

Contributor: Barbara Genter Davis **Grade Level:** 5-8

1. Identify the standards to be addressed:

Fifth Grade English Language Arts Standards: Reading (Literature)

Key Ideas and Details.

RL.5.1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

EERL.5.1. Identify words in the text to answer a question about explicit information.

Craft and Structure.

RL.5.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative language such as metaphors and similes.

EERL.5.4. After listening to or reading a familiar text, determine the meanings of words and phrases Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

EERL.5.7. Identify illustrations and multimedia elements that add to understanding of a text.

Fifth Grade English Language Arts Standards: Reading (Informational Text)

Key Ideas and Details.

RI.5.1. Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

EERI.5.1. Select words or phrases from the text to support inferences.

RI.5.3. Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in a historical, scientific, or technical text based on specific information in the text.

Craft and Structure.

RI.5.4. Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a grade 5 topic or subject area.

EERI.5.4. After listening to or reading a text, determine the meanings of domain-specific words and phrases.

RI.5.6. Analyze multiple accounts of the same event or topic, noting important similarities and differences in the point of view they represent.

EERI.5.6. Given two pieces of information on the same event or topic, note what is the same.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

RI.5.7. Draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently.

EERI.5.7. Use print or digital sources for information to answer a question.

RI.5.9. Integrate information from several texts on the same topic in order to write or speak about the subject knowledgeably.

Fifth Grade English Language Arts Standards: Writing

Text Types and Purposes.

W.5.2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Production and Distribution of Writing.

EEW.5.4. Produce writing that is appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Fifth Grade Social Studies Standards:

U3 USHG ERA 3 REVOLUTION AND THE NEW NATION (1754-1800) Individually and collaboratively, students will engage in planned inquiries to investigate the causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in forging the revolutionary movement, and the reasons for the American victory.

5 – U3.1.6 Identify the role that key individuals played in leading the colonists to revolution, including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, John Adams, and Thomas Paine.

U3.2 The American Revolution and its Consequences

5 – U3.2.2 Describe the importance of Valley Forge, the Battle of Saratoga, and the Battle of Yorktown in the American Revolution.

Fifth Grade Math Standards:

Mathematical Practices - #5. Use appropriate tools strategically
MEASUREMENT AND DATA

• Convert like measurement units within a given measurement system

1. Convert among different-sized standard measurement units within a given measurement system (e.g., convert 5 cm to 0.05 m), and use these conversions in solving multi-step, real world problems.

2. **Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:**

Students will learn about the many difficulties encountered by George Washington’s Army at Valley Forge during their winter encampment of 1777-1778. Students will work in collaborative teams in a simulation activity to allow them to gain some understanding of the challenges the soldiers faced, especially in regard to the building of shelters, lack of food, and inadequate clothing for the winter months.

3. **Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:**

- Textbook (if available) - Read section regarding George Washington’s Army at Valley Forge
- Trade book - *Adventures in Colonial America - The Winter at Valley Forge: Survival and Victory* by James E. Knight. Other trade books with information regarding the building of huts at Valley Forge could be used as well.

• Primary Source Document - “General Orders 18 December 1777”

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-12-02-0573>

Make a copy for each student. Focus on reading the last five paragraphs of text with students.

• Website with information and photos of replica huts at Valley Forge National Historic Park

<https://www.nps.gov/vafo/learn/historyculture/360-huts.htm>

• Website with additional information, photos, and illustrations regarding hut building at Valley Forge, including an eye-witness account by Revolutionary War soldier Joseph Plumb Martin from his diary “A Narrative of a Revolutionary Soldier.”

<https://living-in-the-past.com/hut.html>

• Additional information, as well as a **four minute video about Valley Forge**, can be found at George Washington’s Mount Vernon website:

[https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-](https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/valleyforge/#:~:text=Valley%20Forge%20was%20the%20site,of%20the%20Revolutionary%20War%20generation)

[encyclopedia/article/valleyforge/#:~:text=Valley%20Forge%20was%20the%20site,of%20the%20Revolutionary%20War%20generation](https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/valleyforge/#:~:text=Valley%20Forge%20was%20the%20site,of%20the%20Revolutionary%20War%20generation)

- One die for each team of 8-12 students
- One measuring device (ruler, yardstick, or tape measure) per team
- One “food” card for each individual student
- Hut Simulation Dice Roll Action Chart - three or four copies to post in visible locations
- One roll of tape (masking or painter’s tape) or ball of heavy yarn for each team
- Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Response Sheet - one copy per student

4. **Procedure for instruction:**

In the fall of 1777, the British Army was able to capture the capital city of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. General George Washington’s Continental troops planned to encamp for the winter in a location from which they could observe and respond to British troop movements during the next several months. Valley Forge, located about 20 miles northwest of Philadelphia, was the location chosen for their winter encampment. General Washington realized that the winter months would be very difficult for his soldiers. The Continental Army was extremely low on supplies, especially food and

adequate clothing for the cold months ahead. The winter proved to be just as difficult as General Washington had feared, with more than 2,500 soldiers dying of hunger, exposure to frigid temperatures, and disease. While there were many hardships during the Valley Forge winter encampment, with diligence and much needed military training, General Washington's Army emerged from the encampment in June 1778 as a well-trained and much more effective fighting force.

