

The American Revolution in New Jersey



Encampment at Jockey Hollow, Morristown, NJ

Grade level: 6-8

Time: Five 40-minute periods

Objectives: Students will be able to:

- Explain why some colonists remained loyal to Britain and others supported independence
- Use documents to compare and contrast the backgrounds, views and actions of last Royal Governor William Franklin and first state Governor William Livingston
- Describe what happened to Loyalists and take and defend a position on whether the treatment of Loyalists was necessary and fair
- Explain why Washington choose Morristown as the site for two winter encampments
- Determine the effect of the war and the 1779-80 encampment at Jockey Hollow on the soldiers and the population of New Jersey
- Identify the impact of the Revolutionary War on the New Jersey and American economy

New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies (2020):

- 6.1.8.HistoryCC.3.a: Explain how the consequences of the Seven Years War, changes in British policies toward American colonies, and responses by various groups and individuals in the North American colonies led to the American Revolution
- 6.1.8.GeoSV.3.a: Use maps and other geographic tools to construct an argument on the impact of geography on the developments and outcomes of the American Revolution including New Jersey's pivotal role.
- 6.1.8.HistorySE.3.a: Analyze how the leadership of George Washington during the American Revolution and as president allowed for the establishment of American democracy
- 6.1.8.HistorySE.3.b: Analyze a variety of sources to make evidence-based inferences about how prominent individuals and other nations contributed to the causes, execution, and outcomes of the American Revolution.
- 6.1.8.HistoryUP.3.b: Examine the roles and perspectives of various socioeconomic groups (e.g., rural farmers, urban craftsmen, northern merchants, and southern planters), African Americans, Native Americans, and women during the American Revolution, and

determine how these groups were impacted by the war.

6.1.8.EconET.3.a: Identify the effect of inflation and debt on the American people and evaluate the policies of state and national governments during this time.

Essential/Focus Questions:

- Why were some people Patriots and others Loyalists?
- What happened to Patriots and Loyalists?
- Why did Washington choose Morristown as the site for two winter encampments?
- What was the effect of the war and the encampments on the population of New Jersey?
- What was the impact of the Revolutionary War on the economy of New Jersey and United States?

Activities/Procedures

1. Patriot or Loyalist? Choosing Sides

Background: Not everyone supported American Independence. President John Adams, discussing the Revolution, said "We were about one third Tories [Loyalists], and one third timid, and one third true blue." (David McCullough's Biography of John Adams, 2002).

- Why did some Americans decide to rebel against the British crown and demand independence? What did they argue?
- Why did some Americans wish to remain loyal to the British crown? What did they argue?

The number of Loyalists is still debated. One historian estimates that about 500,000 Americans remained loyal to Britain during the Revolution. This would be about 16% of the total population, or a little more than 19% of Americans of European origin. The Loyalists were a minority in every colony. The ranks of the Loyalists included many Anglicans (Episcopalians), many tenant farmers in New York and people of Dutch origin in New York and New Jersey, many of the German population of Pennsylvania, some Quakers, Highland Scots in the South, and many Native Americans. In every colony, some of the wealthy and socially established families never wavered from their loyalty to the British Crown. Other Loyalists came from outside these religious, social or ethnic categories.

New Jersey's Loyalists came from all levels of society, from large landowners to farmers, artisans and slaves; their loyalty was based on a variety of economic, political, religious and personal reasons. The New Jersey Loyalist leadership included Governor Franklin, son of Patriot leader Benjamin Franklin, Attorney General Cortlandt Skinner and other prominent prewar political figures, who raised loyalist soldiers to fight alongside the British. The New Jersey Volunteers, a noted Loyalist regiment, was organized and commanded by Skinner. One estimate is that 3,500 New Jersey men served in Loyalist units during the Revolution.

