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Major Themes

The War and the Revolution

Phases of the War

- 1.) New England
- 2.) Mid-Atlantic (British is the aggressor and has the greatest chance to win)
- 3.) South (Surrender comes at Saratoga)

Articles of Confederation and its issues

- The Articles of Confederation, drafted in 1777, provided for a national government much like the one already in place.
- Congress remained the central and only institution of national authority
- Powers of Congress
 - 1.) Could conduct wars and foreign relations
 - 2.) Could appropriate, borrow and issue money
- Inabilities of Congress
 - 1.) Could not regulate trade
 - 2.) Could not draft troops
 - 3.) Could not levy taxes directly on the people
- There was no separate executive; the “president of the United States” was merely the presiding officer at the sessions of Congress
- The Confederation lasted from 1781-1789 and was not a complete failure, but it was far from a success
- It lacked adequate powers to deal with interstate issues or to enforce its will on the states, and it had little stature in the eyes of the world

The Declaration of Independence as a global document

- So long as a people comes to believe their rights have been assaulted in a "long Train of Abuses and Usurpations," they will seek to protect those rights by forming their own state, for which international custom demands a declaration of independence. In February 2008, the majority Albanian population of Kosovo declared their independence of Serbia in a document designed to reassure the world that their cause offered no precedent for any similar separatist or secessionist movements. Fewer than half of the current powers of the earth have so far recognized this Kosovar declaration. The remaining countries, among them Russia, China, Spain, and Greece, have resisted for fear of encouraging the break-up of their own territories. The explosive potential of the American Declaration was hardly evident in 1776 but a global perspective reveals its revolutionary force in the centuries that followed. Thomas Jefferson's assessment of its potential, made weeks

before his death on July 4, 1826, surely still holds true today: "an instrument, pregnant with our own and the fate of the world."

Tactics employed by both sides of the war

- The Americans play the aggressor for most of the war as they deployed their guerrilla warfare and multiple sneak attacks on the British. The British however played the war conservatively and fought in a traditional gunmen formation. The Americans offensive tactics led them to several successes at a plethora of battles

The ramp-up to the Revolution

- 2nd Continental Congress Convenes
- Olive Branch Petition
- Americans believe that they are fighting for a redress of grievances within the British Empire, not independence (at first)
- Thomas Paine wrote *Common Sense* which invoked lots of thoughts in the colonies and across Britain. He wanted to turn the anger of the Americans away from the specific parliamentary measures they were resisting and toward what he considered the root of the problem -- the English Constitution itself
- The Declaration of Independence is signed
- Mobilization for war begins and Washington is placed as Commander of the Continental Army
- They receive aid from France and Prussia

People and Terms

George Washington

- In 1775, they created a Continental Army, with George Washington as the Commander-in-Chief
- Washington had commanded during the French and Indian war
- He was unanimously chosen in 1775 and was respected by all
- The Continental Congress was not as much interested in supplying Washington with manpower and equipment, but instead were too much interested with his fellow conduct of military operations

Thomas Paine

- "They cannot defeat an idea with an army"
- Wrote *Common Sense*, and it invoked lots of thoughts in the colonies and across Britain
 - It helped change the American outlook toward the war.
 - Paine wanted to turn the anger of the Americans away from the specific parliamentary measures they were resisting and toward what he considered the root of the problem -- the English Constitution itself
 - He said the King, and the system that permitted him to rule, was to blame

- He claimed that England was no more fit to rule the American continent than a satellite fit to rule the sun

Common Sense

- Written by Thomas Paine and was a pamphlet that sold over 100,000 copies in its first few months of print in 1776; galvanized many Americans in the cause for revolution

Articles of Confederation

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- There was no separate executive; the “president of the United States” was merely the presiding officer at the sessions of Congress
- Each state had 1 vote in Congress and at least 9 of the states had to approve any important measure
- All thirteen state legislatures had to approve an amendment of the Articles
- The small states wanted equal state representation, but the larger states wanted representation to be based on population
- The smaller states prevailed on this issue
- New York and Virginia had to give up their western claims before the Articles were finally approved. They went into effect in 1781
- The Confederation lasted from 1781-1789 and was not a complete failure, but it was far from a success
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Declaration of Independence

