RAISING AN ARMY

• The colonists prioritized liberty and freedom, but initially fighting together was a challenge.
• State militias were important to the revolution, but the Americans needed a regular army too, which was difficult because Congress lacked the ability to raise money & troops.
• Most soldiers signed up for 1 year of service, but Washington appealed for longer terms.
• Soldiers were inexperienced and many did not know how to follow direction or had discipline, & finding qualified officers was also difficult.
• Washington’s biggest challenges during the war were to keep the war going and to hold a Continental army together.
RETREAT FROM NEW YORK

- After L&C and BH, the British withdrew mostly from Boston & sent ships with over 30,000 troops to NY Harbor.
- Troops landed on Staten Island & Long Island – July & August 1776.
- Hessian (German) soldiers also accompanied the redcoats.
- Washington and the Continental Army were defeated due the size of the British army, frequent desertions, and few reinforcements.
- The British were able to push the Continental army out of NY into New Jersey and Pennsylvania.
African Americans in War

- Due to low #s of troops, Washington asked the CC to allow free African Americans to join the Cont. Army, but they refused.
- Some states ignored the ban and rose African American regiments. Only SC didn’t allow them to fight by the end of the war.
- Although some fought for the British (some were offered freedom to fight), many freed and enslaved African Americans chose to fight with the Patriots because they believed more in their cause.
BATTLES OF TRENTON & PRINCETON

- After retreating from NY, the Continental army morale was low.
- General Washington decided to cross the Delaware river into NJ on Christmas night in 1776.
- The army was able to capture the entire Hessian force at Trenton, and they were able to push the British out of New Jersey at Princeton.
- These battles gave Patriots a much needed boost of confidence, encouraged soldiers to stay in the war, and increased the # of recruits.
After Trenton & Princeton, the British goal was to seize Albany to gain control of the Hudson River.

Before the attack, British general William Howe sought to capture Philadelphia (Home of the CC)

Howe’s troops captured Philadelphia, forcing the CC to flee, and he chose to stay in Philadelphia rather than go to Albany.
• With Gen. Howe in Philly, Gen. John Burgoyne attempted to take Albany, but was defeated and retreated to Saratoga, NY.

• Amer. troops under Gen. Horatio Gates blocked & surrounded Burgoyne’s troops & on Oct 17, 1777 Burgoyne surrendered.

• This victory changed the course of the war because it proved to the French & other European nations that the British could lose.

• France decided to help the Americans after Saratoga & declared war on Britain in February 1778.

• Spain also gave aid to the colonies but declared war later in 1779.