While some New Jerseyans, like the men of the New Jersey Volunteers, fought alongside the British army in formal campaigns, others engaged in attacking their former neighbors along the coast and the New York border from bases in New York City, Staten Island and Sandy Hook. Still others took to the wilds of the Pine Barrens, where they hid between raids on Patriot farms. Loyalist troops pushed into Monmouth County and fought patriot militia and Continental troops in Shrewsbury, Middletown and Colts Neck. In New Jersey, the Revolution became a civil war, pitting neighbor against neighbor. Patriot Captain Joshua Huddy was hanged at Highlands in retribution for the shooting death of Loyalist Philip White, and vigilante activity was common to both sides.

The Revolution offered an opportunity for large numbers of slaves to fight, and many did, on both sides, in the hope of earning their freedom. It has been suggested that two revolutions went on at once—the Patriot one against the British, and a second one fought by blacks for their freedom. On Nov. 7, 1775, Lord Dunmore, the former royal governor of Virginia, proclaimed freedom for all slaves (or indentured servants) belonging to Patriots, if they were able and willing to bear arms, and joined the British forces. Within a month of the proclamation, more than five hundred slaves left their masters and became Loyalists.

One of the most prominent black Loyalists was a young man named Tye who had escaped in 1775 from his master in New Jersey. “Colonel” Tye (so-called by the British) joined Lord Dunmore's regiment in Virginia. After the regiment was disbanded, Tye fought on the British side in the Battle of Monmouth and then founded a unit which the British called the “Black Brigade”. The Black Brigade raided Patriot homes and farms in New Jersey, gathered intelligence for the British, kidnapped Patriot leaders, and gathered firewood and provisions for the British Army. Colonel Tye's men were headquartered in a wooden fortress at Bull's Ferry, New Jersey. George Washington sent a thousand troops against the fortress. A force of black and white Loyalists fought them off after an assault, and the raids went on. Colonel Tye died after being wounded in an assault.

The Atlantic coast of New Jersey was also a haven for “privateers” during the war. The Continental Army authorized “privateers” to interfere with British efforts to supply its troops. These private war ships were strictly regulated by law and authorized to capture and destroy British shipping. When a vessel was captured it was taken to an authorized port where the cargo was inventoried. If the vessel and cargo were not need by the Continental Army, they were stored and when the Admiralty Court determined that the capture was legal, the “prize” (the ship) and the cargo were sold by auction, with. Privateers at Little Egg Harbor and other New Jersey coastal locations were in a good position to attack ships traveling between Boston or New York and Philadelphia and South Carolina. Between June and September 1778 the privateers operating out of Little Egg Harbor had obtained no less than 18 prize vessels. Privateers were supporting the war and making fortunes at the same time.

Activity: Meet your “[Revolutionary Neighbors](#)” and hear their stories on the website of Crossroads of the American Revolution, a nonprofit organization located at the Old Barracks in Trenton, NJ, dedicated to connecting people and places of New Jersey's revolutionary heritage. Assign or have students select a “Revolutionary Neighbor” to follow through the war.

For additional information and primary source documents regarding African Americans and the American Revolution go to “[African Americans' Quest for Freedom during the Revolutionary War](#)” by the New Jersey History Partnership.

For additional information and primary source documents regarding New Jersey women and the American Revolution go to “[Petticoats vs. Redcoats: New Jersey Women and the American Revolution](#)” by the New Jersey History Partnership.

2. William Franklin vs. William Livingston

Compare and contrast the experiences and beliefs of William Franklin, New Jersey's last colonial governor, and William Livingston, the first governor of New Jersey under its 1776 state Constitution. Explore the consequences of Franklin's and Livingston's decisions.

Background: For the materials and instructions, go to "[The Two Governors: An Exploration of Loyalist and Revolutionary Thought](#)" by the New Jersey History Partnership.

Activity for Middle school students: Read and analyze two primary source documents, one from each governor and write a short essay, explaining which side they would have supported in the American Revolution.

Activity for High School students: Divide into two groups: half the students read documents by William Franklin; the other half read Livingston documents. Mini groups of 3-4 students in each of the two groups translate and analyze one of the primary source documents and present their summaries to the class. Based on the group work and presentations, students write a short essay comparing the two governors.

