

Soldier's Letter

CCSSR1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

My dear Mother,

It is a very hard time we are having here at Valley Forge. We have little food. I am so glad you made me take the blanket with me when I left. It was a lot of trouble carrying it with me, but every day I use it. I sit huddled under it in the very cold snow and ice. I have two friends that I often share it with. I cut it into three pieces, and each of us has one part. They thank you, too.

When we first came here, George Washington told us it would be hard. But I had not idea it would be so very difficult. There are not many people around to help us. We went to a farm yesterday to beg for food. But the farmer shouted at us to leave. He said he hoped we would just go home and stop this fighting. He does not understand that we are fighting for his freedom, too.

Every day I pray that we will win the war. But every day I get discouraged. My friends and I try to stay hopeful. And George Washington comes to talk with us one by one every day. He says to stay hopeful.

He brought a new man to help us—a man from another country. The man is from Germany, and does not speak English very well. A few people who know German tell him what we are saying, and they translate his words for us, too. His name is Von Steuben, and they say he is an expert at fighting a war.

George Washington says that we will do better if we learn from Von Steuben. The German is very clever, and he shows us how to fight better. I never knew much about fighting and I assumed you just ran across the battlefield. But, he reminds us that we must have a plan for each fight. I think George Washington has found us the help we need to win the war.

I will write to you again next week. We do not have much paper, so I have to stop my letter now. I hope the family is well and I hope I see you soon.

Your Son, Tom

What is a lesson people can learn from this letter?

Underline the parts of the story that show that is the lesson you can learn.
