



American Revolution

American Heritage Discussion Series for Learners with Littles



Our Learning Journey

George Washington's
Headquarters Tent and Flag

Washington's Spies

Music Time: Yankee Doodle

Music Time: Sam's Gone Away

George Washington's Headquarters Tent

- In May 1776, Washington's aide de camp (assistant) picked up two "marquees," also known as tents, for General Washington, one for eating and one for sleeping.
- Washington used them throughout the war as his headquarters.
- Washington received and wrote letters from this tent, including to and from those in the Culper Ring (his spy network).



George Washington's Headquarters Tent "The First Oval Office"

- General Washington met with his officers in the eating tent. His leadership style was to listen to their ideas and suggestions and then decide. The British leadership style was to obey orders from commanders without any input.
- Because of Washington's leadership style and because of the shape of the marquee, we can think of this as the first oval office, before the White House was built.



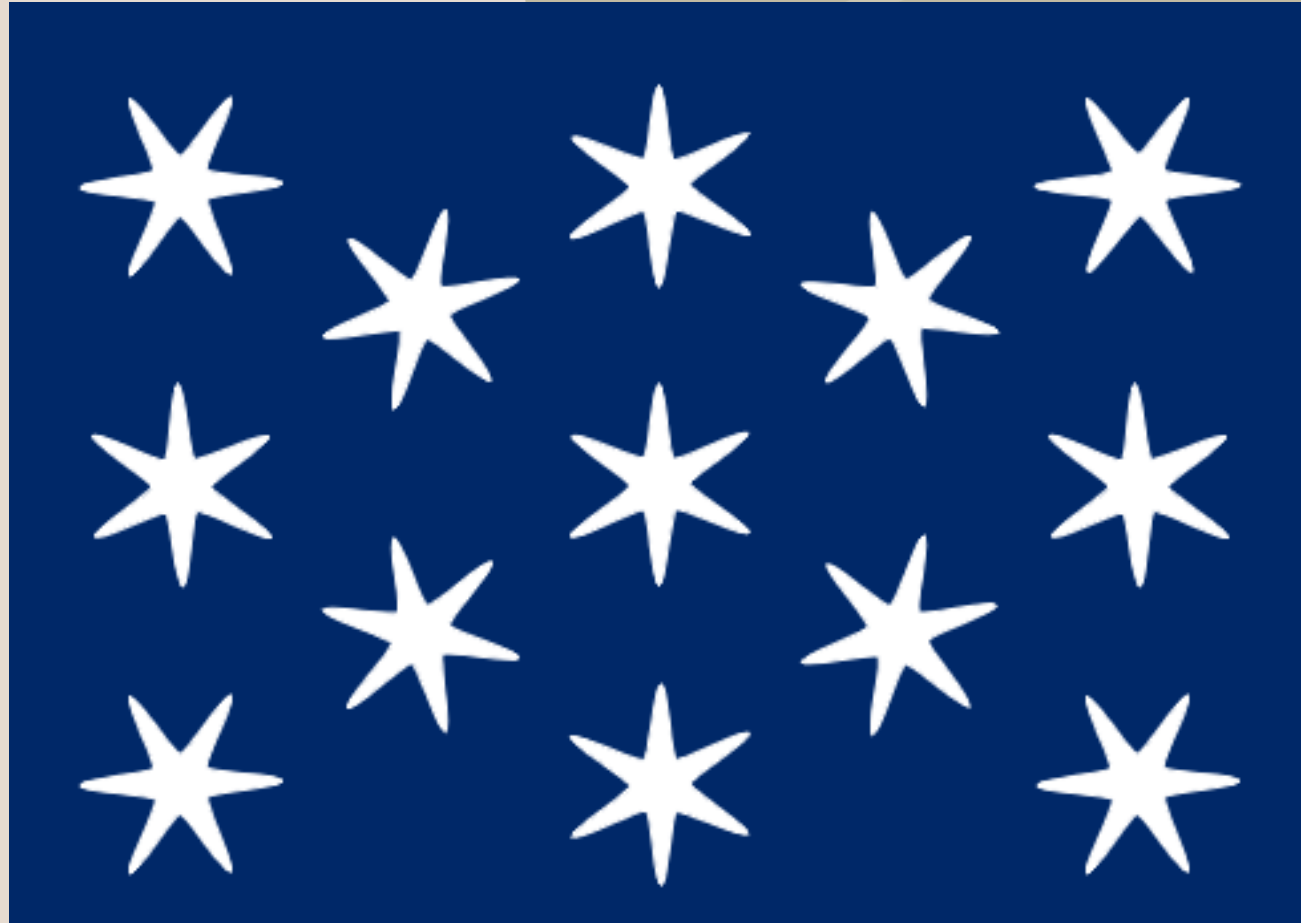
George Washington's Headquarters Tent

- Seven years after Washington's death, his step-grandson, George Washington Parke Custis, began a tradition of pitching the tent at his Arlington plantation. At these events, he would teach about George Washington's legacy.
- You can see Washington's actual tent in the collection of the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia.



George Washington's Headquarters Flag

- How did soldiers know that General Washington was in camp during the Revolutionary War? His aides de camp always posted his flag, known as his colors.
- What did George Washington's flag look like? See this image.



