

# Teachers' Guide for Cobblestone

October 2013: Valley Forge: The Real Story

By Debbie Vilardi

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Goal: To learn about the military encampment at Valley Forge and its impact on the war.

\*Always have a parent or trusted adult help with web research.

Before Beginning:

Discuss what you know about Valley Forge.

"Finding the Truth" by Barbara D. Krasner (Pages 2-4)

Vocabulary: experiences, commissary

Comprehension:

1. What were temperatures like during the Valley Forge encampment?
2. What was the later impact of the weather conditions?
3. Why did General Washington choose Valley Forge?
4. Why might Washington have portrayed the army's condition as worse than it was?
5. What conditions made it difficult for the Commissary Department to properly supply the soldiers?
6. What were the responsibilities of individual states?

Writing Activity: Contrast the information in the article with your prior impressions of the Valley Forge encampment.

Research: Valley Forge, General George Washington, the Continental Congress, battle of Brandywine, battle of Germantown

"Valley Forge" by Marc Brier (Pages 5-7)

Vocabulary: militiamen, volley, outflanked, enlistment, morale, Hessians

Comprehension:

1. How did the American Revolution begin?

2. How were battlefield wins and losses determined in the 1700s?
3. What did the British learn about American soldiers from the battle of Breed's Hill?
4. Why was patriot morale failing by the end of 1776?
5. What was daring about Washington's plan to cross the Delaware River?
6. How did Howe capture Philadelphia?
7. Why was Philadelphia important?
8. What did the Americans gain at Germantown?
9. What does "regulars" mean as used at the end of the article?

Writing Activities:

1. The patriots followed the motto "Defeated, We Rise Again." What did the motto say about their desire for victory?
2. Write about a time in your life when you or someone you know followed the advice in this motto.

Research: Paul Revere, the battles of Lexington and Concord, British Regulars, the battle of Breed's Hill, Hessian, Washington's crossing of the Delaware, General Sir William Howe

"1777" by Andrew Matthews (Page 8)

Geography Activity: Study the map on page 8. Note the locations of battles mentioned in the previous articles. What do Trenton, Brandywine, Valley Forge, and Philadelphia have in common? Why might that make them strategically important?

"Lay of the Land" by Scott Houting (Pages 9-11)

Vocabulary: ford, redans, redoubts, mattock, fascine

Comprehension:

1. Why was it necessary to select the campsite carefully?
2. What were Washington's orders from the Pennsylvania government?
3. What features protected the western side of the camp?
4. What protected the north and southeast?
5. Why was General Duportail assigned to design and lay the camp's defenses?
6. Why did Washington separate the troops into smaller groups?

7. Why might he have been so specific about dimensions and making the roofs and walls tight?

Math Activity:

1. Washington ordered his troops be separated into groups of 12. How many groups were made? They constructed 1,000 huts. Were there enough huts for the soldiers?
2. What was the volume of each hut?

Research: General Louis Lebegue Duportail, Thomas Paine

"Getting the Kinks Out" by Bill Lange (Pages 11-13)

Vocabulary: ration

Comprehension:

1. What challenges did the Continental Congress face in establishing an army?
2. What advantage did the British have in procuring supplies?
3. How did the proximity of both armies impact the patriots' ability to obtain supplies?
4. What were the responsibilities of the Commissary General Department and the Quartermaster General Department?
5. What happened when Thomas Mifflin resigned as quartermaster?
6. How did Washington respond to the shortage of food?

Research: Thomas Mifflin, Major General Nathaniel Greene, Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth

"The Men Who Served" by Tara Videon (Pages 14-16)

"A Commanding" by Tara Videon (Page 17)

Vocabulary: loyalist

Comprehension:

1. What were some of the diverse backgrounds of the American militiamen?
2. How did officers differ from their soldiers?
3. Why did Washington need officers dedicated to letter writing?
4. What was Colonel Morgan's role at Valley Forge?
5. How did foreign born officers help the American soldiers?

6. What was von Steuben's military background?
7. Why were unified commands important for the soldiers?

Writing Activity: You are a soldier who was promised food and payment, neither of which is being provided in the quantities expected. Write a letter home telling why you will or won't reenlist with the forces at Valley Forge. Consider what is happening at home as well as what is happening at Valley Forge.

