

Study Guide



Chapter 4, Section 3

For use with textbook pages 138–145

THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

William Howe general and commander of the British troops (page 138)

guerrilla warfare a different kind of fighting, in which participants hide and ambush their opponents (page 139)

Nathan Hale American spy on the British who was caught and hanged (page 140)

Valley Forge the location of the winter quarters of the Continental Army in 1777 (page 141)

Marquis de Lafayette French military officer who helped train American troops (page 141)

Saratoga the site of an American victory and a turning point in the war (page 141)

letters of marque licenses authorizing private ship owners to attack British merchant ships (page 143)

John Paul Jones naval commander in one of the most famous naval battles of the War for Independence (page 143)

Charles Cornwallis British general who led troops in the Southern campaign (page 143)

Battle of Kings Mountain a turning point in the South for Americans (page 143)

DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Who said, “I have not yet begun to fight?” Why were these words spoken?

The last section described the first battles between the colonies and the British troops. This section discusses the campaigns in the War for Independence.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the diagram below to help you take notes. The British troops and the Continental Army faced certain conditions at the beginning of the war. List these conditions in the diagram.

Conditions Facing Continental Army

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Conditions Facing British Army

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

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READ TO LEARN

• The Opposing Sides (page 138)

The British did not believe that the war would last a long time. The British troops, called “redcoats,” were well equipped and well trained. The Continental Army was not experienced and poorly equipped. The American troops rarely numbered more than 20,000 at any one time. Many soldiers deserted or refused to reenlist. Others returned home for planting or harvest time.

The Continental Congress had trouble paying for the war, so it issued paper money. These “Continental” were not backed by gold or silver, so they quickly became worthless. Robert Morris, a wealthy merchant in Pennsylvania, contributed large amounts of money for the war. He also arranged for foreign loans and convinced Congress to create a bank to finance the military.

Besides the Continental Army, the British had to worry about local militias. Although the militias were poorly trained, they fought in a different way. They used **guerrilla warfare**. They hid among trees and walls and ambushed the British. This kind of fighting was difficult for the British to defeat. Another problem for the British was that they were not united at home. Many merchants and members of Parliament opposed the war. The French, Dutch, and Spanish were all eager to exploit Britain’s problems. As a result, Britain had to station much of its military in other places of the world to defend its empire.

7. Why did colonial militias pose a problem for the British?

• The Northern Campaign (page 139)

The British knew that to be successful, they had to win several battles and convince the Americans that the cause was helpless. General Howe’s strategy had two parts. The first part was military. He began a big buildup in New York, hoping to intimidate the Americans. He also wanted to capture New York City because that would separate New England from the Southern colonies.

The second part of the strategy was a diplomatic one. He invited delegates from the Continental Congress to a peace conference. Howe told the delegates that those that put down their arms and swore loyalty to the king would be pardoned. The delegates refused to talk further, and the first major battle was about to start.

The Continental Congress asked Washington to defend New York City. In a battle on Long Island, Americans suffered more than 1,500 casualties. The surviving American troops moved to Manhattan Island. They joined the remainder of Washington’s army that was defending New York City. Washington then moved his troops to the northern end of Manhattan. The British captured New York and used it as their headquarters. Washington sent

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Captain **Nathan Hale** to spy on the British. He was caught by the British and hanged. Afterwards, Washington moved most of his troops out of Manhattan to White Plains, New York.

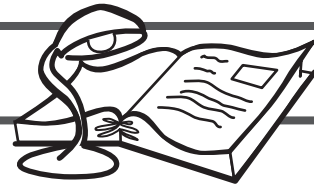
At the Battle of White Plains in October 1776, the British forced Washington to retreat. Then the British troops headed toward Philadelphia, where the Continental Congress was meeting. The American troops managed to get there ahead of the British. By the time the troops reached Pennsylvania, winter had begun. The British scattered into winter quarters. At that time, armies did not usually fight in the winter because of the weather and the limited food supplies. Washington decided to do something unexpected. He decided on a winter attack. On December 15, 1776, Washington led his troops across the Delaware River from Pennsylvania to New Jersey. The troops attacked British troops at Trenton and then at Princeton. They killed or captured almost 1,000 men and scattered three British regiments. With the two small victories, Washington headed into northern New Jersey for the winter.

British General John Burgoyne approved a plan to isolate New England from the other American states. He planned a three-part attack on New York. The three forces would meet near Albany, New York, and then march east into New England. The plan, however, was not coordinated properly. As a result, British General Howe made his own plans. He launched a surprise attack on Philadelphia from the south. He thought that capturing the city and the Continental Congress would cripple the Revolution. On September 11, 1777, Howe defeated the Americans at the Battle of Brandywine Creek and captured Philadelphia. The Continental Congress had escaped, however. Howe did not destroy the Continental Army, which took up winter quarters at **Valley Forge**. Nearly 2,500 men died there from the cold and lack of food.

