

STORYTELLER'S HISTORY: THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

CLASSROOM GUIDE: STUDENT REVIEW AND DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

By Ariella Tievsky

Chapter 1 King George: What was his problem?

Questions for Review

Page 2

Step 1: Kick Out the French

Who won the French and Indian War? What happened as a result?

Pages 2–3

Step 2: Tax the Colonists

What was the Stamp Act?

Pages 3–4

Step 3: Hang the Taxman

How did the Sons of Liberty protest the Stamp Act? What happened when it went into effect?

Page 5

Step 4: Try, Try Again

Why did Parliament pass the Townshend Acts?

Pages 5–6

Step 5: Refuse to Pay

How did the colonists avoid paying taxes on British goods?

Pages 7–8

Step 6: Send in the War Ships

Why weren't the British soldiers and the people of Boston getting along in 1770?

Pages 8–9

Step 7: Fire into a Crowd

What happened at "The Boston Massacre?"

Page 10

Step 8: Keep the Tea Tax

Why did Parliament repeal all of the taxes, except the tax on tea?

Pages 10–11

Step 9: Throw a Tea Party

What happened at the Boston Tea Party?

Pages 11–12

Step 10: Pay the Fiddler

What did King George and Parliament do when they found out about the Boston Tea Party?

Pages 13–14

Step 11: Stand Firm

Why did Patriot leaders decide to hold a meeting in Philadelphia?

Pages 14–15

Step 12: Make Speeches

What was the Continental Congress? What decisions did it make?

Pages 15–16

Step 13: Let Blows Decide

Why did General Gage ask London to send more soldiers to the colonies?

Questions for Group Discussion

- The American Revolution was the result of many events. Identify some of the major causes of the American Revolution, beginning with the French and Indian War.
- What kinds of actions did the British take to get money from the colonists? How did they react? Do you think their reaction was justified?

Chapter 2 A Sleepless Night Before Revolution

Questions for Review

Page 18

Orders Are Orders

Describe General Gage's Plan.

Pages 18–20

Don't Open That Envelope

How did General Percy find out that Gage's plan was no longer a secret?

Pages 20–21

Everyone's a Spy

How did the Americans keep track of the British?

Pages 22–23

Trapped in Boston

What did General Gage do to try and prevent express riders, including Paul Revere, from getting out of Boston?

Pages 23–24

"Two if by Sea"

What did "one if by land, two if by sea" mean?

Pages 24–25

Across the River

How did Paul Revere and his friends manage to make it across the river?

Pages 25–26

Revere and That Other Guy

Where did Paul Revere and Billy Dawes go? What was their mission?

Pages 26–28

The Midnight Intruder

What did John Hancock and Samuel Adams argue about after Paul Revere arrived with his message?

Page 28

Where Are the British?

Why did it take the British such a long time to begin their march toward Lexington?

Page 29

On to Concord

What signal did Captain Parker tell the Minutemen to wait for before they came back to Lexington Common?

Pages 30–31

Captured!

What happened to Prescott, Dawes, and Revere when they were spotted by the British?

Pages 31–32

They Haven't Left Yet?

What did John Hancock and Dorothy Quincy argue about before Hancock left?

Page 32

Beat That Drum, Billy

Around what time were the British spotted near Lexington?

Questions for Discussion

- Why does the author state that “Tensions in Boston were at record levels in the spring of 1775.” How do you think this affected the lives of people who were living in and around Boston at that time?
- As you can see in this chapter, spies were important for both the Americans and the British. Name some of the spies you read about and describe their impact on the events leading up to the Revolution.
- Paul Revere was just one of the men who rode from Boston to warn the people of Lexington that the British were coming. What did you learn in this chapter about the other two men? What did you learn about Paul Revere that you did not know before?

Chapter 3 Who Fired the Shot Heard Round the World?

Questions for Review

Page 34

A Glorious Morning?

What did Samuel Adams mean when he said “Oh, what a glorious morning is this?”

Pages 34–35

Gathering Evidence

Where were Major Pitcairn and his army supposed to be going when they stopped in Lexington? What were they supposed to do when they got there?

Pages 36–37

The First Shot

What happened when the first shot was fired on Lexington Common?

