



ST. EDWARD
HIGH SCHOOL
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Reading Guide for

***Washington's Immortals*, by Patrick K. O'Donnell**

Some Frequently Used Terms:

Abatis – A makeshift defense of sharpened stakes (trees) intended to slow the advance of oncoming soldiers.

Breastworks (or works) - A temporary fortification built by soldiers in the battlefield, often an earthwork thrown up to chest height to provide protection to fighters shooting while in standing position.

Council of War -

A meeting among military leaders on the same side of a conflict to decide a course of action, usually just before or during battle.

Flank - (n.) side of a formation of soldiers. (v.) to attack from the side(s).

Forlorn cause – a suicide mission.

Garrison - (n.) a place where troops stay (v.) to place troops in an area, including a fort.

NCO (noncommissioned officer) – An officer who began as an enlisted soldier and rose through the ranks. The Americans had many of these owing to its citizen soldiery.

Pincer Move - a military attack by two groups of soldiers that approach an enemy position from two different directions at the same time. (source: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pincer%20movement>)

Pyrrhic victory – to win a battle but suffer such severe human losses as to have been defeated.

Quarter/No Quarter - Quarter, in military terms, is to offer mercy and accept surrender. To offer no quarter, then, means to fight the enemy to their deaths, not accepting surrender.

1774-75
(Chapters 1 - 4)

1. Who was Mordecai Gist, and what was his role in forming the Baltimore Independent Cadets (later called the Baltimore Independent Company)?
2. What was Samuel Smith's first role with the Baltimore Independent Company?
3. What the French and Indian War (also called the Seven Years' War) teach
4. Following the French and Indian War, when Great Britain remained in control of the Colonies, why did the British increase taxes on the colonists?
5. What was the Continental Army (also called the "American Army")? Who was commissioned to be the General and Commander in Chief?
6. Why did Smallwood's Battalion, like other military units, have musicians, including drummers and fifers?
7. How were men recruited to the military units?
8. Who were the Loyalists?

1776
(Chapters 5 - 11)

9. Who were the members of the British army? What sort of fighting experience did they have?
10. By contrast, who were the members of the Continental army? What sort of fighting experience did they have?
11. On which side did the Scottish Highlanders and the Hessians fight?
12. Who were the camp followers of Smallwood's Battalion? Despite resistance from some officers, why did even George Washington agree that they were necessary?
13. Why did Stirling (also known as William Alexander, but referred to as Lord Stirling) command half of Smallwood's Battalion to a "suicidal" charge on the stone house occupied by Cornwallis and the British soldiers?
14. What was General George Washington's reaction to watching the Marylanders attack the stone house?
15. What was the result of the Battle of Brooklyn for the American Army?

16. When the Americans were overmatched in Manhattan, legend says that Mary Lindley Murray intervened to allow Washington to escape. What is the more practical reason that the Americans were not immediately pursued north?

(Chapters 12 - 15)

17. What was different about the style of fighting the Americans employed at Pell's Point and throughout the war compared with the British army's style?
18. Where were the American soldiers captured by the British detained? What were the conditions like?
19. When Major Mordecai Gist and Captian Smith met with General Washington and requested that they be relieved by another unit, what was the General's response?
20. Why did Cornwallis and the British always seem to be a day late as they pushed the Americans out of New Jersey?
21. What was the password Washington chose for secrecy as he camped on the banks of the Delaware River? Victory or Death (p. 112)
22. Following the Battle of Trenton, how were the Hessian prisoners treated by the Americans?

1777

(Chapters 16 - 20)

23. What was George Washington's unusual maneuver that rallied the fleeing troops to victory in the battle of Princeton?
24. Who was the Marquis de Lafayette? Why was he, along with his countrymen, eager to see the Revolution succeed?
25. The British captured the American capital of Philadelphia on September 26, 1777. Why was this not the end of the war?
26. What was "The Convention of Saratoga"? How did it change the sentiment of the Americans and the French regarding the war?
- 27.

1778

(Chapters 21 - 22)

28. Who was British General Henry Clinton? What changed that he no longer had enough troops to defend both New York and Philadelphia?
29. What, according to the narrative, was the only time George Washington swore (p. 185)?

30. With which side were most Native American nations aligned during the Revolution? Who were the Stockbridge Mohicans, and for whom did they fight?

1779
(Chapters 23 - 25)

31. Who was Major Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee? And who was his famous son? P. 211
32. How did Allen McClane gather intelligence about the British fort at Stony Point for Major Lee and the Americans?
33. Jack Steward, who led the forlorn hope at Stony Point, received which award from Congress (the forerunner to the Medal of Honor)?
34. Who were the Freemasons (or Masons)? What was the effect of the revolution on their international brotherhood? 229-30

1780
(Chapters 26 - 30)

35. After Gist and the men of Smallwood's Battalion fought bravely in defeat, what was the effect of the British victory on the civilian population of the Colonies?
36. Who were the Overmountain Men? What was the result of their battle with Ferguson and his Loyalists?
37. Who did Washington choose to command the southern army? (His most able general...)
38. Why did this general decide to split the American army?

1781
(Chapters 31 - 41)

39. What was the significance of the "defense in depth" strategy that Morgan employed during the Revolutionary War?
40. When General Washington was attacked by multiple enemy officers and his sword had broken in two, who saved his life and how?
41. When pursuing Greene's army, why did Lord Cornwallis order the British to burn all of their unnecessary belongings?
42. According to the author, why did the inexperienced Maryland troops under Ford fail to charge the British when ordered?
43. How did the American defeat at Guilford Courthouse alter the course of the war?

44. Similarly, though Greene's army retreated at Eutaw Springs, why was it a strategic victory for the Americans?

45. Who was the commander of the British forces that surrendered at Yorktown?

1782-83

(Chapters 42 - 43)

46. How did Marylander Jack Steward, who had escaped so many dangerous situations, die soon after the war?

47. What was the significance of General George Washington retiring his commission?