Sources: Scott Foresman *The United States* Textbook. Pearson Education, Inc. 2008. p.308.

The American Revolution - Official National Park Service Handbook , pp. 10-11, and 59.

<https://www.nps.gov/vafo/learn/historyculture/the-american-revolution-official-national-park-service-handbook.htm>

Suggested instruction for each class period -

Class period #1 - Read Valley Forge information (as listed in Material, Resources, and Technology above) and create Valley Forge Hardships Chart with students. Begin explaining simulation activity directions.

Class period #2 - Finish explaining simulation directions. Have students begin simulation activity. The majority of this class period should be devoted to the simulation activity.

Class period #3 - Students will finish the simulation activity (if not completed during the previous class period). The teacher facilitates a discussion about simulation outcomes, difficulties and successes, while comparing/contrasting with the actual Valley Forge encampment of 1777-1778. As a closure/evaluation activity, the students will work on "Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Response Sheet," either individually, with a partner, or as a small group. The response sheet could be given to students as a homework assignment.

- 1. During a unit on the Revolutionary War, the teacher will begin teaching about the winter encampment of George Washington's Army at Valley Forge by reading a section from the class textbook, or reading excerpts from a tradebook such as *Adventures in Colonial America - The Winter at Valley Forge: Survival and Victory* by James L. Knight. If reading Knight's book, focus on entries dated Saturday, December 20, 1777-Thursaday, January 1, 1778.
- 2. With the students, brainstorm a list of hardships that the soldiers were facing during their winter encampment at Valley Forge. Create a master list of these difficulties on chart paper, or a whiteboard, in a visible location. Some of the hardships might include: lack of food, lack of proper clothing, lack of shelter, exhaustion, hunger, sickness, lack of tools, lack of wood to use for building and for fires, frigid weather and wind, snow, rain, muddy roads, etc.
- 3. Ask the students if the soldiers had anything in their favor at this time. Some possible answers might include: General Washington's leadership, the desire to win the war and gain independence from Britain, hope that the Continental Congress will supply rations soon, support from fellow soldiers, etc.
- 4. The teacher will make and pass out copies of "General Orders 18 December 1777" to students. Project an additional copy for all students to see. Read together the last five paragraphs of this primary source document. As each paragraph is read, have students underline the specific directions that General Washington gives his soldiers for the construction of huts for shelter.

- 5. Show students information and photos of replica huts at Valley Forge National Historical Park on this website:

<https://www.nps.gov/vafo/learn/historyculture/360-huts.htm>

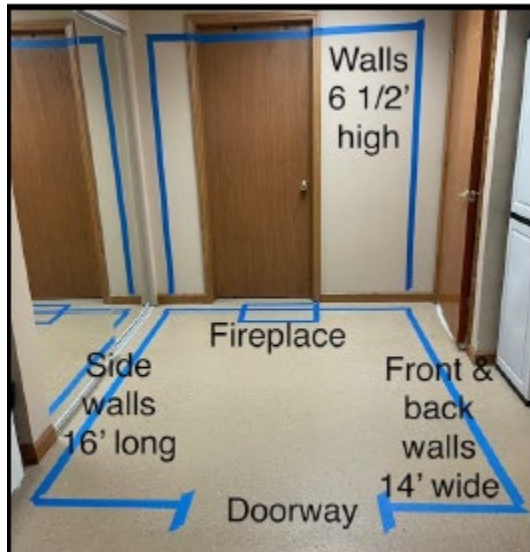
- 6. Show four minute Valley Forge video from George Washington's Mount Vernon

<https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/valleyforge/#:~:text=Valley%20Forge%20was%20the%20site,of%20the%20Revolutionary%20War%20generation>

- 7. **Before beginning the Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Activity, the teacher should:** Secure a location for construction of huts (hallway, gymnasium, large classroom, outdoors), make copies for students of "General Orders 18 December 1777," make one "food" card for each student (plus several extras to have on hand), make a few copies of "Hut Simulation Dice Roll Actions Chart" to post in hut construction location, gather building supplies (rolls of masking or painters tape, or skeins of heavy duty rug yarn, measuring sticks, or rulers, or tape measures - take building supplies to hut building location), and one copy per student of the "Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Response Sheet."