Page 37

Three Cheers

How many minutemen were killed or wounded on Lexington Common?

Pages 37–38

Salmon Update

What did Dorothy Quincy and Aunt Lydia do after the British left Lexington?

Pages 38–39

Grand Music

Who warned the people of Concord that the British were on their way to the town? How many minutemen eventually came to fight at Concord?

Pages 40–41

Breakfast Time

Why didn't the British soldiers find any weapons in Concord?

Pages 41–42

The Bridge Fight

Why is fighting at the North Bridge remembered as a major moment in American history?

Page 43–44

The Nightmare Begins

What happened to the British soldiers as they retreated to Boston?

Page 44

Battling Brothers

How did John Adams feel as he watched the British soldiers returning to Boston that evening?

Pages 44–45

What Next?

How did the British army become trapped in Boston?

Questions For Discussion

- It's not exactly clear who fired the "shot heard round the world." Based on the evidence you read, who do you think was responsible, the British or the minutemen? Why?
- The British soldiers and the minutemen fought battles in different ways. What were they? How do you think these different fighting styles affected the outcomes of the battles?
- Reread the quote by John Adams on page 44. What did he mean when he said this? Do you think other Patriots might have felt the same way? What about the British soldiers?

Chapter 4 George Washington, Meet Your Army

Questions for Review

Page 48

Here Comes Ethan Allen

Who were the Green Mountain Boys?

Pages 49– 50

Party at Fort Ti

What did the Green Mountain Boys capture at Fort Ticonderoga? Why was this important?

Pages 50–51

Walk With Me, Sam

Why didn't John and Sam Adams think John Hancock was a good choice to lead the American army?

Pages 51–52

John Adams Loses a Friend

Who did John Adams suggest to Congress to lead the American army? Why did this upset John Hancock?

Pages 52–53

George Washington, Love Poet

Why was George Washington filled with concern when he was appointed to lead the American army?

Page 54

A Little Elbow Room

What was the British army's plan to get more "elbow room" in Boston?

Pages 54–55

Get Ready for a Long Day

How did the Americans surprise the British at Breed's Hill?

Pages 55–57

The Battle of Bunker Hill

The British captured the American fort on Breed's Hill. Why were the Americans proud of the battle?

Pages 57–58

Washington Takes Command

Why was George Washington worried about the condition of his new army?

Pages 58–59

Bored in Boston

How did the Americans trick the British into thinking they were attacking Boston?

Pages 59–60

And Stay Out!

Why did General Howe and his troops leave Boston?

Page 60

Independence Time?

What was the name of Mercy Otis Warren's play? What was it about?

Questions For Discussion

- Why do you think John and Samuel Adams believed it was important that the leader of the American army represent all regions of the colonies? Do you think they were right to choose a Virginian? Why or why not?
- Even though the Americans lost the battle of Bunker Hill (or Breed's Hill) the author says that they were still "proud." Why? Do you think they should have been even though the British took over the fort?
- Plays, or farces, were important to both the American and British during the revolution. In what ways do you think these plays influenced the way people thought about the war and independence?

Chapter 5 Declare Independence Already!

Questions for Review

Pages 62–63

Anything for the Cause

What did Adams and Franklin argue about when they were forced to share a room and a bed while traveling?

Pages 64–65

Your Turn, Paine

What was the subject of Tom Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense*? What effect did it have on the colonists?

Pages 65–66

Abigail's Advice

What advice did Abigail Adams give to her husband, John, about the new government.

Pages 66–67

King George Update

How did King George get more soldiers for Britain?

Pages 67–68

Congress Heats Up

Name the members of the committee elected to write the Declaration of Independence.

Pages 68–69

Who Gets the Job?

Why did John Adams think that Thomas Jefferson should write the Declaration of Independence?

Page 69

Just a Few Changes

On what date did Congress approve the Declaration of Independence?

Page 70

What Does it Say?

Summarize the basic ideas of the Declaration of Independence.

Pages 71–72

Sign Here—If You Dare

Why were some members of Congress reluctant to sign the Declaration of Independence?

Pages 72–73

Bad Reviews in Britain

Why were the British critical of many signers of the Declaration of Independence?

Pages 73–74

Remember That Statue?

What happened to the stature of King George in New York City after the Americans declared their independence?

