

# Yorktown Changes Everything

Trace how one victory helped bring the American Revolution to an end.

**VS.5.d** "identifying the importance of the American victory at Yorktown."

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1 READ AND MARK \_\_\_\_\_ Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline two details that explain why Cornwallis surrendered. Then number three results that show why the American victory at Yorktown was important.

### A Victory That Ended a War

- ① In 1781, the American Revolution had lasted for six years. British General Lord Cornwallis moved his army to Yorktown, Virginia, on a peninsula near the Chesapeake Bay. He expected British ships to bring supplies or carry his troops away. General George Washington saw a chance to trap Cornwallis. American and French forces marched south while French warships headed toward the bay.
- ② The French fleet defeated British ships in the Battle of the Capes. This victory blocked Cornwallis from getting help by sea. On land, Washington's American soldiers and French soldiers surrounded Yorktown. They dug trenches and fired cannons at British positions. Cornwallis could not break out or receive enough supplies. On October 19, 1781, he surrendered his army to the American and French forces.
- ③ The surrender at Yorktown was important because it ended the last major fighting of the American Revolution. Britain still had soldiers in some places, but many British leaders no longer wanted to continue the costly war. Peace talks began. In 1783, the Treaty of Paris ended the war and recognized the United States as an independent nation. Yorktown helped make American independence possible.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE Use the passage

1 Why could Cornwallis not get help or supplies by sea?

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2 What did Cornwallis do on October 19, 1781?

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3 How did the surrender at Yorktown affect Britain's decision about the war?

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4 How did the victory at Yorktown help the United States become independent?

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## 3 YOUR TURN Your own words

Write a three-sentence newspaper report about the American victory at Yorktown. Include what happened at Yorktown, one immediate result, and why the victory mattered for the future of the United States.

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**PART 1 • READ AND MARK**

Underline two details that explain why Cornwallis surrendered. Then number three results that show why the American victory at Yorktown was important. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

**PART 2 • ANSWERS**

| # | QUESTION                                                                   | ANSWER                                                                                                                                                      |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Why could Cornwallis not get help or supplies by sea?                      | <b>The French fleet defeated British ships in the Battle of the Capes, blocking help by sea.</b>                                                            |
| 2 | What did Cornwallis do on October 19, 1781?                                | <b>He surrendered his army to the American and French forces.</b>                                                                                           |
| 3 | How did the surrender at Yorktown affect Britain's decision about the war? | <b>Many British leaders no longer wanted to continue the costly war, so peace talks began.</b>                                                              |
| 4 | How did the victory at Yorktown help the United States become independent? | <b>It ended the last major fighting, led toward peace talks, and helped lead to the Treaty of Paris, which recognized the United States as independent.</b> |

**PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)**

American and French forces surrounded the British army at Yorktown, and Cornwallis surrendered on October 19, 1781. The surrender ended the last major fighting of the American Revolution. It led toward a peace treaty that recognized the United States as an independent nation.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect the surrender at Yorktown to the end of major fighting, peace talks, and American independence. For the newspaper report, check for all three required parts and accurate cause-and-effect reasoning.