

### Follow-up Activities

- Assign groups of students to research major battles of the Revolutionary War, such as the battles of Long Island, Saratoga or Yorktown. Each group may role-play its own military press conference, with a press secretary or general responding to reporters asking probing questions about the events that occurred in their selected battles.
- Things were going so badly for the Continental Army early in the Revolutionary War that some members of Congress were strongly considering replacing George Washington with someone else. Based on what they know about the early part of the Revolutionary War, ask students to write letters to the editor expressing concerns about the ability of Washington to conduct the campaign against the British.
- Benedict Arnold was one of the American generals who helped the colonies win the Battle of Saratoga. Ask students to research this battle, one of the major turning points in the Revolutionary War. Ask students to discuss Arnold's role in this campaign and, based on his later actions in siding with the British, to hold a mock trial in which he is tried for treason.
- Share with students the text of the Treaty of Paris of 1783. Break students into small groups and ask each group to identify on a map the changes in territory that were detailed in the treaty. The full text of the treaty can be found at this Web site: [www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=6](http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=6)
- The American war effort benefited greatly from the assistance of Europeans such as Baron von Stueben, the Marquis de Lafayette and Thaddeus Kosciusko. Ask students to research and summarize the contributions of these famous men. Based on what they learn, have students write journal entries describing the likelihood of American victory without European aid.
- There were many famous women associated with the American Revolution. Break students into small groups and assign each group an important woman to research, such as Mercy Otis Warren, Nancy Hart or Phyllis Wheatley. Ask each group to do a presentation explaining the significance of their Revolutionary War heroine.

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gwhtml/gwhome.html)  
"The George Washington Papers at the Library of Congress" contains a wealth of information on the famous Founding Father, and offers an extensive time line on the crucial events of the Revolutionary War.

(Continued)

- [www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/revamer.html](http://www.libs.uga.edu/darchive/hargrett/maps/revamer.html)  
The Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library at the University of Georgia provides links to many historical maps from the Revolutionary War time period.
- [www.ushistory.org/valleyforge/](http://www.ushistory.org/valleyforge/)  
A valuable resource that provides teachers with the names, places and fascinating stories associated with the Continental Army's 1777-78 winter encampment at Valley Forge.

### Suggested Print Resources

- Beller, Susan Provost. *Revolutionary War*. Benchmark Books, New York, NY; 2003.
- Maestro, Betsy. *Liberty or Death: The American Revolution: 1763-1783 (American Story)*. HarperCollins, New York, NY; 2005.
- Nardo, Don, Ed. *The American Revolution*. Lucent Books/Thomas Gale, San Diego, CA; 2003.
- Sheinkin, Steve. *The American Revolution (Storyteller's History)*. Summer Street Press, Stamford, CT; 2005.

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

Jeffrey W. Litzke, M.Ed.  
Curriculum Specialist, Schlessinger Media

#### TITLES

- ORIGINS OF DEMOCRACY (1688-1765)
- CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION (1765-1774)
- DECLARING INDEPENDENCE (1774-1776)
- THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR (1776-1783)
- CREATING A NEW NATION (1783-1791)

Teacher's Guides Included  
and Available Online at:

800-843-3620

**libraryvideo.com**  
The Leading Educational Video Distributor

**SCHLESSINGER**  
MEDIA  
— A DIVISION OF LIBRARY VIDEO COMPANY, —

Teacher's Guide and Program Copyright 2004 by Schlessinger Media,  
a division of Library Video Company  
P.O. Box 580, Wynnewood, PA 19096 • 800-843-3620  
Executive Producer: Andrew Schlessinger

Programs produced and directed by Issembert Productions, Inc. D6864  
All rights reserved. V6144



## THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR (1776-1783)

Grades 5–9

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting programs in the *The American Revolution for Students* series.

**Before Viewing:** Give students an introduction to the topic by relaying aspects of the program summary to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

**After Viewing:** Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up activities to inspire continued discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.

**SCHLESSINGER**  
MEDIA  
— A DIVISION OF LIBRARY VIDEO COMPANY, —

## Program Summary

With American independence officially declared in Philadelphia in 1776, George Washington and his makeshift army prepared to take on one of the world's greatest military powers. As the British mounted a major offensive in strongly loyalist New York, many people expected a quick American defeat.

Despite a devastating loss in the Battle of Long Island, Washington prevented his small regular army from being captured, and later won some important victories at Trenton and Princeton. After General Gates' major victory at Saratoga, Benjamin Franklin solicited and received aid and military assistance from Britain's archrival, France — a huge turning point in the war. However, even after Saratoga, Washington's troops still lacked adequate supplies, food and clothing and were forced to endure the harsh winter at Valley Forge.

While Washington and other brilliant generals such as Nathaniel Greene led America in battle, thousands of everyday citizens also contributed to the war effort. While men were away from their homes and farms fighting the British, women took on the crucial role of keeping the economy going and providing the troops with much needed supplies; some heroines directly participated in battles, risking their own lives for independence.

Throughout the long war, the British won most of the battles and controlled most of the major cities; however, America was mostly rural, and the British were unable to defeat the quick-hitting American forces in the vast countryside.

