

The American Revolution

Lesson 4 The Final Years

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Why does conflict develop?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *What events occurred in the victory at Yorktown?*
2. *What helped the Patriots win independence?*

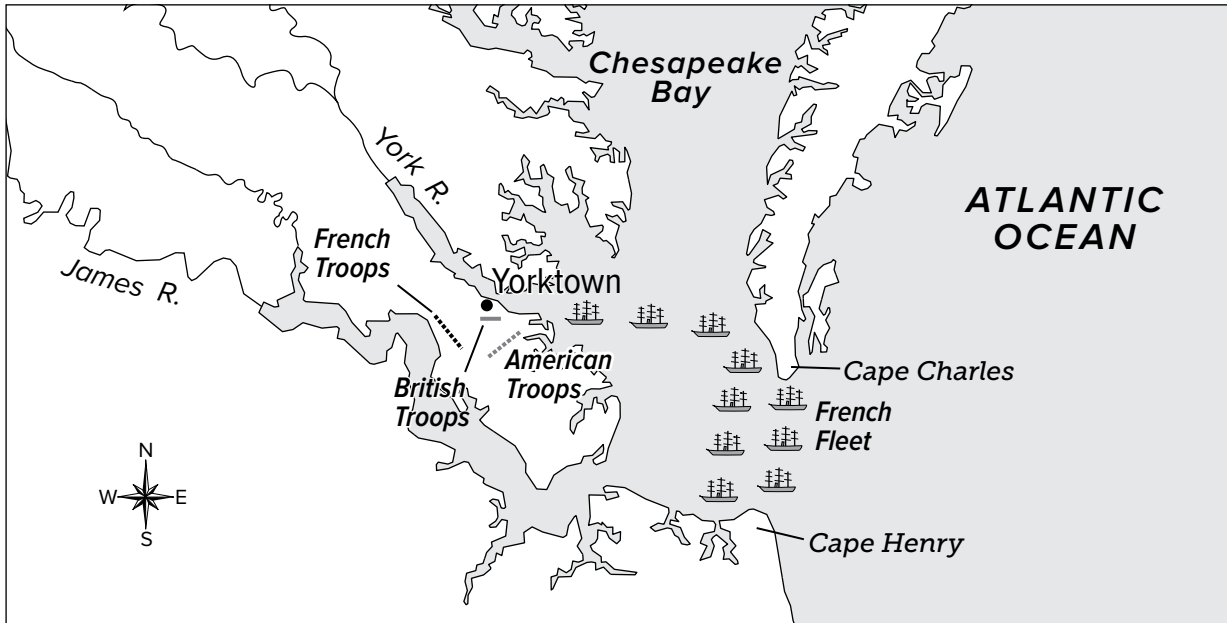
Terms to Know

siege an attempt to force surrender by blocking the movement of people or goods into or out of a place

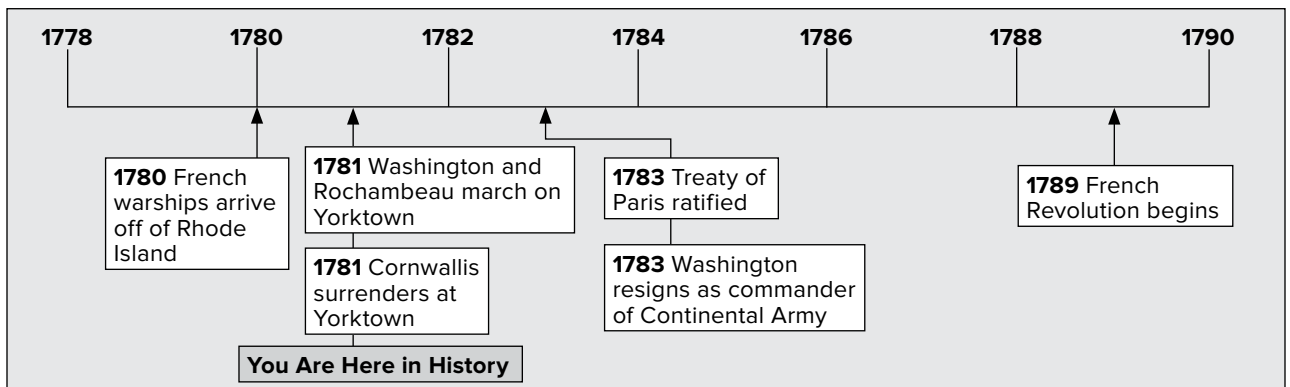
ratify to approve officially

ambush an attack in which the attacker hides and surprises the enemy

Where in the world?



When did it happen?



The American Revolution

Lesson 4 The Final Years, *Continued*

Victory at Yorktown

While battles were going on in the South, General Washington and his troops were in New York. In July 1780, French warships arrived off of Rhode Island to help the Americans. They carried thousands of French troops led by Comte de Rochambeau. They joined General Washington and waited for a second French fleet to arrive.

General Washington had a plan. He wanted to attack an army base in New York commanded by British general Clinton. A second fleet of French ships was expected. The attack would happen when that force arrived.

