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A NEW NATION

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A NEW NATION

The United States of America was born on July 4, 1776, the day the Declaration of Independence was accepted by Congress. The nation was not really free, however, until after the War for Independence was fought. Americans fought for their freedom for eight long, hard years. They might have given up many times, but they did not. Britain finally granted the United States its independence in 1783 after losing two armies in America.

The war was only the beginning. After it was over, the new nation had to write a constitution that would work. It also had to start up a new government that was not like any other in the world! George Washington, who had led the American army to victory, was chosen as the nation's first president. He started the nation off right by his fairness and firmness in those first years. By God's grace, the nation was born and survived its first years.

OBJECTIVES

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you should be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFEPAAC®.

When you have finished this LIFEPAAC, you should be able to:

1. Name the major battles and leaders in the Revolutionary War.
2. Describe the government under the Articles of Confederation.
3. Describe the decisions made at the Constitutional Convention and the government created by the Constitution.
4. Explain how the Constitution became the government of America.
5. Describe the problems and actions of the first president of the United States.
6. Describe life in the United States when the new government began.
7. Describe the beginning of political parties and important events under the second president of the United States.

VOCABULARY

Study these new words. Learning the meanings of these words is a good study habit and will improve your understanding of this LIFEPAAC.

ally (al' ī). A nation united with another for some special purpose

bail (bāl). The money left with a court of law in order to free a person from jail until a trial is held

betray (bi trā). To be unfaithful or disloyal to

bribe (brīb). A reward for doing something that a person does not want to do

cannon (kan' ən). A big gun supported by wheels or a flat base

colonel (kèr' nl). Officer ranking above a major and below a general

compromise (kom' prə mīz). To settle a quarrel or difference of opinion by agreeing that each side will give up part of what it wants

debate (di' bāt). A discussion, often public, of reasons for and against something

delegate (del' ə git). A person given power or authority to act for others, a representative

immigrant (im' ə grənt). A person who comes into a foreign country or region to live

manufacture (man' yə fak' chər). A making of articles by hand or by machine especially in large quantities

motto (mot' ō). A sentence, word or phrase written or engraved on some object

neutral (nü' trəl). On neither side in a quarrel or war

promote (prə mōt). To raise in rank or importance

siege (sēj). The surrounding of a fortified place by an army trying to capture it

spokesman (spōks' mən). A person who speaks for another or others

spy (spī). A person who tries to get information about the enemy, usually in time of war, by visiting the enemy's territory in disguise

tariff (tar' if). A duty or tax on a list of imports or exports (goods sold or bought in other countries)

term (tèrm). A set period of time that an elected official serves in office

traitor (trā' tər). A person who betrays his or her country

Note: These words appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used in this LIFE PAC. If you are unsure of the meaning when you are reading, review the definition.

Pronunciation Key: hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tèrm; it, ĭce; hot, ōpen, ôrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rüle; child; long; thin; /ʒh/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /ə/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.



I. WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

The Revolutionary War lasted from 1775 to 1783. It began at Lexington in Massachusetts and ended at Yorktown in Virginia. It was fought all over the colonies.

The British should have won easily. They were a powerful nation with a large army and navy. The United States was a very weak country with a small army that was made up of men from the militia. However,

God had His own plans. The British fought very poorly, and the Americans would not give up.

Finally, the French decided to help the Americans. They wanted revenge for the loss of New France. With French help, the Americans trapped and defeated a whole British army. Then, Britain agreed to end the war and give America its independence.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review this objective. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Name the major battles and leaders in the Revolutionary War.

Restudy these words.

ally	betray	cannon
colonel	promote	siege
spokesman	spy	traitor

A Bleak Beginning

Problems. The Revolutionary War was not a fair fight. The British had many advantages. Britain was one of the most powerful nations on earth in 1775. It had a large army and navy. It had money to hire soldiers from Germany (Hessians). Also, many Americans still did not want independence. They were loyal to the king. These people, called *Tories*, would help the British against the patriots.

Another problem was the American government. The Second Continental Congress took over as a government for all the colonies in 1776, but it had no power. It could not collect taxes, only the state assemblies could do that. (The original thirteen colonies had all become states.)

Congress could only ask for money, and they often did not get it. That made it very difficult to pay the soldiers and buy supplies for them. Britain did not have that problem. Its soldiers were better paid and supplied all through the war.

However, the British had some problems too. Their generals were usually noblemen who had paid for their place in the army. Many of them were not good soldiers. They also had to get their orders from Britain which was 3,000 miles (4,839 km) away, across the Atlantic Ocean. There were no telephones. Orders from the British government could take weeks or months to reach a commander in America.

Also, the British had to defeat and control all of the United States! It was a huge land with miles of deep forests where the patriots could hide. These patriots were also fighting for their homes and their freedom. They were led by men who were clever and determined, like George Washington. They would not make it easy for the British.

Boston. The American army surrounded Boston after Lexington and Concord. George Washington took command of the army in July of 1775, just after the Battle of Bunker Hill. Washington was a good choice for this job. He was a rich plantation owner from Virginia. He had fought in the French and Indian War and the Virginia militia. He was a man that soldiers trusted, and he was a clever fighter. Washington wanted to drive the British out of Boston, but he could not until March of 1776.

A group of patriots called the "Green Mountain Boys," led by Ethan Allen, had captured Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain in 1775. This was an important fort because the British could invade New York from Canada along the lake. (Roads were really bad in America. Traveling along rivers or lakes was much better.) Also, the patriots captured the fort's **cannons**. Henry Knox moved almost 60 of these cannons south by sled during the winter of 1775-76. In the spring, Washington set them up on the hills around Boston. The British realized they were in real danger and left the city.

In the meantime, another American army had captured Montreal, north of Lake Champlain. These men then tried to take Quebec and failed. General Benedict Arnold had been a part of the attack on Quebec. He retreated back to Fort Ticonderoga. In 1776, he defeated a British fleet that tried to retake the fort and the lake.

New York. The British army moved from Boston to New York in July of 1776. Washington was defeated at the Battle of Long Island in August, but he and his army escaped. The British also captured two

important American forts near New York City. The British army then settled in New York for the winter.

An American soldier named Nathan Hale offered to get information about the British in New York City. He went over to Long Island dressed in regular clothes. He took careful notes and then tried to get back across the bay to Connecticut. He saw a boat coming that he thought might give him a lift. Unfortunately, one of the men on the boat was a member of Hale's family and a Tory. They captured him and gave him to the British. He was hung as a **spy**. He died bravely saying, "I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country!"

Washington's surprise. By the end of 1776, the American army was in trouble. They were camped in the cold outside of New York City in New Jersey, and many of the soldiers wanted to go home. Many had signed up to fight only until the end of the year. Unless George Washington could convince them to stay, he would not have an army after December 31st.

In December Washington planned a surprise for the British. After dark on Christmas night, he and the army crossed the Delaware River. It was bitterly cold, and anyone falling in the river could have died. The water was full of chunks of ice that threatened to tip the small boats. With great skill and daring the army was able to cross the river and sneak up on a Hessian camp at Trenton.

Most of the Hessians were sound asleep. They had celebrated all day on Christmas. No one was ready for an attack, but that is what happened. The American army came at them out of the early dawn. It was a complete surprise! In less than an hour, Washington and his men captured a thousand prisoners and many supplies.

The British tried to trap Washington after Trenton; however, Washington was very clever. He had his men leave their campfires burning, and a few men stayed in the camp making noise while the rest of the army snuck away during the night. They