

1.8 – THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION – HARKNESS DISCUSSION DOCUMENTS

STRATEGIES FOR ANNOTATION

1. Circle and comments on key words
2. Ask questions AND answer them
3. Annotate your own annotations (use arrows: →)
4. Ask about implications (“So what?”)

Document 1 – George Washington

During the Revolutionary War, George Washington became a national hero as he fought for freedom against British tyranny. An imposing man, Washington stood six feet two inches tall. He was broad-shouldered, calm and dignified, and he was an expert horseman. But it was Washington’s character that won hearts and, ultimately, the war.

Washington’s leadership during the American Revolution was bold and decisive. During the Battle of Trenton, Washington risked everything with one daring move on Christmas night. In the face of a fierce storm, he led 2,400 men in small rowboats across the ice-choked Delaware River to attack British forces in New Jersey.

By 8 o’clock the next morning, the men had marched nine miles through sleet and snow to the objective—Trenton, New Jersey, which was held by a garrison of Hessians (German mercenaries fighting for the British). Lulled into confidence by the storm, most of the Hessians had drunk too much rum the night before and were still sleeping it off. In a surprise attack, the Americans killed 30 of the enemy and took 918 captives. It was one of Washington’s greatest victories.

Throughout the war, Washington continually roused dispirited men into a fighting force. At Princeton, he galloped on his white horse into the line of fire, shouting and encouraging the Patriots as he went. During the harsh winter at Valley Forge, Washington endured the same cold and misery as every suffering soldier. Time and again, Washington’s tactics saved his smaller, weaker force to fight another day.

With the help of Washington’s leadership, the American colonies were finally able to defeat the British and win the freedom they had been longing for. By the end of the war, the entire nation idolized General Washington, and adoring soldiers crowded near him just to touch his boots when he rode by.

Directions: Write down **at least two questions** from the document to bring up in the tomorrow’s Harkness discussion.

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Document 2 – Tye Cornelius

At the start of the Revolutionary War, British Loyalist Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation that offered freedom to American slaves who would join the British forces. Dunmore was trying to undermine the American Patriots by encouraging slaves to rebel against their masters and to fight for the British instead.

Tye Cornelius was one of the many African-Americans who saw fighting for the British army as their only chance for freedom. Born in 1753, Tye was in his early 20s when he escaped from slavery and joined Lord Dunmore’s all-black Ethiopian Regiment.

Tye was a successful fighter and war strategist. His British comrades called him “Colonel” even though Britain did not award military titles to blacks. He eventually led his own elite black troop, the Black Brigade. Tye’s specialty was waging guerilla war against the Patriots. He soon became feared wherever he went. During the winter of 1779, Colonel Tye led the Black Brigade on ruthless raids against the Patriots. Joined by the British unit, the Queen’s Rangers, they freed many slaves and helped keep New York under British control.

The 24 African Americans of the Black Brigade were also involved in raids on rebel sympathizers. Colonel Tye’s raids were aimed at demoralizing the rebels and depriving them of arms and manpower to resist the British. Tye’s tactics were so effective that most of the raids were successfully completed without the loss of any of his men.

Though he fought for the British, Tye and other black Loyalists were struggling for the same freedoms demanded by the Patriots. In his own way, Tye’s efforts reflected the values most cherished by the Revolution and stated in the Declaration of Independence: “All men are created equal.”

Directions: Write down **at least two questions** from the document to bring up in the tomorrow’s Harkness discussion.

WRITING PROMPT

Who was more heroic, George Washington or Colonel Tye?

Write a thorough paragraph that answers the question above. Remember to reference both documents and your discussion in your paragraph.