George Washington's Headquarters Flag is in Philadelphia

- You can see George Washington's headquarters flag today in the collection of the Museum of the American Revolution in Philadelphia



Culper Spy Ring

George Washington's Spies

Benjamin Tallmadge oversaw the Culper Spy Ring operating out of New York City



- Washington came up with the code name Culper from a county near his home in Virginia called Culpeper.
- Near the end of the war, the Culper Ring gained intel that Benedict Arnold informed the British of the French fleet arriving in Newport, Rhode Island. Washington used that info to fake out the British and make it look like the allied forces were going to attack New York. Instead, they moved to Virginia and brought the war to an end at Yorktown.

Culper Ring Members

The Ring consisted of core agents with numerous others operating as sub-agents, couriers, and support personnel. Ring members had much in common. They were New Yorkers – mostly from Long Island – and knew each other as friends, neighbors, or family. Most had suffered cruelties at the hands of the British. All feigned loyalty to the Crown.

Culper Ring

George Washington's Spies

- The British drove the Americans out of New York City in 1776. Washington always wanted to take the city back, so he used spies to gain information about the British occupation.
- The spies in the Culper Ring lived in or near New York City. Most lived on Long Island.
- The spies used code names, ciphers, and secret drop points to get intelligence to General Washington

[Learn more about the Culper spies.](#)



American Revolution Spy Techniques

- Code Names
- Ciphers or coded letters
- Masking letters
- Couriers (messengers who carry letters across distances)
- Invisible ink
- Sewing messages into clothing
- Hiding messages in farm produce or eggs
- Drop points

What is your Revolutionary War spy code name?

What other ways do you think you could deliver secret messages?

The background features a light grey base with several organic, rounded shapes in muted colors: a large brown shape on the left, a green shape in the top right, and a light grey shape in the middle right. Faint, stylized foliage patterns are visible in the top left and middle left areas. A white, wavy line starts from the bottom right and curves across the lower part of the image.

Choose Stations



Music Time



Yankee Doodle

What is a macaroni?

What is the history of the song Yankee
Doodle?

How do you sing Yankee Doodle?

Who was in the Continental Army?



What are the beginnings of the song Yankee
Doodle?

How did the Americans use it?

Macaroni in Yankee Doodle

“Stuck a feather in his cap and called it macaroni”

- This isn't a reference to pasta
- Macaroni were men who dressed fancy to the point of being silly
- There were lots of cartoons at the time making fun of macaroni.
- The song Yankee Doodle at first was used to make fun of Americans. In the view of some British, the Americans looked silly by trying to be like Europeans.



Words to Yankee Doodle

Verse 1:

Yankee Doodle went to town
A-riding on a pony
He stuck a feather in his hat
And called it macaroni

Chorus

**Yankee Doodle, keep it up
Yankee Doodle dandy
Mind the music and the
step
and with the girls be handy!**

[Play video here](#)

Verse 2:

Father and I went down to camp
Along with Captain Gooding
And there we saw the men and boys
As thick as hasty pudding.

Chorus

Verse 3:

And there was Captain Washington
And gentle folks about him
They say he's grown so tarnal proud
He will not ride without them.

Learn More About the Continental Army

The French formed an alliance with the Americans and sent troops and supplies to America. These allied troops successfully trapped the British at Yorktown and ended the American War of Independence.

After the Siege of Yorktown, French officer Jean Baptiste Antoine de Verger drew this picture of American soldiers in his journal.

Left to Right

- Rhode Island Regimental soldier from “Black Regiment”
- Congress’ Own soldier
- Pennsylvania Rifleman
- Artilleryman (with a match for a cannon)



Diversity in the Continental Army

This picture is inspired by Verger's drawing. It represents more people who served in the Continental Army.

Left to Right

- Rhode Island Regimental soldier from the "Black Regiment"
- Woman who followed the army
- New England Sailor
- Pennsylvania Rifleman
- Virginia Regimental Soldier



Diversity in the Continental Army

African American Soldiers



Regimental Soldiers



Frontier Riflemen



Diversity in the Continental Army

Soldiers From the Shore



Women Who Followed the Army





Sam's Gone Away

Why did sailors sing sea shanties?

Who fought the Revolutionary War at Sea?

Sam's Gone Away



Why did sailors sing sea shanties?

Diversity at Sea During the American Revolution

Left to Right

- Common Sailor
- Able Seaman
- British Naval Captain
- French Naval Lieutenant
- American Privateer



Commanders at Sea

British Naval Captain



French Naval Lieutenant



American Privateer



Sailors

Able Seaman



Common Sailor





VOCABULARY FOR THE SEA SHANTY SAM'S GONE AWAY

Man o' War—an armed sailing ship

Gunner—seaman who operates a gun on a ship

Boatswain (bos'un)—ship crewman in charge of a ship's anchors, cordage, colors, deck crew, and the ship's boats

Captain—the highest-ranking officer on a ship

Words to Sam's Gone Away

- I wish I was a cabin boy, aboard a man o' war!

Chorus

***Sam's gone away, aboard a man o' war!
Pretty work, brave boys,
Pretty work, I say!
Sam's gone away, aboard a man o' war!***

- I wish I was a gunner, aboard a man o' war!

Chorus

- I wish I was the bos'un aboard a man o' war!

Chorus

- I wish I was an officer...

Chorus

- I wish I was the captain...

[Hear the song at this link.](#)