

Valley Forge

Center for Urban Education ©2007

5th Grade Nonfiction

The United States today has been a country for more than 200 years. But in 1777 many people did not think the United States would become a country. George Washington was a great leader. He was leading the army. The army was fighting for independence.

That winter was a time of challenge. George Washington and his army were living in a camp. It was a Valley Forge. That was a good location. It was near trees so they could get wood to make fires to keep warm. And they could see far from a hill. That way they could see if the other army was coming to fight them.

That other army was the British. They had many more guns and supplies than Washington's army. Washington's army had little food. They had some blankets. But many of the soldiers did not even have shoes or coats.

George Washington kept encouraging the soldiers. He told them to be brave, that they were fighting for freedom. Some days it was so cold and snowy he himself worried. But he did not tell the soldiers that. He was very brave.

The soldiers were not well trained. Many had been farmers before. They did not know much about fighting. Washington used the time at Valley Forge to train them. He got help.

A soldier from Germany came to Valley Forge. He was named von Steuben. He wanted to help. He organized a group of 120 leaders. He showed them how to fight well. He showed the soldiers how to fight with guns. He showed them how to win a battle with the British. They trained other soldiers. Soon, the army was much better prepared.

When spring came, some soldiers had died. The others were ready to fight. They fought for their freedom. George Washington led them to win the war. And the soldier who helped them, von Steuben, helped, them to that victory.

Today, Americans remember von Steuben with statues in many places. In Chicago, there is a high school named after that brave soldier.

Identify and infer stated and implied character traits - Nonfiction

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

Choose the best answer for each question

1. What is a trait that is literally stated about George Washington?

- a. great
- b. brave
- c. hero
- d. strong

2. What is a trait you infer for George Washington?

- a. indecisive
- b. courageous
- c. impatient
- d. generous

3. What is a trait that you infer for Von Steuben?

- a. intelligent
- b. foolish
- c. impatient
- d. lazy

4. What is a trait you infer about the soldiers?

- a. volunteers
- b. farmers
- c. hungry
- d. determined

5. *Write your own answer to this question. What trait do you think was important to winning the war?*

Why do you think so?

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	b	b	a	d

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.
Courageous or dedicated—based on the hardships faced