- On July 2, 1776, it adopted a resolution: “That these United Colonies are, and of right, out to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Britain is, and out to be, totally dissolved”
- On July 4th, they drafted and approved the Declaration of Independence
- Thomas Jefferson, 33, from VA, drafted the Constitution
- He received help from Benjamin Franklin and John Adams

- Jefferson borrowed texts and ideas from many declarations that had been drafted in the colonies years before
- The Declaration was divided into two parts:
 - o 1.) The ideas of Locke, which stated that government was formed for the good of the people and are attached to natural rights
 - o 2.) Listed the allegations against the King, who with the help of Parliament, had violated his “contract” with the colonists.
 - o “All men are created equal” ~ George Mason
 - o Patriots were more motivated than ever to fight for independence, while American remained a divided nation

Battle of Long Island

- Greene is put in charge of Long Island due to its importance but by May him and his men were in Brooklyn
- Washington urges his troops to fight for liberty, telling them, “You are free men, fighting for the blessings of liberty.” He also threatened death to anyone who showed cowardice
- General Heath said, “They must be well watched. They, like the Frenchman, look one way, and row the other”
- The generals were scared
- The Americans fear a surprise the most
- On August 24th, the American troops march out to meet the British
 - Washington also put Putnam in Sullivan’s place
 - Stirling decides to surrender to the Hessian regiment and more specifically, General von Heister
 - By noon, it is imminent that the Americans have been defeated and have lost many men in the process
 - **This was the first great battle of the Revolutionary War: the Battle of Brooklyn Heights/ Long Island and the largest battle ever fought in North America**

Battle of Trenton

- The British, having been used to pausing war in the winter, settled down leaving a squad of German Hessians in Trenton
- Washington did not pause
 - On Christmas night, 1776, Washington crossed the Delaware and surprised the Hessians

Battle of Princeton

- Left no choice, Washington and the American troops left Trenton and went to attack Cornwallis’s rear guard in Princeton
 - Washington again divided his force in 3
 - Greene’s column went to the left, Sullivan’s column to the right

- The Battle broke out on January 3rd
 - Colonel Charles Mawhood was the British general in charge of Princeton
 - “It’s a fine fox chase my boys”
- This battle lasted only 15 minutes
 - 23 Americans died including Colonel Haslet and General Mercer
 - Many British died and 300 were taken prisoner
 - This was an “unexpected victory”

Battle of Quebec

- Benedict Arnold threatened Quebec in late 1775 and early 1776 after a winter march of incredible hardship
- Richard Montgomery came to his assistance and they combined forces, with Arnold taking command of both
- Montgomery died in the assault on the city
- The Quebec siege ended in frustration
- After attempts from Franklin to draw Canada in, it was certain that Canada was not to become part of the new nation

Battle of Saratoga

- This New York campaign was a remarkable victory
- The British surrender at Saratoga became a major turning point in the war
- Above all else, because it led to the American and French alliance

Battle of Yorktown

- Cornwallis followed orders and retreated to Yorktown
 - Washington, Count Jean Baptiste de Rochambeau, and Admiral Francois Joseph Paul de Grasse set out to trap Cornwallis at Yorktown
 - Washington and Rochambeau marched French-American forces to Virginia from NY to meet up with other French forces
 - Grasse sailed to the Chesapeake Bay and the York River
 - These two forces captured Cornwallis and on October 17, 1781, they got him

French Alliance

- The greatest potential ally for the United States was France
- King Louis XVI took the throne in 1774
 - Him and his Count de Vergennes (foreign minister) were eager to see Britain lose a crucial part of its empire
 - The French began to give the US supplies but refrained from the thing the US wanted and needed the most: Diplomatic Recognition
- **Benjamin Franklin**
 - Went to France to represent the US
 - A natural diplomat, he became a popular hero among the French (both the aristocrats and common people)

