

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

Topic 3 Content: Reasons for American Victory Notes

Introduction

Reasons for American Victory	
Home Field Advantage	
British Separation	
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Although the colonists began the war with many disadvantages, there were also factors that gave the Continental Army certain advantages. In this interactivity, click each of the tabs to explore some of the reasons why the Continental Army was victorious over the British.

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Home Field Advantage

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Fighting on a vast area of foreign soil was a major problem for the British.

Colonists used newspapers, pamphlets, and word-of-mouth to communicate.

Unable to navigate the interior, the British remained close to the coastline.

The colonists' prime advantage was that they were fighting on their own land. They were able to communicate messages in order to get support using various modalities, such as newspapers, pamphlets, and word-of-mouth.

Fighting on foreign soil presented a major problem for the British. Not accustomed to fighting a war on a large area of land, the British were unaware of how to navigate the vast terrain. This caused the British to remain close to the coastline in reach of their powerful navy.

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British Separation

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The distance separating New England and Great Britain is over 3,000 miles.

The Atlantic Ocean

The infographic features a dark background. On the left, a vertical list of reasons for American victory is presented in white text. To the right, a map shows the eastern coast of North America and Great Britain, with a red double-headed arrow spanning the Atlantic Ocean between them. The text 'The distance separating New England and Great Britain is over 3,000 miles.' is written in white below the map. The words 'The Atlantic Ocean' are written in red along the arrow.

Being separated from Great Britain by the Atlantic Ocean caused many issues for the British soldiers fighting in the colonies. When supplies ran low, the soldiers had to wait for additional supplies to travel more than 3,000 miles by ship.

The separation also caused delays in the delivery of military orders from Great Britain to the British soldiers fighting in the colonies. The orders had to travel to the colonies by ship. The separation was a definite disadvantage for the British.

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Unity

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The British attempted to maintain the allegiance of the Loyalists. They hoped the Loyalists would convince slaves and Native Americans to fight.

The colonists' common goal of independence from the British encouraged them to persist during the Revolutionary War. Patriots such as Thomas Jefferson, Thomas Paine, and Patrick Henry helped to champion the fight for independence in the political and media arenas. General George Washington led the troops in their fight on the battlefield.

During the war, the British attempted to maintain the allegiance of the Loyalists, and garner the support of slaves and Native Americans. Their attempts were often met with resistance and minimal effort.

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Military Strategy

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The British attempted to capture New York, separating New England from the rest of the colonies.

The typical strategy of the strong and well-trained British military was to capture the capital, or a central area, of a country. Once the main area was overtaken, the British would essentially weaken the area and wait for surrender. The British attempted to cut off the New England colonies by overtaking New York. This strategy failed with losses at both Battles of Saratoga. This forced the British to stay close to the coastline and within protection of their navy.

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Poor Military Leadership

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British General William Howe used slow-moving tactics, which exhausted military supplies. His leadership caused a lack of support for the war.



British General William Howe's military leadership served as an advantage for the Continental Army. Howe did not initially take the war seriously. His slow-moving tactics continuously caused the British to exhaust military supplies and funding. His actions actually created a lack of British support for the war. This resulted in a lack of funding for the war.

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Strong Military Leadership

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Continental Army Commander General George Washington motivated his soldiers. His decisions kept the army from destruction.



Strong military leaders like Commander George Washington were able to organize untrained soldiers. While motivated, in many cases these soldiers lacked proper supplies and weapons. Washington used strategy to avoid situations that would lead to the destruction of the Continental Army.