



George Washington, Commander in Chief

6

☑ **Lesson Objectives**

Core Content Objectives

Students will:

- ✓ Describe how the thirteen colonies in America evolved from dependence on Great Britain to independence as a nation
- ✓ Describe the contributions of George Washington as military commander

Language Arts Objectives

The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.

Students will:

- ✓ Describe the connection between the Declaration of Independence and its affect on the Continental Army (RI.1.3)
- ✓ Ask and answer *who* questions orally, requiring literal recall and understanding of the details or facts from “George Washington, Commander in Chief” (SL.1.2)
- ✓ Describe George Washington’s army with relevant details, expressing ideas and feelings clearly (SL.1.4)
- ✓ Prior to listening to “George Washington, Commander in Chief,” orally identify what they know and have learned about the sequence of events leading up to the creation of the United States as a nation
- ✓ Prior to listening to “George Washington, Commander in Chief,” orally predict what the next event is in the sequence of events leading to the creation of the United States as a nation, and then compare the actual outcomes to predictions

Core Vocabulary

daring, *adj.* Bold or courageous

Example: The mouse made a daring move and ran right past the cat.

Variation(s): none

defeat, *v.* To beat someone in a game or battle


Example: Using only their brains, the children were able to defeat the adults at the board game.

Variation(s): defeats, defeated, defeating

struggled, *v.* Found it difficult and had to work really hard to do something

Example: The climbers struggled up the mountain.

Variation(s): struggle, struggles, struggling

<i>At a Glance</i>	Exercise	Materials	Minutes
<i>Introducing the Read-Aloud</i>	What Have We Already Learned?	story chart from Lesson 4; Image Cards 1–8; timeline from previous lessons	10
	Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud		
	Purpose for Listening		
<i>Presenting the Read-Aloud</i>	George Washington, Commander in Chief	world map	15
<i>Discussing the Read-Aloud</i>	Comprehension Questions		10
	Word Work: Struggled		5
 Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day			
<i>Extensions</i>	Student Choice		20
<i>Take-Home Material</i>	Family Letter	Instructional Master 6B-1	*



George Washington, Commander in Chief

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Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

What Have We Already Learned?

Have students use the timeline with Image Cards 1–8 to retell, in correct sequence, the events from the creation of thirteen colonies, to the Boston Tea Party, to Paul Revere’s ride, to the writing of the Declaration of Independence, and the creation of a flag. If students give one-word descriptions and/or fail to use read-aloud or domain vocabulary in their discussion of each Image Card, acknowledge correct responses by expanding students’ responses using richer and more complex language.

Finally, tell students that you need help adding to the story you wrote thus far about the founding of our country. Reread the story from the chart, which was created during the introduction activity in Lesson 4. When you get to the end, ask students to dictate what you should fill in about the writing of the Declaration of Independence and the creation of the Stars and Stripes.

Making Predictions About the Read-Aloud

Share the title of the read-aloud with students and show them Flip Book image 6A-1. Ask them to think about the title and what is happening in the picture to make predictions about the read-aloud and what will happen next in the sequence of events shown on the timeline.

Purpose for Listening

Tell students to listen carefully to find out whether or not their predictions about the next event in the creation of the United States as a nation are correct.



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◀ Show image 6A-1: George Washington's army

1 What was the Declaration of Independence?

You will remember that while representatives to the Second Continental Congress met and signed the Declaration of Independence, George Washington was far away from Philadelphia.¹ He was sent north to Boston to fight the British. His was a very difficult job. Washington's army was made up mostly of farmers with no military experience at all; they had no uniforms and only old guns, called muskets, which they hardly knew how to fire. There weren't enough guns, and there was hardly any gunpowder.

2 How do you think the army felt when they heard the declaration?

The wording of the Declaration of Independence was approved on July 4, 1776. Five days later, messengers carrying copies of the declaration reached New York, where General Washington's army was camped. His army heard the words and rallied in support of independence. A statue of King George was melted down into bullets for the Continental Army.²



◀ Show image 6A-2: British warships in New York Harbor

3 Germans are people who are from Germany, another country on the continent of Europe. Show students its location on a world map.

The men soon realized that they would never have enough bullets for the fight ahead. Later that summer, British warships were spotted entering New York's harbor. King George had gotten help from the Germans as well.³ More than thirty thousand trained troops arrived to fight the unprepared colonial militiamen.

4 What do you think the colonists did?

George Washington nearly lost his army in the fierce fighting around New York and New Jersey that fall. The Redcoats chased the Continental Army south, across the Delaware River. Thinking that they had scared them off, the Redcoats left only a small force to guard them on the other side of the river. It was December, and they felt sure that nobody would fight during the dead of winter. But they were wrong.⁴



5 *Daring* means courageous.