Even though conditions were harsh at Valley Forge, Washington managed to get training for his army. Two European military officers, the **Marquis de Lafayette** from France and Baron Friedrich von Steuben from Prussia, joined him at Valley Forge. They helped improve discipline and boost morale among the troops.

General Burgoyne's troops were not able to defeat the Americans defending upper New York. As a result, Burgoyne surrendered at **Saratoga**. The victory there was a turning point in the war. It improved American morale, and it convinced France to help the Americans. The French and Spanish had been helping the United States with supplies before Saratoga, but neither country had sent troops. In September 1776, the Congress sent an American delegation to France to ask for troops. The French had not been willing to risk war until they believed that the Americans could win. The victory at Saratoga gave them that assurance. The French then began negotiations with the United States. In two treaties the French recognized the United States as an independent nation. They also created an alliance between France and the United States. By June 1778, Britain and France were at war.

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8. How did General Burgoyne plan to defeat the Americans?

- **The War in the West** (page 142)

Not all of the fighting in the American Revolution occurred in the East. George Rogers Clark and his troops captured several towns along the Ohio River. After the British surrendered to Clark, the United States took control of the region. At about the same time, Chief Joseph Brant convinced four Iroquois nations to join the British. In July 1778, British troops and Iroquois warriors attacked western Pennsylvania, killing more than 200 militia. The following summer, American troops defeated the British and Iroquois in western New York. These battles destroyed the power of the Iroquois. Farther south, the Cherokee attacked settlers in Virginia and North Carolina. However, the American militias were too strong. They destroyed hundreds of Cherokee towns.

9. What was the result of the Iroquois defeat in New York?

- **The War at Sea** (page 142)

Americans also fought the British at sea. They attacked British merchant ships. To disrupt trade even further, the Congress issued **letters of marque**, or licenses, to private ship owners to authorize them to attack British merchant ships. These attacks harmed Britain's trade and economy.

The most famous naval battle involved naval officer **John Paul Jones**. He commanded the *Bonhomme Richard*. His ship encountered a group of British merchant ships protected by British warships near Britain. After his ship was hit, Jones tied his ship to a British warship and then boarded it. After a three-hour battle, the British surrendered.

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10. How did American attacks on British merchant ships affect Britain?

• The Southern Campaign (page 143)

After being defeated at Saratoga, the British decided to start a campaign in the southern states, where they had greater Loyalist support. In December 1778, British troops captured Savannah, Georgia. Then British forces surrounded Charles Town, South Carolina, capturing American forces there. Nearly 5,500 American troops surrendered. The Continental Congress then sent troops to defend the South Carolina backcountry.

The British continued taking over the Carolina backcountry. Many Loyalists agreed to fight for Britain. British troops tried to subdue the people living in the Appalachian Mountains. The people there pulled together and formed a militia. They intercepted British troops at the **Battle of Kings Mountain** and destroyed the army. The battle was a turning point in the South. General Nathaniel Greene, the new American commander in the region, wanted to wear down the British and destroy their supplies. The plan worked, and by late 1781, the British controlled very little territory in the South.

11. Why did the British decide to start a campaign in the South?

• The War Is Won (page 144)

The British realized that to keep control of the South, they had to get Virginia. In April 1781, the British, under General **Charles Cornwallis**, marched into Virginia. There they linked up with forces under the command of Benedict Arnold, who had been an American commander early in the war. Arnold later sold military information to the British. When this was discovered, Arnold fled to British-controlled New York City.

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When Arnold joined Cornwallis, the British began to conquer Virginia. Then in June 1781, the British troops were met with American troops under General Anthony Wayne. The British were outnumbered and too far inland, so they retreated to Yorktown to keep communications by sea. This retreat helped the Americans and their French allies. The French general found out that a French fleet was on its way from the Caribbean. Washington decided to move the American and French troops to Yorktown. With a French fleet nearby, the British could not escape by sea. On September 28, 1781, American and French troops surrounded Yorktown and bombarded the town. On October 19, 1781, the British surrendered. In March 1782, Parliament voted to start negotiations with the colonists in Paris. The Treaty of Paris was signed on September 3, 1783. Under the treaty, Britain recognized the United States of America as a new nation. It recognized the Mississippi River as the western border and gave Florida back to Spain.

12. Why did the British troops retreat to Yorktown in June 1781?