- February 6, 1778
 - In part to forestall a British peace offensive that Vergennes feared might persuade the Americans to abandon the war, France formally recognized the US as a sovereign nation and laid the groundwork for greatly expanded assistance to the American war effort
 - As a result of France entering, the Netherlands and Spain later joined and drifted into a war against Great Britain on the American side
 - French was the greatest ally, as they offered a Navy and an expeditionary force that proved invaluable in the decisive phase of the Revolutionary Conflict

Valley Forge

- The six-month encampment of General George Washington's Continental Army at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777-1778 was a major turning point in the American Revolutionary War. ... The defeats had led some members of the Continental Congress to want to replace Washington, believing he was incompetent
- Martha Washington stayed with Washington during this time

General Burgoyne

- The British devised to split the US in two parts, with Howe to move to the North and John Burgoyne would control the troops of this northern force
- Burgoyne devised a two pronged attack along both the Mohawk and the upper Hudson approaches to Albany
- Seized Fort Ticonderoga with ease and got its enormous share of supplies
- On October 17, 1777, Burgoyne ordered his troops, nearly 5,000 of them, to surrender to the Americans

General Gates

- The Americans were so irritated that they even removed General Phillip Schuyler from command of American forces in the north and replaced him with Horatio Gates
- August 16, 1780
 - Camden, South Carolina and a British win
 - Lord Cornwallis meets and crushed the Patriot force led by Horatio Gates
 - As a result, Gates was recalled and Nathaniel Greene was placed in charge

Benedict Arnold

- Benedict Arnold becomes a traitor and shocks everyone
 - He was convinced that the American cause was hopeless and conspired with the British agents to betray the Patriot stronghold at West Point on the Hudson River
 - The plan fell through and he spent the remainder of the war on the British side

General Greene

- As a result, Gates was recalled and Nathaniel Greene was placed in charge
 - He was a Quaker from Rhode Island and probably the best of all the American Generals of the time except Washington
 - Battle at King's Mountain (October 7, 1780)
 - A band of Patriot riflemen from the backwoods killed, wounded, or captured an entire force of 1,100 NY and SC Tories that Cornwallis was using as auxiliaries
 - Greene split his men into contingents and attacked from several different points
 - He avoided a showdown in open battle
 - "A very unexpected and severe blow"
 - Dealt to Cornwallis at Cowpens on January 17, 1781
 - Greene combined his troops and maneuvered to meet the British on the land of his choosing... the courthouse
 - Greene withdrew but Cornwallis lost so many men that he decided to withdraw from the Carolina campaign

Treaty of Paris

- September 3rd, 1783
 - Occurred when both Spain and France agreed to end hostilities
 - It was great for the Americans
 - It granted a clear-cut recognition of its independence and a generous, though ambiguous cession of territory -- from the southern boundary of Canada to northern boundary of Florida and from the Atlantic to the Mississippi
 - In the fall of 1783, the Americans celebrated

Shays Rebellion

- Shays wanted paper money, tax relief, a moratorium of debts, the relocation of the state capitals from Boston to the interior, and the abolition of imprisonment for debt
- Summer of 1786
 - The Shaysites concentrated on preventing the collection of debts, private or public, and used force to keep courts from sitting and sherrifs from selling confiscated property
 - Samuel Adams and others called the followers of Shay rebels and traitors
 - When winter came, rebels advanced on Springfield, hoping to seize weapons from the arsenal there
 - An army of state militiamen, financed by a loan from wealthy merchants, set out from Boston to confront them.
 - In 1787, this army met Shay's band and dispersed his ragged troops

- As a military enterprise, Shays Rebellion was a failure and added urgency to a movement already gathering support throughout the new nation-- a movement to produce a new, national constitution
- Shay was pardoned of death and Massachusetts offered him some tax relief and a postponement of debt payments