- 8. Begin introducing the Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Activity. Explain to the students that they will be working in teams, just as George Washington's soldiers did, to build "huts" for shelter. Each team of students should have as close to 12 members as possible, while keeping the team sizes equal.

- 9. The goal of the simulation is to have each "soldier" (student team member) participate in the construction of an outline of the hut dimensions, as ordered by General Washington. The hut must include four sides of the floor, a doorway, a fireplace, and one wall showing the height of the hut. See example photo:



- 10. In order for a team to complete the simulation successfully, they must finish constructing their team's hut with the correct dimensions given in General Orders 19 December 1777, have at least some food cards remaining, and have some shoes on their feet. This outcome simulates the team's ability to procure shelter, food, and clothing, thus enabling them to survive their Valley Forge encampment experience.
- 11. Throughout the simulation, the teacher will take on the role of the "active field officer" to "superintend the business of hutting," as well as the role of "Qr Mr General" (Quartermaster General) who will be responsible for the disbursement of tools, food, and clothing to the "soldiers."
- 12. During the simulation, each team member's action will be determined by the roll of a die. Post the "Hut Simulation Dice Roll Action Chart" in a few locations for teams to refer to during the simulation. See "Hut Simulation Dice Roll Action Chart" below.

- 13. For teacher reference, the Dice Roll Actions are as follows:

“Roll a 1 - Your food is done.” Student must surrender their food card to the teacher (Quarter Master General). The student sits out of the simulation until his/her next turn to roll the die, due to weakness from hunger.

“Roll a 2 - Lose your shoe.” Student must surrender one shoe to the teacher. The student sits out of the simulation until his/her next turn to roll the die, due to pain from frostbite.

“Roll a 3 - Get a tree!” Student gets one building supply item from the teacher. The first supply item acquired must be a measuring device (ruler, yardstick, or tape measure). When a 3 is rolled again by any team member, the student will get a roll of tape (or ball of rug yarn) from the Qr Mr General to simulate logs for building the walls of the hut. Only one length of wall may be constructed (measured and laid on the floor) per 3 that is rolled.

“Role a 4 - Complete a chore!” - With help from team members, the student will choose to construct another hut wall, OR a doorway, OR a fireplace.

“Role a 5 - You might survive!” - The student has the choice of retrieving building supplies, OR a food card, OR one shoe from the teacher.

“Role a 6 - You are sick.” - Student has contracted one of the many illnesses running rampant through the encampment. The student sits out of the simulation until his/her next turn to roll die, due to fever, nausea, and body aches.

Hut Simulation Dice Roll Action Chart:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g11w0-pG5_zY1KBcH1AGk7_p3u2Gc0yge4hIIGUuvGY/edit?usp=sharing

- 14. The teacher should introduce the directions for the simulation, explaining thoroughly what each “Dice Roll Action” requires a student or team to do.
- 15. Students take individual turns rolling the die and completing the action that they were assigned according to the number they rolled. Depending on the number rolled, the student may need to complete an action as an individual, or the student may require assistance from other team members to complete the action.
- 16. A rolled number may require a student to get supplies from the Qr Mr General (teacher), or to surrender supplies to the Qr Mr General.
- 17. After all directions have been explained, and student questions answered, the teacher will divide the students into their hut construction teams.
- 18. Pass out one food card to each student.

● Food Cards Document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1mtPvK9qxZDUapAm_0dvL0UMQ_INweCrFHxD bMoe1b1k/edit?usp=sharing

- 19. Take the students to the hut building location. Give one die to each team. Students begin taking turns rolling the die, beginning the simulation activity.
- 20. As the “active field officer” who “superintends the business of hutting,” the teacher should assess when the hut building portion of the simulation will end, based on his/her observation of the overall progress of hut completion. The teacher should let the students know when there are about 10 minutes remaining for hut

completion.

- 21. When the hut building portion of the activity comes to an end, have students do a “gallery tour” of the other teams’ huts. This will enable students to have more active participation in the discussion to come.

5. **Lesson Closure**

The teacher facilitates a discussion about simulation outcomes, as well as its difficulties and successes, while comparing and contrasting it with the actual Valley Forge encampment of 1777-1778.

6. **Assessment of Understanding**

- As a closure/evaluation activity, the students will work on “Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Response Sheet,” either individually, with a partner, or as a small group. The response sheet could be given to students as a homework assignment. See “**Valley Forge Hut Construction Simulation Response Sheet**” below:

- <https://docs.google.com/document/d/14YrxXwjMSgFWYyOp2gEjl91MuH6dw0ctFMXQITf9kA/edit?usp=sharing>