Questions For Discussion

- What if John Adams had take Abigail Adams' advice about rights for women more seriously? How might it have affected women once Americans became independent from Britain?
- How do you think King George's use of German soldiers made the Americans feel? Do you think it made them even more determined to declare independence? Why or why not?
- Imagine you were one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. What things would you have to consider before you signed? How would you have felt about signing it? Excited? Scared? Explain your answer.

Chapter 6 Losing and Retreating in '76

Questions for Review

Page 76

Expect a Bloody Summer

Compare and contrast the size and skill of the American and British armies.

Page 77

The British Are Coming!

What happened to the village of Flatbush when the British army arrived?

Pages 78–79

A Midnight Escape

Using the map on page 78, describe how the Americans were able to retreat without the British army knowing.

Pages 79–80

The Story of Nathan Hale

What was Nathan Hale reported to have said after he was captured by the British? Explain the meaning of the quote.

Pages 80–81

More Bad News

Why was General Washington so angry at his troops when the British attacked on April 15th?

Pages 81–83

Is This the End?

What were some of the problems the American army faced during the fall of 1776?

Pages 83–84

Report From Trenton

How did the Hessians discover that the Reeds were actually Patriots?

Page 85

The Lion in the Tub

Why wasn't Colonel Johann worried about the Americans attacking his army?

Pages 85–87

Across the River

Using the map on page 87, describe Washington's plan to get his army to Trenton.

Pages 87–88

Surprise!

What happened to the German army at the Battle of Trenton?

Page 88

Saved, For Now

What inspired new soldiers to join the American army?

Questions For Discussion

- Reread pages 83 and 84. What do you think life was like for the people who lived in towns that were occupied by German and British soldiers? What kinds of difficulties would they have had to face?
- Describe the condition of the American army in the fall and winter of 1776. What might have happened to the Revolution if the army hadn't won the battles of Trenton and Princeton?

Chapter 7 Showdown at Saratoga

Questions for Review

Page 90

No Secrets Here

Describe General Burgoyne's plan.

Pages 91–92

Benedict Arnold to the Rescue

What were some of the qualities American officers and soldiers used to describe Benedict Arnold?

Pages 92–93

Franklin's Secret Mission

What was Benjamin Franklin's secret mission?

Pages 93–94

We'll Think About It

Why did the French wait to offer their help to the Americans?

Pages 94–96

The News From Home

How did the Americans make it difficult for General Burgoyne and his army to march toward the Hudson River?

Pages 96–97

A Little Help From Poland

How did Thaddeus Kosciusko help the American army?

Pages 97–98

Pa-Pa Franklin

Why did Ben Franklin think that going to parties given by the people of Paris was important to the American cause?

Pages 99–100

The Battle of Saratoga: Part 1

How did the American army ruin the British army's battle plan at Saratoga?

Pages 100–102

The Battle of Saratoga: Part 2

Why did General Gates and General Arnold argue at Saratoga? What happened as a result?

Pages 102–103

Johnny Loses One Pony

What happened to General Burgoyne and his army after the battle of Saratoga?

Pages 103–104

Ben Seals the Deal

What happened when Ben Franklin met with France's King Louis and his officials?

Page 105

The Turning Point

Why was Benedict Arnold angry with General Gates, even though the Americans had beaten the British at the Battle of Saratoga?

Questions For Discussion

Do you think General Burgoyne's plan for crushing the Revolution could have worked if he had been able to carry it out? Why or why not?

Do you think it was fair of the French to "think about it" before helping the Americans? Or should they have helped them right away? Explain your answer.

Why was the Battle of Saratoga a "turning point" in the Revolution? How might it have changed the way the British and American soldiers felt about the war?

Chapter 8 Will We Ever Win This War?

Questions for Review

Pages 108–109

A Long Way from Victory

According to Joseph Plumb Martin, what problems did the American army face as winter approached?

Pages 108–110

Terrible Times at Valley Forge

Describe the conditions soldiers at Valley Forge faced during the winter of 1777.

Pages 110–111

The Good Life in Philadelphia

What was life like for the British officers in Philadelphia during the winter of 1777?

Pages 111–112

New Hope in the Spring

Who was Friedrich von Steuben? How did he help the American army?

