

# Saratoga National Historical Park

## Virtual Lesson — Loyal to Whom?

### Activity Packet



**NAME:**

Please enter your name above, as you will be submitting this Packet to your teacher for grading. Check with your teacher about how you should create the filename for submitting your work.

**WELCOME to Saratoga National Historical Park’s first virtual education program!**

This Activity Packet will help you explore an essential question and topic for the Battles of Saratoga and the American War for Independence: loyalty, and to whom.

**BACKGROUND:** The **Battles of Saratoga**, fought on September 19<sup>th</sup> and October 7<sup>th</sup>, 1777, and their formal end with the British surrender on October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1777, became the “Turning Point of the American Revolution.” It was also the first time in history a whole British army had surrendered!

Because of America’s major victory over the British at Saratoga, France would, in 1778, officially recognize the United States as a nation. Later, Spain (1779) and the Netherlands (1780) would do the same. In addition, these nations also provided the U.S. with needed money, military and other supplies, and naval transportation to get them here.

None of that could be known, of course, when, on September 19, 1777, American and British forces took the field in an otherwise quiet, peaceful, and scenic rural area along the Hudson River, just north of a little village called Stillwater, New York....

**NOTE FOR STUDENTS:**

The videos you will be viewing as part of this lesson will all be found on the Saratoga National Historical Park website. Go to the website’s “Education – curriculum Materials” page at [www.nps.gov/sara/learn/education/curriculummaterials.htm](http://www.nps.gov/sara/learn/education/curriculummaterials.htm) and bookmark the page for easy access to the video segments later. Likewise, if you need to download another copy of this Activity Packet, it will also be available there.

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### Introduction

When the 13 American Colonies declared their independence in July 1776, those living in the newly declared United States had to decide to whom they should be loyal. Should they be:

- **Royalists:** supporting Great Britain?
- **Neutral:** trying not to support one side or the other?
- **Supporters of Independence** and the newly declared United States?

### Reasons for Loyalties

It could be a very difficult decision! Many reasons could influence one's decision. For example:

#### You might choose to be a Royalist if you:

- owned a business that relied on British ships to bring you supplies
- had family or friends still living in Great Britain
- had family or friends who supported British rule
- disagreed with the American Colonies declaring their independence
- had been pressured, even threatened, by the military or others to support Great Britain, or at least to keep quiet
- were an enslaved Black person who heard Great Britain's promises of support if you ran away from your enslaver
- you were a member of the Church of England (Anglican)
- were a member of the Mohawk Nation, in the Iroquois Confederacy, traditionally supporting the British

#### You might choose to be Neutral if you:

- had some friends or family supporting British rule but others supporting independence
- owned a business that didn't rely on British or American shipping
- were a Quaker, a religious group drawn to staying neutral
- owned a business relying on customers who might be loyal to either side, or to no side

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### **You might choose to Support Independence if you:**

- were tired of the British requiring more and more taxes on Americans
- owned a business that was losing money because of British taxes
- had family or friends serving in your state's Militia (part-time military duty) or the Continental Army (full-time military duty)
- were an enslaved Black man who could earn money serving militia duty in place of your enslaver
- had been pressured, even threatened, by the military or others to support independence, or at least to keep quiet
- were an enslaved or free Black man who, as a soldier, would be treated as equal to any other soldier and who, if enslaved, might possibly earn your freedom
- were part of a Congregational or a Dutch Reformed church, many of which supported independence
- were a member of the Oneida Nation, in the Iroquois Confederacy, that formally recognized the United States—even before France did!

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### John Neilson

Excerpt (short section) from the Colony of New York's April 1775 Militia Law

**“Whereas a due and proper regulation of the Militia of this Colony tends not only to the security and Defence thereof, but likewise to the Honor and Service of his Majesty,**

**Be it therefore Enacted by his Honor the Lieutenant Governor, the Council and the General Assembly, And it is hereby enacted by the Authority of the same, that from and after the First Day of May next every Person from Sixteen to Fifty Years of Age, residing within this Colony not already inlisted...shall inlist himself with the Captain....”**

A little background vocabulary:

- **militia** (pronounced “mill-ish-ah”)—men within the stated age range by law had to serve a certain amount of military duty each year. They were made up of established groups called **regiments** (pronounced “red-juh-ments”), each having a few hundred soldiers. Each regiment was then made up of smaller groups called “**companies,**” each having about 40 soldiers. If the militia regiment was called together because of a particular need, like the threat of a nearby enemy, all members were required to gather. And no, militia were not bad, they were actually very important and necessary for local and area defense, kind of like volunteer fire companies helping protect our communities today.
- **enlist/enlisted**—in terms of the law as shown above, this means if a man had not already let his local Captain know he was living in the area and been formally added to the Captain's list of available militia soldiers in his area, he needed to do so.

### ACTIVITY:

**QUESTION:** To whom am I loyal?

**If you're not sure how to answer that, ask yourself: who or what do I feel dedicated or connected to? Whom or what do I try to help or support?**

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION — Remember to save your work!

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### **Jotham Bemus**

#### **ACTIVITY**

**QUESTION:** When have I witnessed disloyalty?

**If you're not sure how to answer that, ask yourself: When have I witnessed someone lying to, cheating, or mistreating someone to whom they had been connected?**

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION — Remember to save your work!

**How did I feel about what I witnessed?**

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION — Remember to save your work!

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### **The Freeman Family**

#### **ACTIVITY:**

**QUESTION:** What is a time in my life I had to make a difficult decision to maintain or preserve my loyalty?

If you're not sure how to answer, think of a time you may have had to choose loyalty instead of being popular, or instead of "going along with the crowd." What did that look like? How did it affect you? How did it affect others?

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION — Remember to save your work!

