

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Saratoga

National Historical Park



“Dear Diary” –ACTIVITY KEY —Journal entries from the Battles of Saratoga—

Goals, Themes, Objectives

Goals:

This activity gives students the opportunity to use primary sources to learn about the Battles of Saratoga. It also gives insights into how the battles affected some of those involved.

Themes:

The Battles of Saratoga not only had significant effects on national and world history, but also had deep impacts in the lives of those involved.

Objectives:

1. Students will be able to analyze passages from journal entries and obtain factual data from those passages.
2. Students will also be able to analyze these passages to ascertain some of the effects that the Battles of Saratoga had on those involved in them.

Supplies

- photocopies
- pencils

Summary

Use of primary source documents (journals, letters, diaries, drawings or sketches, etc.) is an excellent way of learning about events. Participants may not only record factual details of a particular event; they may also share details of how they personally felt and were affected by those events. Even people who were not direct participants can be greatly affected, as their lives are impacted by the effects on those around them.

Introduction

How many of us keep a diary or journal? At one time or another, many of us have. Others have at least thought of doing so. These documents, though we don't usually think of them as documents, give us a place to write about things that happened in our lives. They also give us a place to write about how we felt about those events. Were we happy about an event? Were we sad about it? Did we feel surprised? Scared? Confused?

Journals and diaries from long ago can tell us about things that happened at the time they were written. They can also tell us about the people who wrote them.

Answer Key

Passage #1

1. age 16
2. wounded in the leg or thigh, shot through the body
3. General Gates
4. sad, depressed, scared, angry –answers may vary, but the key is to have the students attempt to put themselves in the place of General Gates, to empathize
5. a kind man, evidenced by his taking care of this young wounded officer –words to describe that will vary

Passage #2

1. September 19th
2. about 12 o'clock
3. about 2 miles
4. answers will vary –main issue was the lack of a standardized dictionary, so people spelled words as they sounded
5. answers may vary –main idea is that the American soldiers weren't fighting just for their pay, but also for independence

Passage #3

1. Friday, September 19th
2. 12 o'clock
3. yes (the two accounts agree)
4. bad; “rebel” was the word Hadden used to describe / label Colonel Morgan

Passage #4

1. no (she did not perceive a problem)
2. the soldiers often went on reconnaissance (scouting) missions
3. the Native American troops (she used the term “savages” as that is how Natives were generally perceived at that time)
4. sad, depressed, scared, angry –answers may vary, but the key is to have the students attempt to put themselves in the place of the Baroness, to empathize