- What were the views of Franklin and Livingston on the relationship between England and its North American colonies?
- How did each view his role as governor?
- What were the hopes and fears of each for the colony/state?
- Who do you think was the better governor? Did circumstances favor one man over the other? Use primary and secondary sources to support your argument.

1) What happened to Patriots? What happened to Loyalists?

Background:

What happened to early Patriots? Go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OfzNU8IHQyM> to watch the 90-second video, "Five New Jersey Signers of the Declaration of Independence," to identify the dangers involved in "declaring independence" from Britain and the consequences for Richard Stockton.

What happened to Loyalists? Patriots confiscated Loyalist property and jailed or tarred and feathered British sympathizers, and the war produced a good deal of residual bitterness. On June 4, 1777, the New Jersey legislature passed an act providing for the "confiscation of property of all citizens of New Jersey who joined the enemies of the state and country," in other words, Loyalists. Essentially a civil war was fought in New Jersey between the Patriots and Loyalists. The Patriots formed an "Association for Retaliation," an extra-legal organization created for the sole purpose of harassing known local Loyalists and their suspected sympathizers. Its first meeting was held in Freehold on July 1, 1780 to address Loyalists still residing in Monmouth County. The group pledged to use the same violent tactics employed by Tory refugee groups that raided the county against those perceived to be Loyalists, and drafted a constitution entitled "The Articles of Association for Purposes of Retaliation," a document that clearly exemplifies the principle of an "eye for an eye."

When the war ended, the question arose as to what would happen to the Loyalists. Many Loyalists kept their heads down and made their peace with the new nation of the United States. A few returned from exile and took up life in the U.S. But remaining in the United States after the Revolution was not an option for some, including many of those who had fought. The British were willing and anxious to reward white Loyalists and their families, particularly those who had fought on the British side, by helping them escape from the vengeance of Patriots. At the close of the conflict most New Jersey Loyalists fled to Britain or Canada.

But what would happen to the African-American Loyalists? As the fighting ended, escaped slaves were flooding into British-occupied New York City. Although the British government had promised

emancipation to former slaves who fought for it, Article 7 of the peace treaty that ended the war provided that the British were to leave the United States "without ... carrying away any Negroes". Many of the senior British officers in North America refused to comply with article 7. The British general Sir Guy Carleton (later Lord Dorchester), who commanded in New York City, believed that any Black American who had served the mother country was not property; he (and his family) were British subjects. In defiance of the plain language of the treaty, (and of his own political masters in London), he began to issue passes which allowed the bearer to go to Nova Scotia, or wherever else the freed slave thought proper. In May, 1783, George Washington met with Carleton and protested the British policy of carrying escaped slaves away. Eventually, nearly three thousand ex-slaves were evacuated by Carleton to Nova Scotia.

Activity: Students with a Patriot Revolutionary neighbor should report of his or her fate during the war. Students with a Loyalist Revolutionary Neighbor should report on his or her fate during and after the war. Then have the class consider and discuss:

- Do you think that it was necessary for the colonial Patriots to seize the property of Loyalists during the American Revolutionary War?
- Do you think that this action was fair? Support your opinion.

2) Why did George Washington choose Jockey Hollow in Morristown for his winter encampments?

Background: After significant victories over the British in Trenton (Dec. 26, 1776) and Princeton (Jan. 2-3, 1777) General Washington marched the Continental Army north to Morristown where he set up winter camp January 6-May 28, 1777. The hills in Morristown offered Washington a view across the Hudson River where the British army was headquartered in New York City. The vantage point also enabled Washington to protect the roads leading to New England and to Philadelphia, where the Continental Congress was meeting. The army was protected from British attacks by the Watchung Mountains and swamplands to the east and the Ramapo Hills which ran north to join the Hudson Highlands. Also iron deposits (for cannons) and economic resources (especially food and clothing) were available in northern New Jersey.

Washington spent the winter months reorganizing, training and disciplinary the Continental Army, which had begun to shrink due to desertion and soldiers' refusal to reenlist when their enlistments expired (initial enlistments were for six months). A cash bonus was promised to men enlisting for three years; a land bounty was offered to those enlisting for the duration of the war (promises that would become problems later on).