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### **Summary**

#### **ACTIVITY:**

**QUESTION:** What is one thing I can do to better show my loyalty?

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION. To use during “Group Share” activity later  
— Remember to save your work!

**QUESTION:** What is one reason people during the American War for Independence might have been Royalists? Neutral? Supporters of Independence?

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS. **NOTE:** PLEASE PROVIDE ONE ANSWER FOR EACH OF THOSE LOYALTY PERSPECTIVES — Remember to save your work!

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### FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

#### 1. Visit Saratoga National Historical Park

- a. If you live close enough to visit Saratoga National Historical Park, we encourage you to come visit!
- b. You could combine this with one of the other activities listed here.
- c. When visiting—whether hiking, bicycling, snowshoeing/cross-country skiing, or in a car—keep a short journal for yourself of your visit, and include:
  - i. What places did
  - ii. what you enjoyed the most, and why
  - iii. what you would like to include in your next visit
  - iv. what you expected to see and how it was similar or different to what you experienced
  - v. how you felt about being in the place where the world-changing Battles of Saratoga happened
  - vi. a “selfie” or a drawing of your visit
- d. Submit your journal to your teacher

If you do plan to visit the park, there are 5 parts to Saratoga NHP. Not all parts are open at the same time or have the same uses, it can vary depending on the season. Use the table on the next page to help you plan your trip to the park.



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SITE	GROUP-FRIENDLY	LOCATION	OPEN SEASON
Saratoga Battlefield	Yes	Battlefield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pedestrians: sunrise-sunset daily (hiking trail, walking on Tour Road, bicycling Tour Road when clear of ice and snow)</li> <li>Tour Road open for driving April 1 – May 30 from 9 AM to 5 PM daily</li> <li>Tour Road open for driving June 1 – Labor Day from 9 AM – 6 PM daily</li> <li>Tour Road open for driving after Labor Day – Eastern Standard Time change from 9 AM – 5 PM daily</li> <li>Tour Road open for driving from Eastern Standard Time – November 30 from 9 AM – 4 PM daily</li> <li>NOTE: Tour Road closed Thanksgiving Day</li> <li>Tour Road closed from December 1 – March 30</li> </ul>
Philip Schuyler House	Up to 10 people	8 miles north of Battlefield	Open hours and days vary by season, call park at 518-670-2985 for details
Saratoga Monument	Up to 6 people	8 miles north of Battlefield	Open hours and days vary by season, call park at 518-670-2985 for details
Victory Woods	Possibly	8 miles north of Battlefield	Open to pedestrian use only, sunrise – sunset daily, not maintained in winter
Saratoga Surrender Site	Possibly	7 ½ miles north of Battlefield	Open to pedestrian use only, sunrise – sunset daily, not maintained in winter

Oh, and if you are planning a trip, our address is:

Saratoga National Historical Park  
 648 Route 32  
 Stillwater, NY 12170

That’s the mailing address and the physical address for Saratoga Battlefield, the main part of the park. If using a mapping / navigation app, you might have more success by doing a search for “Saratoga Battlefield.”

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### 2. Military engineering

- a. Soldiers in the War for American Independence, and throughout time, have had to build fortifications to defend and protect roads, bridges, camps, buildings, towns or cities, or other areas that were important. They needed the expertise of “military engineers,” specialists who designed forts and other defensive structures.
- b. Choose a small object you don’t mind if it gets dirty.
- c. With an adult, go outside with your object—you’ll need to wear clothing you don’t mind getting dust or dirt on.
- d. Find a spot you can comfortably work in—your yard, a playground, a park, a garden, a planter box, etc.
- e. Imagine you are a military engineer, in charge of building defenses to protect something of value, like a building, a town, access to a water source—this “thing” will be represented by the object you chose.
- f. Find what you think would be a good location to place your object, and use items from the environment to build defenses to protect the object—rocks, pieces of wood or cardboard, natural high or low spots in the ground, a stream, trees, etc.
- g. Take a picture or draw the defenses
- h. Label what the different parts are—ditches, walls, piles of branches or stones to block paths going to the object, etc.
- i. Write a description or story about what you’re protecting and why.
- j. Submit your design and description/story to your teacher.

### 3. Take a walk

- a. Imagine you’re going to be a soldier in the American War for Independence.
- b. Think of 5 items you’d like to bring with you, or that you think you might need, and why.
- c. Weigh those 5 items and write down the combined weight.
- d. Think of a way you could carry those items with you so you won’t lose them, and so you can carry them comfortably.
- e. Gather those 5 items and put them in your chosen carrying method.
- f. With an adult, go for a short walk—perhaps 10 to 15 minutes—and carry your items during the walk.
- g. After the walk, write down what items you carried, why you chose them, how you carried them, how heavy or light it all was, how comfortable it was.
- h. Calculate how much weight would be involved if 10 soldiers each had to carry their own such items...how about 100 soldiers? How about 1,000 soldiers?
- i. Also, write down what you might have done differently—choosing a different item, choosing a different way to carry the items—especially if you had to walk 100 miles with it!
- j. In the case of multiple soldiers’ equipment and how much it would weigh, how do you think an army might have needed to transport all that equipment?
- k. Submit your responses to your teacher.

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### 4. Environmental science—observation

- a. With an adult, go for a short walk somewhere in your area—playground, park, beach, city block, school ground.
- b. Find one item or object in that given environment and answer the following questions about it:
  - i. What is the item or object?
  - ii. Why did it catch my attention?
  - iii. What does it do within this environment?
  - iv. How do I know what role it serves? What clues exist for this?
  - v. What could it do, or what could it be used for?
  - vi. What would this item or object need to do what it does better?
  - vii. How would this environment be different without it?
  - viii. What might you do to improve that item or object and its environment?
- c. Write down your responses and submit them to your teacher.