

Diversity during the American Revolution - Name_____

Diversity of the Revolutionary Soldiers <http://www.nps.gov/history/logcabin/html/vf4.html>

The soldiers who fought alongside General Washington in the Continental Army — and also on the British side — came from all walks of life. The soldiers had different backgrounds and different skills. Some were born in the colonies, while others were immigrants. They were rich and poor, free men and slaves, and of different religions. Those involved in the war were not just the male soldiers; women and children also played a crucial role in the Revolutionary War.

1. Define diverse
2. Why were the soldiers diverse?
3. What types of people fought in the Revolutionary War?

African Americans played a role in America's fight for independence. On April 19, 1775, African Americans joined the militia and Minutemen who defended the stores of ammunition and supplies that had been gathered in the towns of Concord and Lexington, Massachusetts. In the early months of the war, concern among whites over the arming of free African Americans and slaves increased. Recognizing the need for manpower against superior British forces, General George Washington authorized the enlistment of free African Americans on December 30, 1775.

1. Define militia-
2. What was stockpiled in Lexington & Concord?
3. What did George Washington allow free African Americans to do in 1775? Why?

For slaves seeking freedom in return for military service, life in the army was a step up in society. For free African Americans, service was looked upon as a way to increase their community standing and earn cash and land bounties. By 1777, whites and African Americans served side-by-side in the Continental Army. But not all African Americans fought on the side for independence; some fought for the British.

1. What did slaves want in return for military service?
2. What did free African Americans want out of military service?
3. Was the Continental Army integrated (did blacks and whites fight together)?
4. Besides the Patriots, who else could African Americans fight for?

While numerous soldiers captured by the British Army suffered and died in the holds of prison ships, many white soldiers were exchanged for captured British soldiers. However, African American soldiers were rarely exchanged for British prisoners of war, and many of the African Americans were sold into slavery in the West Indies. Although slavery did not stop with the end of the British rule, many African Americans did earn their freedom, which would pave the road for others to follow.

1. What happened to most African Americans who were taken prisoner during the war?
2. Did slavery in America end when the colonies won independence?

Native Americans fought on both sides during the American Revolution. The Revolutionary War began with both sides adopting a policy of neutrality towards the Native Americans. However, their participation was inevitable, as

Revolutionary War soldiers fought for control of North America, including traditional tribal lands. During the French and Indian War (1754-1763) many Native Americans sided with the British and continued that alliance during the Revolution.

1. Define neutral:
2. What side did Native Americans fight on?
3. Why was Native American involvement inevitable?

Why did so many Native Americans choose to fight alongside the British? First and foremost, the Indian nations knew that an American victory would open territory and increase the tide of settlers on traditional tribal lands. The British also had more money with which to purchase tribal loyalty through trade gifts. Finally, the British already had influential agents and traders in place among the tribes.

1. List all the reasons why so many Native Americans sided with the British:

Congress authorized General Washington to recruit Native Americans. He employed them for scouting and harassment operations. A party of Oneida Indians reached Valley Forge in May. Some Native Americans joined the Revolutionary forces and fought face-to-face against British soldiers, particularly in the New England regiments.

1. What type of missions did Washington use Native Americans for?
2. Where were Native Americans most likely to fight alongside the patriots?

Most of the actions involving Native Americans took place on the frontier where they could put their style of individual fighting to best use. They were enough of a threat to cause the Revolutionary soldiers to organize expeditions against them. In the end, it did not really matter whose side Native Americans fought on. Even though most of the Iroquois sided with the British, they lost all of their lands when the war ended in 1783.

1. Why did Revolutionary soldiers organize expeditions against the Native Americans on the frontier?

2. In the end what was the result for most Native Americans?