Ben Franklin

- Went to France to represent the US
- A natural diplomat, he became a popular hero among the French (both the aristocrats and common people)
- Jefferson received help from Benjamin Franklin and John Adams when drafting the Declaration of Independence

John Jay

- Franklin, Jay, and Adams began proceeding on their own, without informing Vergennes, and signed a preliminary treaty with Great Britain on November 30, 1782
- In the meantime, Franklin pacified Vergennes and avoided an immediate rift in the French-American alliance
- Treaty of Paris came as a result of his work

John Adams

- John Adams called the early American representatives abroad “militia diplomats”
 - These were the men who were sent into Europe to form new relationships with potential trading partners
 - These Militia Diplomats had little experience with the formal art and etiquette of Old World Diplomacy
- Franklin, Jay, and Adams began proceeding on their own, without informing Vergennes, and signed a preliminary treaty with Great Britain on November 30, 1782
- John Adams defended the British soldiers but a jury of Massachusetts colonists found them guilty of manslaughter and were sentenced to a token punishment

Cornwallis

- Battle at King’s Mountain (October 7, 1780)
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 - Greene split his men into contingents and attacked from several different points
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 - Dealt to Cornwallis at Cowpens on January 17, 1781
- Guilford Courthouse
 - March 15, 1781
 - Greene combined his troops and maneuvered to meet the British on the land of his choosing... the courthouse

- Greene withdrew but Cornwallis lost so many men that he decided to withdraw from the Carolina campaign
- Cornwallis dipped to NC and waited for supplies and later to VA
- Clinton was concerned for their safety so he ordered him up to the York and James River
- Cornwallis followed orders and retreated to Yorktown
 - Washington, Count Jean Baptiste de Rochambeau, and Admiral Francois Joseph Paul de Grasse set out to trap Cornwallis at Yorktown
 - Washington and Rochambeau marched French-American forces to Virginia from NY to meet up with other French forces
 - Grasse sailed to the Chesapeake Bay and the York River
 - These two forces captured Cornwallis and on October 17, 1781, they got him
 - 4 years to the day after the Surrender of Burgoyne at Saratoga
 - Cornwallis claimed to be sick and sent a messenger to surrender more than 7,000 men
 - The war was not officially over

Stamp Act

- Required revenue stamps to be placed on most printed paper (legal documents, newspapers, ads, etc.)
- First direct tax on colonists (opposed to those paid by merchants on imported goods)
- It was not that the stamps were expensive, and it did not cause a heavy burden, but the price was not what made the colonists mad
 - It was the precedent that it set that seemed to be obnoxious
 - The colonists realized that this tax was a direct attempt from England to raise revenue in the colonies without the consent of the colonial assemblies

Quartering Act

- 1765
- Required colonists to provide food and living quarters for British soldiers

Intolerable Acts

- Issued as a result of the Boston Tea Party
- Four Acts issued by Parliament
 - 1.) The Port Act closed the port of Boston, prohibiting trade in and out of the harbor until the destroyed tea was paid for
 - 2.) The Massachusetts Government Act reduced the power of the Massachusetts legislature while increasing the power of the royal governor
 - 3.) The administration of Justice Act allowed royal officials accused of crimes to be tried in Great Britain instead of in the colonies

- 4.) A fourth law expanded the Quartering Act to enable British troops to be quartered in private homes. It applied to ALL COLONIES

Boston Massacre

- March 5th, 1770
- A few members of the “Liberty Boys” and other began pelting the sentries at the customs house with rocks and snowballs
- Captain Thomas Preston of the British regiment lined up several of his men in front of the building to protect it
- One of the soldiers was knocked out and in the midst, British soldiers fired and killed 5 people (among them a mulatto sailor, Crispus Attucks)
- Paul Revere depicted the scene in a painting
- John Adams defended the British soldiers but a jury of Massachusetts colonists found them guilty of manslaughter and were sentenced to a token punishment