← **Show image 6A-3: Washington crossing the Delaware**

George Washington came up with a **daring** plan.⁵ On Christmas night, he gathered his men together. It was snowing and cold, but Washington had the men get into their boats and row quietly across the ice-filled river. More than two thousand soldiers crossed the river. The crossings took nine hours! Marching through the wind and sleet of the December cold, the Continental Army reached the British troops just before dawn. While the Redcoats were still sleeping, Washington's men launched a surprise attack on the enemy camp.

The Redcoats were surprised all right! Some of them came out of their bunks in their underwear and just held up their hands. It was a total victory for General Washington. Nobody in his army had been killed. Washington and his army returned to Philadelphia to shouts of joy. But the war wasn't over yet.



← **Show image 6A-4: Benjamin Franklin in France**

The Continental Congress knew that they needed more help in order to win their war for independence. German soldiers were fighting alongside the British. Perhaps the French would send soldiers across the ocean to help the colonists fight against the British. It was no secret that the French and British had long been enemies.⁶ The Continental Congress decided to send some men to France to ask for their support. Their chief representative was seventy-year-old Benjamin Franklin.⁷

The French did not like to lose in battle, and they were still angry about losing to the British in an earlier war. At first they did not want to support the colonists. It was crazy to think that an army of farmers could **defeat** one of the greatest armies in the world, the British army.⁸ But an American victory in New York in the fall of 1777 changed their opinion overnight. They promised gunpowder, soldiers, and ships.

6 The French are people who are from France, another country on the continent of Europe. [Show students its location on a world map.]

7 Who was Benjamin Franklin?

8 If you defeat someone, you win.



← **Show image 6A-5: Valley Forge**

9 Washington worked very hard to keep his men from quitting.

General Washington's army was camped in Pennsylvania at a place called Valley Forge during the winter of 1777 and 1778. Snow lay on the ground when Washington and his men arrived. They pitched tents and built log cabins, but neither kept out the cold. The men were dressed in rags, and many of them had no shoes, walking barefoot in the snow. There was hardly any food, and some days the men had little to eat and drink other than bread and water. Disease spread through the camp, and many men died. The men missed their families and wanted to go home. Washington **struggled** to keep up his men's spirits.⁹ He camped in a tent beside them for a time, earning their respect. No battles were fought at Valley Forge that winter, but the cold and hungry men spent hours training to be ready when they met the British again in the spring.

Discussing the Read-Aloud

15 minutes

Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* Were your predictions about what happened next in the formation of the United States as a new nation correct? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)
2. *Inferential* How would you describe George Washington as commander in chief? (He was brave; he was a good leader; etc.)
3. *Inferential* How would you describe George Washington's army? (They had no military experience and few supplies.)
4. *Inferential* Why were George Washington and his army willing to fight the Redcoats? (Answers may vary.)
5. *Evaluative* How did the Declaration of Independence make George Washington's soldiers feel, and what did they do after they heard it? (It made them want to fight for independence. They melted a statue of King George to use for bullets, and they started winning some battles.)

[Please continue to model the *Question? Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

6. *Who? Pair Share:* Asking questions after a read-aloud is one way to see how much everyone has learned. Think of a question you can ask your neighbor about the read-aloud that starts with the word *who*. For example, you could ask, “Who did you hear about in today’s read-aloud?” Turn to your neighbor, and ask your *who* question. Listen to your neighbor’s response. Then your neighbor will ask a new *who* question, and you will get a chance to respond. I will call on several of you to share your questions with the class.
7. After hearing today’s read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

Word Work: Struggled

5 minutes

1. In the read-aloud you heard, “Washington *struggled* to keep up his men’s spirits.”
2. Say the word *struggled* with me.
3. *Struggled* means had difficulty and worked very hard to accomplish something.
4. I struggled to get up the steps with the heavy box.
5. Have you ever struggled with a task? Try to use the word *struggled* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students’ responses: “I struggled with . . .”]
6. What’s the word we’ve been talking about?

Use a *Discussion* activity for follow-up. Directions: I will ask a question. Be sure to use the word *struggled* in your answer. (Answers may vary for all.)

1. Have you ever struggled to get out of bed in the morning?
2. Have you ever struggled with cleaning your room?
3. Have you ever struggled to find something?
4. Have you ever struggled to wait your turn?



Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day



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Extensions

20 minutes

Student Choice

Ask students which read-aloud they have heard recently that they would like to hear again. If necessary, reread the titles of recent read-alouds to refresh students' memories. You may also want to choose one yourself.

Reread the text that is selected. Feel free to pause at different places in the read-aloud this time and talk about vocabulary and information that you did not discuss during the read-aloud previously.

After the read-aloud, ask students if they noticed anything new or different during the second reading that they did not notice during the first reading. Also, ask them to try to express why they like this read-aloud. Remember to repeat and expand upon each response using richer and more complex language, including, if possible, any read-aloud vocabulary.

Take-Home Material

Family Letter

Send home Instructional Master 6B-1.