Activity: Why encamp in Morristown?

Students assume the role of a surveyor attached to the Continental Army, and write a memo to General Washington explaining why Morristown is a good choice for winter encampments. The letter should also address some of the anticipated difficulties and make a recommendation. Use the background information provided and a map of New Jersey showing the position of Morristown: what were the benefits and costs of setting up winter camp in Morristown?

Good content score references include: the regional geography of New Jersey and the protection afforded by the hills, proximity to the British in New York, the iron deposits and economic resources of northern New Jersey, the ability to command the corridor between New York and Philadelphia. The disadvantages: it was cold in the winter in Morristown; it was not near any major city; no housing was readily available for all of the soldiers; they would need to build their own housing.

3) “So Hard a Winter”

Background: In late November 1779, General Washington decided that the Continental Army would return to Morristown for its winter encampment (December 1, 1779-June 23, 1780) because of its strategic location. While Washington’s officers had used Jacob Arnold’s tavern on the Morristown Green as the army’s headquarters and Washington had stayed in the nearby Ford mansion in 1777; the second encampment during the winter of 1779-1780 was in the woods of Jockey Hollow, outside of the town. According to David Ludlam’s book, *Early American Winters, 1604-1820*, there were 28 separate snow storms in Morristown during the 1779-1780 winter. Five years of fighting has greatly reduced the colonial economy. The underfed, poorly clothed and unpaid troops struggled for the first two months to construct their 1000-plus log-house city in the woodlands of Morristown.

By the time fighting resumed in the spring of 1780, Washington’s immediate command numbered 11,000, including militia (trained civilians reserved for deployment by local and state governments). Additional Patriots fighting for the cause of independence soon joined. In June they fought the decisive battles of Connecticut Farms and Springfield.

Activity: Students read the excerpts in Handout 2 about the winter of 1779-80 and/or watch the 90-second, “Morristown: the Winter of 1779-80” on the NJ350 website at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoCTuRlc8R8> or a five-minute video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9Gr0BUGRsA>. Assume the role of a New Jersey soldier at the encampment at Jockey Hollow in Morristown in 1779-1780 and explain the challenges faced by the Continental Army as it encamped in New Jersey and the effect of the war and the encampments on the population.

Good content score references include: The extremely cold weather; the need to build housing in freezing cold and snow; the need to obtain food and clothing and to stay warm; the lack of money and supplies. The effect of the war after five years since 1775 was to reduce the economy and to demoralize the colonial troops and the population.

4) What was the impact of the Revolution War on the NJ and U.S. economy?

Background: The Revolutionary War created harsh economic conditions in New Jersey, forcing the Continental Army and New Jersey citizens to make difficult choices. Money became scarce during and after the war. When the American Revolution began in 1775, the rebelling colonies, soon to be independent states, issued paper money to pay for military expenses. The Continental Congress did not have the power to borrow money as the war continued but it did have the power to print it. The American Revolution was financed, in large measure, with paper currency called “the Continental,” which was not backed by silver or gold. The printing of paper bank notes resulted in steep inflation. By April 1779, George Washington wrote to John Jay, president of the Continental Congress, “In the last place, though first in importance, I shall ask, is there anything doing, or that can be done, to restore the credit of our currency? The depreciation of it is got to so alarming a point that a wagon-load of money will scarcely purchase a wagon-load of provisions.” Speculators profited from fluctuations in paper currency. Others profited by selling scarce commodities to the Continental Army at inflated prices. The war-weary civilian population saw household income decline by 40 percent. Farmers faced raids from the British and their Indian allies. Merchants lost foreign trade due to the war.

Soon it became clear that the debt could not be repaid. Due to over-issuance of currency and the lack of confidence in the government, the notes were soon nearly worthless-“not worth a

continental." Eventually, Congress redeemed them at 1/100th of their original value in bonds, which did not mature until 1811.