Boston Tea Party

- British East India Company held official monopoly on tea
- Colonial boycott hit the company very hard
 - 17 million pounds of tea were sitting in their warehouse
- The Tea Act of 1773 stated that the British East India Company would not have to pay tax on imports to the colonies
 - This caused the price of the tea to go down
- The colonists resented the Tea Act because it hurt colonial businesses
- While 3 ships were in the Boston harbor, Bostonians disguised themselves as Native Americans, boarded the ships, and dumped 18,000 pounds of tea into the harbor
- The Coercive/ Intolerable Acts are passed in result from this

Lexington & Concord

- “The shot heard ‘round the world’
- Colonists stockpiling arms and ammo and training as minutemen
 - Approved by Continental Congress
- General Gage felt his army in Boston was too small to suppress the colonial troop build-up
- Gage receives orders to arrest Sam Adams and John Hancock outside of Lexington
- Gage receives intel that there is ammo storage at Concord
- Plans to seize the illegal supplies without bloodshed
- Midnight riders depart Boston and warn the militias (Paul Revere)

Ordinance of 1784 & 1785

- The Ordinance of 1784, based on the proposal by Thomas Jefferson, divided the western territory into ten self-governing districts, each of which could petition Congress for statehood when its population equaled the number of free inhabitants of the smallest existing state

- The Ordinance of 1785, created by Congress, created a system for surveying and selling the western lands
 - The territory north of the Ohio River was to be surveyed and marked off into neat rectangular townships, each divided into 36 identical sections
 - In every township, 4 sections were to be set aside for the United States; the revenue from the sale of one of the other sections was to support the creation of a public school
 - Sections were sold for no more than \$1 an acre
 - Among the important results of the Ordinance of 1785, one of them was the establishment of dividing up land for human use
 - The result was called “The Grid” and was first implemented in the Northwest
 - It was the division of land into carefully measured and evenly divided squares or rectangles
 - This system became very influential for the future

Northwest Ordinance

- Criticism of the selling of land to Ohio brought about this
- It abandoned the ten districts established in 1784 and created a single Northwest Territory out of the lands north of the Ohio; the territory could be divided subsequently into between three and five territories
- ***It also specified a population of 60,000 as a minimum for statehood, guaranteed freedom of religion and the right to trial by jury to residents of the Northwest, and prohibited slavery throughout the territory***

Ideas to Consider

Was it a social and political revolution? How were different demographic groups impacted?

- The American Revolution was assuredly the greatest social and political war. The change in political mindset as bestowed upon the Declaration writers by John Locke led to a change in beliefs regarding independence from Britain. As the war came to a close, we seem to recognize the different effects on each social division. The Loyalists of Britain remain rich but begin to see their world changing around them. Women begin to take on stronger roles in society and recognize their purpose outside of the household. The Native are severely diminished and seek change as their territories have been taken back. They are no longer protected by the British and are left to fend for themselves. The American morale has never been higher and the beginning of a new world has officially begun.

Compare/Contrast the three phases of combat during the war.

- The Revolutionary war can be broken down into 3 specific phases. The War begins in the New England region where the British have the advantage. The war then shifts down into the Mid-Atlantic region where the British had the greatest chance of winning. After blowing several chances and blundering many opportunities, the war then heads to the South where the British overestimated their Loyalist population. The Battle of Yorktown pushes Britain into the Battle of Saratoga where Cornwallis eventually surrenders.

What were the issues with the Articles of Confederation? Successes?

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In what ways, both at the time and since, is the Dec. of Ind. a global document?

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among them Russia, China, Spain, and Greece, have resisted for fear of encouraging the break-up of their own territories. The explosive potential of the American Declaration was hardly evident in 1776 but a global perspective reveals its revolutionary force in the centuries that followed. Thomas Jefferson's assessment of its potential, made weeks before his death on July 4, 1826, surely still holds true today: "an instrument, pregnant with our own and the fate of the world."