Research: Windsor Fry, Marquis de Lafayette, Alexander Hamilton, Tench Tlighman, Colonel Daniel Morgan, Brigadier General Henry Knox, Major General Johann de Kalb, Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben

"A Great Leader" by William Troppman (Pages 18-20)

Vocabulary: insubordination, coalition

Comprehension:

1. What was George Washington's military experience prior to the American Revolution?
2. How did Washington's behavior change in the years after the French and Indian War?
3. How did Washington feel about being selected to lead the patriot army?
4. Why was the need to ask permission from the Continental Congress for military actions a problem?
5. Where did the money to fund the war come from?
6. What was the conflict between the French and American officers?

Discussion: According to the caption for the picture of Thomas Mifflin on page 12, he was one of the officers who wanted Washington removed from the army. Why might some officers have disliked Washington? Were the reasons political, personal, or military?

Research: French and Indian War, Mount Vernon

"The French Join the Fight" by George Matlack (Pages 21-23)

Comprehension:

1. Why did the Continental Congress believe France might help them?
2. Why did European governments fear the British?
3. What was the American reaction to France entering the war on their side?
4. What was the British reaction?

5. What was Washington's response to the British retreat?
6. What happened in the Battle of Monmouth?

Writing Activity: When the French entered the war, the tide changed in America's favor. However, the American army had already changed. Rewrite history. What do you think would have happened if the French had not entered the war?

Research: Benjamin Franklin, Sir Henry Clinton, Battle of Monmouth

"Did You Know" by (Pages 24-25)

Vocabulary: desert

"Remembering the Ladies" by Dona M. McDermott (Pages 26-27)

Vocabulary: sustenance, messes

Comprehension:

1. Why did women follow the army?
2. How did they earn a living?
3. Why did Washington prefer female nurses?
4. What were the roles of the wives of officers?

Writing Activity: You are a woman during the Revolution. Your husband is in the army. Decide if you are the wife of a soldier or an officer. Do you come to Valley Forge or remain home? What is your life like?

Research: Martha Washington, Catharine Littlefield Greene, Lucy Knox, Lady Sarah Stirling

"From Military Camp to National Park" by Andrew Matthews (Pages 28-30)

Comprehension:

1. What prompted the formation of the Centennial Association?
2. Why did they hope to purchase the Isaac Potts house?
3. Were they successful?
4. Which groups helped purchase and restore the home?
5. How did Valley Forge become a state park?

6. What changes did the state park make to the area?
7. What changes occurred as the bicentennial approached?
8. What is the park like today?

Research: Centennial and Memorial Association, Isaac Potts house, Patriotic Sons of America, Daughters of the American Revolution, Governor Robert E. Pattison, Paul Philippe Cret, President Gerald R. Ford, George C. Neumann

“Digging for History” by Meg Chorlian (Pages 31-33)

Vocabulary: excavation, stratigraphically

Comprehension:

1. How do archeologists select a dig site?
2. How is a layer of soil processed?
3. What happens to the artifacts that are found?
4. What have archeologists learned about the huts?
5. What artifacts have been found in trash pits?
6. What can be learned from these artifacts?
7. What are the procedures for working with the artifacts?
8. Why were the remains of the dining hut an important find?

Research: archeology, National Park Service

“No Battles Here” by Rhonda Buell Schier (Pages 34-37)

Vocabulary: living history, historical reenactments, hammer, priming pan, frizzen

Comprehension:

1. How do park employees give visitors a feel for history?
2. How do modern children learn about the training that the soldiers experienced at Valley Forge?
3. What annual events occur at the park?
4. What are some of the leisure activities the soldiers engaged in?

Drama Activity: In groups, select an aspect of life at the encampment to reenact. Research the equipment, clothing, and behaviors appropriate to ensure your presentations are as historically accurate as possible. Possible topics may include building a hut, cooking food, writing a letter, or tending sick soldiers.

"Words" by Dennis Denenberg (Page 45)

Vocabulary: corset

"A Revolutionary Park" by (Page 46)

Research: Independence National Historical Park

Activity for the Entire Issue: Read the "Cartoon Connection with Ebenezer and the Colonel" on page 49. Use the information in this issue to argue that "Sometimes, it's what happens between the battles that counts!"