General Washington and Comte de Rochambeau waited, but the second French fleet never arrived in the North. Instead, Washington learned that the fleet would arrive at Chesapeake Bay. They could help fight General Cornwallis, who was camped on the Yorktown Peninsula.

Cornwallis was in a dangerous position. There was only one direction on land for escape. This had been blocked by Marquis de Lafayette and Anthony Wayne. Now the second French fleet would block escape by water as well.

General Washington changed his plan to attack General Clinton in New York. He and Rochambeau would take their troops to Virginia to fight against Cornwallis. This plan was kept a secret. Washington and Rochambeau moved quickly. Even their soldiers did not know where they were going. He hoped to trick General Clinton so he would not have time to send help to General Cornwallis. The plan worked. French and American troops left New York and marched 200 miles (322 km) in just 15 days. General Clinton did not know they were gone until it was too late.

The Continental forces at Yorktown were ready. Washington, Rochambeau, Lafayette, and the French fleet had Cornwallis cornered. British ships could not reach Cornwallis to help him escape. Washington's plan had worked perfectly.

At the end of September 1781, the Americans began a **siege**. This means that the Patriots hoped to force Cornwallis to surrender by keeping the British blocked off from supplies and communication. Cornwallis did not give up right away. He was surrounded by 14,000 American and French army and naval forces, but he still had 8,000 British and Hessian troops. The British were low on supplies. Many of their men were sick or wounded. On October 14, General Washington's aide, Alexander Hamilton captured important British defenses. Cornwallis saw he could not win. He surrendered.



Describing

1. Explain how General Cornwallis was trapped on the Yorktown Peninsula.



Marking the Text

2. Underline the sentence that describes Washington's first plan. How did General Washington change his strategy?



Vocabulary

3. What does the word *siege* mean?



Reading Check

4. Why did Washington advance on Yorktown?

The American Revolution

Lesson 4 The Final Years, *Continued*

Critical Thinking

5. Why was the Treaty of Paris important?

Reading Check

6. Why did Washington take action to end the soldier's threat in Newburgh?

The Patriots won the Battle of Yorktown. The French band played the song “Yankee Doodle” which the British had used to make fun of the Americans. In response, the British band played a children’s tune called “The World Turned Upside Down.”

Independence Achieved

Yorktown was not the last battle of the American Revolution. The British still held cities such as Savannah, Charles Town, and New York. Yet the British realized that the fight was finished. The war was too costly to continue.

Both sides sent representatives to France to work out a peace agreement. Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay represented the United States. The first draft of the Treaty of Paris was **ratified**, or approved, by Congress. The final agreement was signed in September 1783.

The treaty was a success for the Patriots. Great Britain agreed to recognize the United States as an independent nation along with other agreements.

United States	Great Britain
Recognized as independent nation	British merchants could collect debts from Americans
Promised that Congress would advise state governments to return Loyalist property	British agree to withdraw troops
	Americans granted permission to fish off of Canada

Some time passed between the end of the war and the signing of the treaty. The Continental Army was kept active during this time in Newburgh, New York. The soldiers wanted to get paid. They were angry because they were owed money. Some thought they should use force against Congress if they were not paid. General Washington stepped in to settle the dispute. He understood the threat was very serious for the new nation. He asked the soldiers to be patient. He also asked Congress to meet the soldiers’ demands. Congress agreed. General Washington showed his superior leadership once again.

The American Revolution

Lesson 4 The Final Years, *Continued*

When the last of the British troops left New York City in November 1783, Washington decided to resign. He wanted to retire to Virginia and live a quiet life with his family.

Even though the British were strong, the Americans won the war because they had certain advantages. They fought on their own land for a cause they believed in. They knew the land and how to use it, often using **ambushes** to surprise the enemy. The British, on the other hand, fought a war far from home. Their troops and supplies had to be shipped in. They also had a hard time controlling the Americans even when they captured major cities.

The Americans also had help from many others. The French supplied soldiers and naval support as well as money. The Spanish gave aid when they attacked Britain. Individuals from other countries came to help the Americans fight and build their defenses.

Most of all, the British could not fight against the power of independence. Americans fought hard because they believed in what they were fighting for. They wanted to protect their land, their families, and their freedom.

This spirit spread to other places in the world as well. Shortly after the American Revolution, French rebels fought for freedom. They fought for the ideals of “Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity.” These ideas also took root in the French colony of Saint Domingue, which is now Haiti. Led by a man named Toussaint L’Ouverture, enslaved Africans fought for their freedom. In 1804, Saint Domingue became the second nation in the Americas to win its freedom.

////////// Glue Foldable here //////////

Check for Understanding

Give two reasons that General Cornwallis was defeated at Yorktown.

1. _____
2. _____

List two elements that helped the Patriots win the war.

1. _____
2. _____



Explaining

7. How did France and Spain help the Americans win the war?



8. Use a two-tab Foldable and place it along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Write *American Independence* on the anchor tab. Label the two tabs *Patriots Win* and *British Defeated*. Recall and list reasons for the Patriots’ victory and the defeat of the Loyalists. Use the Foldable to help answer Check for Understanding.