Activity: "Not Worth a Continental":

- Students conduct a short research project and write three diary accounts explaining the impact of the Continental currency:
 - 1) one from the perspective of a New Jersey farmer who had his crops and animals confiscated by Continental troops and was forced to accept Continental dollars;
 - 2) one from the perspective of an officer who was forced to choose between letting the army starve or coercing the farmer, and
 - 3) one from the perspective of a New Jersey Loyalist whose property has been confiscated by the Continental Army.
- Good score references: the dire situation of the Continental Army, the rich natural resources of New Jersey, the reasons why the currency was worthless, the extent to which government may impose on citizens, individual rights and dignity, the different perspectives of individuals in a given situation.

Assessment

Students select from among the following topics to research and write an essay explaining:

- Why were some people Patriots and others Loyalists?
- What happened to Patriots and Loyalists?
- Why did Washington choose Morristown as the site for two winter encampments?
- What was the effect of the war and the encampments on the population of New Jersey?
- What was the impact of the Revolutionary War on the economy of New Jersey and United States?

Extension

- Visit the **Proprietary House** at 149 Kearny Avenue in Perth Amboy, NJ, home of William Franklin, New Jersey's last royal governor. For information call (732) 826-5527.
- Visit **Liberty Hall** at 1003 Morris Avenue in Union, New Jersey, home of William Livingston, New Jersey's first state governor. For information call (908) 527-0400.
- Visit **Ft. Lee Historic Park**, *a cliff-top park area with scenic overlooks, a reconstructed Revolutionary War encampment, and a Visitor Center*. The Visitor Center is open Weds.–Sun., 10 AM–4:45 PM, with exhibits, gift shop, 150-seat auditorium, restrooms, beverage vending machine, and a water fountain. It is closed on holidays except Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day. Living history school program is offered and special events. Contact 201 461-1776 or <https://www.njpalisades.org/fortlee.html>.
- Visit **Washington Crossing** in Titusville, NJ. Washington Crossing State Park includes the site of the landing at Johnson's Ferry and the Johnson's Ferry House. For information go to <https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/parks/washingtoncrossingstatepark.html>
- Visit the **Old Barracks** in Trenton Barracks, a fieldstone structure built in 1758 during the Seven Years' War and used by both sides during the American Revolution. When General Washington attacked Trenton, there was skirmishing around the building against the Hessian troops

stationed within. After defeating the Hessians, the Americans used the Barracks as a hospital. It was occupied at different times during the war by American, British, and Hessian troops as well as loyalist refugees and prisoners. For information go to <http://www.barracks.org/>

