

Teacher's Guide

George Washington Crosses the Delaware

Introduction

This guide will help educators teach children about the decisions people made during the late eighteenth century in the American colonies and by the British army that helped to determine the future of our nation. Beginning with the plight of General George Washington and his troops camped on the shore of the Delaware River in 1776 through the decision of General Cornwallis to surrender at Yorktown in 1783, students are presented with basic information and asked what they would do. Each dilemma is followed by an explanation of the actual course of events and their impact on the next steps in the development of our country.

National Standards

Go to www.enslowclassroom.com and click on the Curriculum Correlations tab. Click on your state, grade level, and curriculum standard to display how any book in this series backs up your state's specific curriculum standard.

Classroom Activities

Activities for teaching the five curriculum areas: Reading/Language Arts; Math, Science; Social Studies; and the Arts, can be found in this teacher's guide.

Guided Reading Level: O

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Enslow Publishers, Inc.
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How to Use This Book

The material in this book is presented in a format that allows students the opportunity to think critically about specific events in American history, weigh the advantages and potential consequences of a course of action, then asks students to decide for themselves which way they would proceed. Students should be encouraged to make a personal decision before turning the page to find out the historical outcome of the dilemma. After learning the actual course of events, students should be encouraged to speculate on the ramifications of the other choices presented. In this way students will feel more directly connected with the events that became turning points in American history.

The passing of long periods of time is an abstract concept for students so the creation and maintenance of a physical timeline while using this text would help students gain a better understanding of the amount of time between significant events presented. Register tape or yarn marked at even intervals representing years beginning with 1760 through the present would be displayed in the classroom for reference throughout this American History unit.

Here are some basic facts that you can share about the events noted in this book and in the “What Would You Do?” series:

The Revolutionary War – The origins of the Revolutionary War include disagreements between the British Crown and the American colonists over taxation and other issues. These increasingly bitter disputes led to armed revolt. The conflict initially began in Massachusetts, but eventually involved all thirteen original colonies. When the Revolutionary War began, Britain commanded a well-trained army and the world’s most powerful navy. The American rebels’ forces included a ragtag army and virtually no navy. Yet, the American forces prevailed, with timely assistance from France. Important battles include George Washington’s crossing of the Delaware River, the British defeat at Saratoga and Lord Cornwallis’ surrender at Yorktown. Among the key political events of the war, the most memorable was the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

Westward Expansion – The series focuses on two important episodes in the history of America’s westward expansion: the Louisiana Purchase and the California Gold Rush. In the early 19th Century, American political leaders such as Thomas Jefferson were keenly interested in expanding into North American territories held by France and Spain. Jefferson especially wanted access to the port of New Orleans and control of the Mississippi River. The purchase of the land, known as the Louisiana Purchase, massively expanded the territory of the young United States, while removing French and Spanish power from North America’s continental land mass.

The California Gold Rush started in 1848, with the discovery of the precious metal in northern California. Soon after the discovery, thousands of people moved west. By sea, gold seekers faced fierce storms; by land, they endured climatic extremes, disease, and Native American attacks. The Gold Rush also saw an influx of Chinese immigrants to California. While the Gold Rush ended around 1852, it profoundly shaped the nation’s awareness of the region’s natural resources.

The Civil War – Westward expansion and its impact on slavery was a cause of the Civil War. The conflict began in 1861, shortly after the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency. Eleven southern states seceded from the Union and formed the Confederate States of America. The Northern states’ military attempts to enforce unification met with sustained Confederate resistance from the war’s origin – the firing upon Fort Sumter in Charleston, South Carolina – to the Confederate surrender in 1865. Among the Civil War’s essential events was Lincoln’s issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed slaves in those states in conflict with the Union. The war’s most important conflicts included the Battle of Gettysburg in July 1863, in which a Confederate invasion of the North was defeated. Abraham Lincoln would later visit Gettysburg and deliver his famous “Gettysburg Address” to commemorate the battle site.

The Five Curriculum Activities for George Washington Crosses the Delaware

SAFETY WARNING:

Before any activity, make sure your students do not have any allergies to items that you might use. Never use anything that is sharp or may cut a student. Do not use anything too hot or cold that might injure any student. Always have an adult supervise all activities to ensure the safety of your students.

Reading/Language Arts activity: Students will imagine they are members of the Continental Army under General Washington's command camped in the snow on the shore of a frozen river on a cold December night. They are waiting for the order to cross the river and attack an enemy that is much better equipped. Students will write a one paragraph diary entry describing what they might be thinking about on this night. Have students consider the following questions as they write: Are you cold? Hungry? Missing your family? Are you anxious to get on with the attack or glad to have a few days to rest, even if it is bitter cold?

Math activity: How long would it take to march from Trenton to Princeton? Using the distance scale on the map of New Jersey, students will determine the distance from Trenton to Princeton. Under the winter conditions described, with deep snow and poor shoes, the Continental Army could walk about three miles per hour. How many hours would it take to travel the 12 miles from Trenton to Princeton? Using a computer mapping program, students may compare the time it took Washington's troops to make the trip to the time it would take to drive today.

Science activity: Attacking by the dark of night was a key strategy used by Patriot James Ewing to attack the Hessians. What phase of the moon would make for the best conditions for a surprise night attack? Full moon, when the moon looks like a complete disc and is at its brightest, occurs every 28 days. New moon, when there is no moon visible and no moonlight, occurred on December 10, 1776. Students will decide on the importance of the phase of the moon for a sneak attack and investigate the actual moon phase on December 21, 1776 using a moon phases chart or the internet for research.

Social Studies activity: Post a map of New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania in the classroom. Place a marker (e.g., push pin or dot) on the locations mentioned in the book regarding the movement of George Washington's troops and those of the Redcoats during this decisive period of the American Revolution.

Arts activity: The three groups of fighters, the British, the Patriots and the Hessians all wore colorful uniforms with unique hats. Draw a picture of a uniform that you would feel proud to wear in to battle. Consider the color you would wear, the style of the clothes and coat and what would be practical for a cold winter march. Be sure to include a hat and good shoes.

George Washington Crosses the Delaware Student handout

1. George Washington was in charge of the colonists' fighting force, called the _____.
2. British General William Howe knew it would be difficult for Washington to cross the Delaware River because the water was filled with _____ of _____.
3. The British hired _____ soldiers to help them.
4. Ewing pointed thirty cannon at the Hessians and fired whenever they _____
_____.
5. The Hessians defended the town of _____ alone.
6. After crossing the river in a storm, Washington's troops needed to march _____
miles to reach the Hessian camp at Trenton.
7. According to the map on page 32, how did some Hessian soldiers escape?
Over the _____.
8. During the battle of Trenton, what did Colonel Rall go back to the center of town for?
Colonel Rall went back for the _____.
9. After winning the battle at Trenton, most of Washington's men stayed because they had
a new _____ of _____.
10. When Cornwallis arrived at Trenton ready to fight the Americans, they had already left
for _____.
11. Other important victories were at Saratoga, _____ and Cowpens, _____.