Pages 112–114

Back in Action

Who were the “Molly Pitchers?” What did they do?

Pages 114–116

Are You the Famous Adams?

Why did Congress send John Adams’ to join Benjamin Franklin in France?

Pages 116–117

The Adventures of John Paul Jones

Who was John Paul Jones? How did he help the American army?

Pages 118–119

Benedict Arnold in Love

Who did Benedict Arnold marry? Why was this important in his decision to change sides in the war?

Page 119

Arnold’s Fiendish Plan

What was Benedict Arnold’s plan for capturing West Point and George Washington?

Page 120

André is Captured

What mistake did John André make after being captured by bandits?

Pages 121–122

And Arnold Escapes

What did Benedict Arnold do when he found out John André had been captured?

Pages 122–123

No End in Sight

Why were George Washington and other Patriots stressed in 1781?

Questions for Discussion

- Much of the way the American Revolution was fought was based on the ideas and actions of American and British army leaders. Choose two of the leaders in this chapter and describe how they influenced the outcome of the war.
- Why was Benedict Arnold upset with the American army? What were they? Why did he decide to join the British side and plot George Washington’s capture? Why do you think American’s still remember Arnold’s treason today?
- In reading pages 122 and 123, you can see that George Washington was clearly affected by the stress of the war. In what ways do you think other people and groups were affected by the length of the war? Think about the American and British soldiers, other Americans and British citizens, and the economies of both countries.

Chapter 9 The Great Race to Yorktown

Questions for Review

Page 126

Refreshments for the Enemy

Why was George Washington upset with his cousin Lund?

Pages 126–127

Another Wasted Year?

Why was Washington worried that 1781 was going to be another year with no major attacks on the British?

Page 127

Part 1: The King Tries the South

What was King George's new strategy for winning the war?

Pages 127–128

Part 2: Bad Peaches/Bad General

What mistakes did General Gates make that led to the defeat of the Americans at Camden?

Pages 128–129

Part 3: British Behaving Badly

How did the acts of some of the British soldiers encourage more people in the South to fight against the British?

Pages 129–130

Part 4: The Swamp Fox

Why was Francis Marion nicknamed "The Swamp Fox?"

Page 130

Part 5: Fight, Lose, Fight Again

What was General Greene's strategy for fighting the British army?

Page 131

Part 6: Cornwallis Gets Tired

Why was General Cornwallis becoming frustrated in the summer of 1781?

Pages 131–133

Part 7: Spying on Cornwallis

How was James Armistead able to spy on General Cornwallis?

Page 133

Part 8: Pick a Port, Any Port

What was the compromise reached by General Clinton and General Cornwallis?

Page 134

Part 9: The French Sail North

Where were the French warships before they sailed north to Chesapeake Bay?

Page 134

Now Back to Washington

What was George Washington's plan for trapping Cornwallis and his army?

Pages 134–135

The Trap Slams Shut

What did General Weedon mean when he said “We have got him handsomely in a pudding bag?” Who was he talking about?

Pages 136–137

Huzza for the Americans!

Why couldn't the British ships reach Yorktown?

Page 138

A Shell! A Shell!

Why didn't Hamilton want to follow Washington's orders? What made him change his mind?

Page 139

The White Handkerchief

How did the Americans know that they were beating the British at Yorktown?

Pages 139–140

The World Turned Upside Down

On what date did the British officially surrender to the American army? Why wasn't General Cornwallis at the surrender?

Pages 140–141

It is All Over!

What did King George do when he found out about the Yorktown surrender?

Pages 141–142

One Last Story

What was Deborah Sampson's secret?

Page 142–144

This is Goodbye

When did the American Revolution officially end? What event officially ended it?

Questions for Discussion

Each of the nine parts that led to the battle of Yorktown was important to the success of the American army. Describe the importance of each and explain how it helped the Americans defeat the British and end the American Revolution.

James Armistead was an important part of the American army's success, although he was not a soldier or an officer. How did his position as a slave allow him to spy for the American army?

Although the Americans had been victorious in the Revolution, and won their independence, there was still a lot of work to be done. What kinds of decisions would the leaders of the new country have to make? What would be the most important things they would need to do to make sure the new country was successful?