growing state.
4	What two concerns did Virginia leaders consider when choosing Richmond?	They considered danger from Britain and the changing location of Virginia's people as settlers moved west.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The General Assembly is moving Virginia's capital from Williamsburg to Richmond. Richmond is farther from the coast, so British ships will have a harder time reaching our government. It is also nearer to settlers moving west, which better serves the growing state.

Accept equivalent explanations that Williamsburg was vulnerable to British attack and that Richmond was farther inland. For the population reason, accept that Richmond was nearer to settlers moving west or better served Virginia's growing western population.