

United States History Summer Reading

Dr. Westerman

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Please purchase and read **1776** by David McCullough. ISBN-13: 978-0743226721

Discussion Questions

Please answer the following questions in complete sentences, and please support your answers with specific examples (direct quotes, please!) from the book. Each answer must include a brief quote, with the page number in parentheses after the quote, to support your analysis. *This must be TYPED in 12 point, Times New Roman font, be double-spaced, and submitted on the **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL** to Turnitin.com.*

Make sure your name is at the top of the page, and also include the Porter-Gaud Honor Code: "As a student of Porter-Gaud, I pledge to not lie, cheat, or steal." **All work must be done individually.**

1. Why was England so reluctant to let go of the Colonies? What did the colonist have to lose and to gain as a result of the war?
2. What qualities made General George Washington a successful leader? Do you think there is anything particular about Washington that enabled him to turn a lost cause into a victory?
3. What were some of the difficulties George Washington and his troops faced? How prepared were the American colonies to fight the British?
4. There was a lot of regional prejudice in the Continental Army. Note an example. Do you think that such sentiments still exist today from region to region in the United States? (This question asks for you to think about how different areas of the country – northern colonies and southern colonies; rural areas and urban areas – thought about each other even though they were in the same army.)
5. What was the effect of the Declaration of Independence on the Continental Army? Why was this step so "revolutionary" and also so impactful?
6. Describe the British soldiers' morale? Did they have reason to be confident? Explain.
7. Describe how the American and British officers interacted with each other on pages 144-146. How did Washington "perform his role to perfection?"
8. McCullough describes the growing British armada on its way to New York in 1776 as "the largest expeditionary force of the 18th century, the largest, most powerful force ever sent forth from Britain or any nation." (148) Contrast the two sides' advantages going into the war, and explain the Americans' sense of foreboding.
9. Describe the camps, and include a description of the role of women in these camps and in the war more generally.
10. How did the war proceed for the Americans, beginning with the British attack on New York? Note some of the difficulties that the colonists endured.
11. How did the British approach the winter of 1776, and how does this contrast with the colonists' approach?
12. Why were the events of December 25-26 so important for the Americans and their morale? Who were the Hessians, and why was the American victory all the more impressive, considering who their adversaries were?

13. Why did the crossing of the Delaware become part of the great lore of Washington's resilience and leadership?
14. Why were the victories at Trenton and Princeton "turning points" for the war? Explain how the war wraps up.
15. How does McCullough conclude his story regarding what the year 1776 and the war, in general, came to mean.
16. Write a **long paragraph** that summarizes your feelings about this book. Did it inspire you or change your perception of the story of the Revolution? What did you learn about the American Revolution that you had not known? (You do not need a specific quote for this question, but I do encourage you to find and include an example that helps you summarize your feelings about the book.)

This assignment will count for **35 points**. Start the year off strong!