- **Visit Princeton Battlefield Park** which preserves part of the site of the [Battle of Princeton](#) (January 3, 1777), which was a victory for General Washington's revolutionary forces over British forces. The park also includes the Clarke House Museum; the site of the [Mercer Oak](#), a tree which stood in the middle of the battlefield until recent years; the Ionic Colonnade and a stone patio marking the grave of 21 British and 15 American soldiers killed in the battle. The park's hiking trails lead to the [Delaware and Raritan Canal](#) and to Princeton University. The park is open daily sunrise to sunset. Contact 609-921-0074.
- Visit **Jockey Hollow** where Washington's troops camped during the winter of 1779-1780, and/or the Ford Mansion, which served as Washington's Headquarters for six months during the American Revolutionary War. Jockey Hollow, Fort Nonsense and the Jacob Ford Mansion were of importance during the American Revolution. Today they are part of the Morristown National Historical Park, created in 1935 as the nation's first national historical park in Morristown, NJ, and operated by the National Park Service (go to <http://www.nps.gov/morr/index.htm>) The Jockey Hollow Section is free; Washington's Headquarters/Jacob Ford Mansion at Morristown charges an admission fee.
- Visit **Monmouth Battlefield State Park** in Manalapan, New Jersey. Open daily 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (732) 462-9616 <https://nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/ssparks/monmouthbattlefieldstatepark.html>. There is a reenactment of the Battle of Monmouth every year at the park in late June, including pacing sentries, enlisted men cleaning their weapons or idle away their time gambling, and women of the army cooking, mending, and washing. At the parade ground, soldiers drill or artilleryists fire their cannon.
- Visit the **Battle of Connecticut Farms** in Union, New Jersey, where an invading force of 5000 British and Hessian troops moving from Elizabeth to Morristown fought the Continental Army and New Jersey Militia forces. Some of the heaviest fighting took place around the area of the Presbyterian Church. The original church building was burned that day along with much of the Village of Connecticut Farms by British/Hessian forces. The cemetery at the Connecticut Farms Presbyterian Church contains the graves of 72 American Revolutionary War soldiers as well as a mass grave of British and Hessian soldiers who died at the Battle of Connecticut Farms. The church was soon rebuilt both, and the 'new' building still stands today at 888 Stuyvesant Avenue in Union, with a plaque commemorating the battle, which is reenacted. For more information visit www.unionhistory.org or www.uniontwphistoricalsociety.webs.com or call 908-687-0048.
- Visit the **Battle of Springfield** in Springfield, New Jersey. Continental troops and New Jersey Militia successfully defended against the attack and kept the invasion from reaching Washington's supplies at Morristown. However, the British and Hessian forces burned most of the buildings in Springfield, including the Presbyterian Church on Morris Avenue in Springfield that was being used as a storehouse. The Battle of Springfield was the last major battle fought in the North. The Cannon Ball house, so-named because it had been hit by a cannon ball during the battle, was one of only four houses in Springfield to survive unburned and the only one open to the public. For more information about the Cannon Ball House, the Presbyterian Church and graveyard in Springfield. Contact the Springfield Historical Society at (973) 376-4784.

- Visit **Wharton State Forest #9 Batsto Historic Site**, Hammonton, NJ 08037 Phone: 609.561.0024 School Group Contact: Gil Mika, (609) 567-4559. Fax: 609.567.8116 Email: info@bastovillage.org Website: www.batstovillage.org. Located in Wharton State Forest, Batsto Village is the site of a former bog iron and glass-making community. A full time naturalist on staff conducts natural history programs for school groups.

Handout 1

From <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/washingtons-encampment-morristown-new-jersey-and-hard-winter-1779-1780>

George Washington wrote the Marquis de Lafayette on March 18th, 1780 from the Ford Mansion. "... *The oldest people now living in this Country do not remember so hard a winter as the one we are now emerging from. In a word the severity of the frost exceeded anything of the kind that had ever been experienced in this climate before.* "

When the Army arrived at Jockey Hollow, there was already a foot of snow on the ground. Doctor James Thacher, whose journal is one of the best sources of first person descriptions of events during the war, wrote: "*The weather for several days has been remarkably cold and stormy. On the 3rd instance, we experienced one of the most tremendous snowstorms ever remembered; no man could endure its violence many minutes without danger to his life. ... When the storm subsided, the snow was from four to six feet deep, obscuring the very traces of the roads by covering fences that lined them.* " In March he wrote: "*...an immense body of snow on the ground there had been four snowfalls in February and March brought six more.* " Another entry in his journal read: "*For the last ten days we have received but two pounds of meat a man, and we are frequently for six or eight days entirely without bread. The consequences is that the soldiers are so enfeebled from hunger and cold, as to be almost unable to perform their military duty or labor in constructing their huts.* "

General Johann de Kalb wrote: "*...so cold that the ink freezes on my pen, while I am sitting close to the fire. The roads are piled with snow until, at some places they are elevated twelve feet above their ordinary level.*"

Private Joseph Plumb Martin's memoirs, writing in the rollicking style of a soldier, reported: "*We are absolutely, literally starved. I do solemnly declare that I did not put a single morsel of victuals into my mouth for four days and as many nights, except for a little black birch bark which I gnawed off a stick of wood. I saw several men roast their old shoes and eat them, and I was afterward informed by one of the officer's waiters, that some of the officers killed a favorite little dog that belonged to one of them.*" He then wrote that he wore "*what laughingly could be called a uniform, and possessed a blanket thin enough to have straws shoot through it without discommoding the threads.*"