The British moved the war south in 1778 and took Savannah and Charleston, but America's hit-and-run tactics prevented the British from winning the war outright. In 1781, the American and French forces came together at exactly the right time and won a dramatic victory at Yorktown. Washington captured Cornwallis' army and the British surrendered! The United States of America was officially created and the country embarked on its unique experiment to build a democratic nation.

## Time Line

**1776** — The Second Continental Congress adopts the Declaration of Independence.

**1776** — An overwhelming British offensive forces Washington to evacuate New York.

**1776** — Thomas Paine writes a series of essays called "The American Crisis."

**1776** — Washington leads a bold attack on the Hessian forces in Trenton.

**1777** — The Americans capture Burgoyne's army at Saratoga; France soon agrees to provide military assistance.

**1777** — The Battles of Brandywine and Germantown occur.

**1777-78** — Washington and his troops spend a cold, harsh winter at Valley Forge.

**1778-80** — The British move the war south, and capture the cities of Savannah and Charleston.

**1780** — The Battle of Kings Mountain takes place.

*(Continued)*

**1781** — A combined American and French offensive captures Cornwallis and his forces at Yorktown.

**1783** — The Treaty of Paris is signed; the British officially acknowledge America's independence.

## Vocabulary

**Second Continental Congress** — A group of colonial representatives who gathered in Philadelphia in 1775 to talk about their problems with the British. The group voted to form a committee to write the Declaration of Independence.

**Declaration of Independence** — A document issued on July 4, 1776, which declared that the American colonies were free and independent states.

**Continental Army** — The name of the army of colonists led by George Washington that fought in the Revolutionary War.

**militia** — A group of citizens that protects its area in times of conflict.

**Lexington and Concord** — Two towns outside of Boston, Massachusetts where fighting between British troops and colonial militiamen took place in April 1775. Concord became known as the place where the "shot heard 'round the world" was fired.

**Hessians** — Term used by Americans to describe German soldiers hired by the British to fight in the Revolutionary War.

**Battle of Long Island** — An August 1776 British victory over the Americans, in which overwhelming British military power forced George Washington to evacuate his troops from New York to Trenton.

**"Common Sense"** — The title of a pamphlet published by Thomas Paine in 1776 that became highly influential in persuading Americans to join in the move toward independence.

**"The American Crisis"** — A series of essays written by Thomas Paine between 1776 and 1783 which inspired Americans to continue their fight for independence.

**Seven Years War** — A major conflict over territory that was fought in Europe beginning in 1756. The war also involved a struggle known as the French and Indian War between Great Britain and France for control of North America.

**Battle of Saratoga** — A major turning point in the Revolutionary War, as the Americans captured Burgoyne's army in New York in 1777, helping to push France toward joining the colonial cause.

**Molly Pitcher** — A legendary woman associated with the Battle of Monmouth in 1778; also a nickname given to women who carried pitchers of water to soldiers in battle during the Revolutionary War.

**Valley Forge** — The location in Pennsylvania where George Washington and his army set up their winter camp and endured many hardships in 1777-78.

**loyalists** — People in the colonies who remained loyal to Great Britain during the American Revolution.

**Battle of Yorktown** — The final major battle of the Revolutionary War, in which the Americans and French attacked and captured Cornwallis' army in 1781.

**Treaty of Paris** — An agreement reached in 1783 that officially ended the Revolutionary War and created the United States of America.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- In the early part of the Revolutionary War, Washington's army faced cold, hunger and sickness, and many deserted the armed forces altogether. Ask students what they think motivated soldiers to continue fighting against the British in the face of such hardships. What would students have done if they were members of the Continental Army?
- In fighting the Revolutionary War, Americans won their independence from Great Britain. Ask students to offer definitions for the term "independence." Why did many Americans value independence for themselves and for their country? What benefits, responsibilities and challenges did independence offer?
- Many colonists either supported or fought for the British during the Revolutionary War. Ask students to offer reasons why these colonists chose to remain loyal to King George III and Great Britain.

## Focus Questions

1. Who were the Hessians?
2. Why did the British move their campaign from New England to New York?
3. Explain Thomas Paine's contribution to the war effort.
4. What was the fundamental difference between the British soldiers and the patriots?
5. What was the role of a "Molly Pitcher"?
6. What was the last significant battle of the war?
7. When was the Treaty of Paris signed, and what was its significance?
8. How long did the war last?

## Follow-up Discussion

- Explain in detail Washington's strategy in fighting the British. Why did this strategy give America its best chance to win? Ask students to apply the statement, "won the battles, but lost the war" to the British campaign in the Revolutionary War. Why did the British strategy of capturing major cities not help them defeat the Americans?
- Describe the relative strengths and weaknesses of both the British and American sides prior to the Revolutionary War. Ask students to speculate about and list reasons why the Americans were able to win their independence.
- Thousands of enslaved Africans fought during the Revolutionary War. Ask students to discuss the irony of the colonies fighting for independence but still enslaving a large segment of their population. What role do students think America's victory in the Revolutionary War played in the eventual abolition of slavery?