

## Module 2: The American Revolution - 1750s to the 1780s

### Topic 3 Content: Major Battles of the Revolutionary War Notes


#### Introduction

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The Revolutionary War lasted from 1775 until 1783, and was not just a war between the United States and Great Britain. Eventually, France would become a major ally of the United States and help end the war. Although outnumbered and often without the proper supplies, the army of colonists was united in a common goal: to defeat the British.

Click **NEXT** to learn about some of the major battles of the American Revolutionary War.



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#### Battle of Bunker Hill

#### Major Battles of the Revolutionary War

##### Battle of Bunker Hill



The bloodiest battle of the war occurred prior to the signing of the Declaration of Independence. The Battle of Bunker Hill began when British General Thomas Gage attacked militiamen near Bunker Hill in Boston, Massachusetts. Fought on July 17, 1775, the Battle of Bunker Hill was a success for the British. The British marched up Bunker Hill in the direct line of the colonists' gunfire. After three advances, the colonists retreated due to low ammunition. The battle saw 450 colonist casualties and 1,000 British casualties.

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#### Battle of Long Island

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##### Battle of Long Island



After retreating from Boston, the British had a plan to isolate New England by capturing New York City. British General William Howe and his brother Admiral Richard Howe sailed into New York harbor with an estimated 32,000 soldiers. Commander George Washington brought 23,000 troops to defend the City of New York. However, the Continental troops were untrained and had poor equipment. The unorganized Continental troops were forced to retreat back across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. The battle left the Continental Army almost completely disbanded. Only 8,000 men remained in Washington's command. The other 15,000 soldiers had either been killed in battle, or had abandoned the cause.

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#### Battle of Trenton and Princeton

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Desperate and needing to take a risk, Commander George Washington led an estimated 2,400 soldiers across the Delaware River on December 25, 1776. Upon reaching the other side of the river, the army marched into Trenton, New Jersey, to attack the British. The American' offensive attack took the British by surprise. As a result, the Continental Army was able to capture more than 900 British soldiers.



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#### Battle of Brandywine Creek

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Many battles continued during the winter and spring of 1777. In these many smaller battles, it appeared as though the British had a slight edge. On September 11, 1777, British General William Howe sailed the army into the northern Chesapeake Bay. Stationed near Brandywine Creek, Commander Washington prepared to confront the British and stop their northern expansion. Unfortunately, the Continental Army was caught off-guard. Forced to retreat, the British moved northward and captured Philadelphia.

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#### Battle of Saratoga

##### Major Battles of the Revolutionary War

##### Battle of Saratoga



Two battles took place at Saratoga on September 9 and October 7, 1777. British General John Burgoyne wanted to lead a caravan of troops southward into New York. In New York, he planned to meet General Howe's troops in an effort to isolate New England from the rest of the colonies. Burgoyne left with 8,000 troops and allies under his command. As his caravan of troops and supplies traveled, they were attacked by the colonists. Continental Army General Horatio Gates gathered colonists and surrounded Burgoyne at Saratoga. Without the help of General Howe, Burgoyne surrendered. After the Battles of Saratoga, the British changed their war strategy. No longer would the British stray away from the coastline. The British troops remained close to their supply bases and Navy presence.

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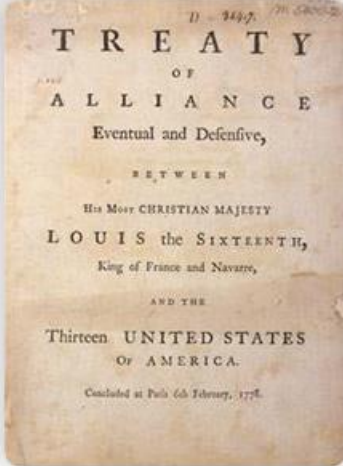
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#### Treaty of Alliance

**Major Battles of the Revolutionary War**

#### Treaty of Alliance



Still angered by its loss to the British in the French and Indian War, France made a decision to support the Continental Army after the Battle of Saratoga. In February, 1778, American Benjamin Franklin negotiated a Treaty of Alliance with France. The treaty aligned France with the Americans during the Revolutionary War. In the Treaty of Alliance, France agreed to remain enemies with Britain until the Americans gained full independence.

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