

## Student Worksheet #1:

### Defending Independence: Timeline (2 pages)

# The American Revolution: From Protest to Independence

(Part 1)

1776



#### Washington and Trenton

After a series of defeats, Washington's army had low morale. He crossed the icy Delaware River and surprised Hessian forces at Trenton. This victory helped restore hope that the Revolution was not lost.

1777



#### Saratoga

American forces defeated the British army at Saratoga. Saratoga was a major turning point because it helped convince France that the Americans could win.

1778



#### France Joins the War

After Saratoga, France officially joined the American side. French military, naval, financial, and diplomatic support made the American cause much stronger.

1777-1778



#### Valley Forge: Winter Hardship and Training

The Continental Army faced hunger, disease, cold weather, low supplies, and low morale. Baron von Steuben helped train the army. Training helped turn the Continental Army into a more disciplined fighting force.

1778-1779



#### John Paul Jones and Naval Action

John Paul Jones used bold naval attacks and raids to challenge British ships. Even with a smaller navy, Americans and their allies found ways to pressure Britain.

1779-1780



#### Spain and the Dutch Enter the Wider War

Spain entered the war against Britain in 1779, while the Dutch Republic later came into conflict with Britain. The war expanded beyond North America, forcing Britain to spread its military and financial resources across multiple fronts.

*The fight for independence grew from a colonial protest into a global struggle.*



# The American Revolution: From Protest to Independence

## (Part 2)



### Native American Involvement

Different Native American tribes were pulled into the war on different sides. The Revolution affected Native communities deeply, including through violence, displacement, and loss.



### African American Involvement

Free and enslaved African Americans fought on both sides, often hoping to gain freedom. The Revolution used powerful language about liberty, but freedom was not equally available to everyone.



1780

### Benedict Arnold's Betrayal

Benedict Arnold secretly tried to help the British by giving them information about West Point. His betrayal showed how fragile trust and loyalty could be during the war.



1780–1781

### Southern Campaign

Britain shifted its strategy to the South. American commanders used mobility, endurance, and strategy to weaken British forces. The Southern Campaign showed that strategy and persistence could matter as much as winning one battle.



1781

### Yorktown

American and French forces trapped Cornwallis at Yorktown by land and sea. Cornwallis surrendered. Yorktown was a decisive victory that helped lead Britain toward peace negotiations.



1783

### Treaty of Paris

The Treaty of Paris officially ended the war. Britain recognized American independence. The treaty turned military victory into official independence.



1789

### Washington as First President

George Washington became the first president and helped set important examples for the office. Washington showed that American leadership would be powerful but limited, not a monarchy.



### Key Ideas:

- ✓ Declaring independence required vision and courage.
- ✓ Achieving independence required leadership, sacrifice, strategy, alliances, persistence, and the ability to sustain a long and difficult war.



*A more  
free and fair  
future.*