

Name: _____

Class: _____

African Americans in the American Revolution:

Part 1: Answer the questions in complete sentences

Lord Dunmore's Proclamation (announcement)

By His Excellency the Honorable JOHN Earl of DUNMORE, His Majesty's Lieutenant and Governor General of the Colony of VIRGINIA, and Vice Admiral of the same.

A PROCLAMATION

And I do hereby further declare all indentured Servants, Blacks, or others, free that are able and willing to bear Arms, they joining His **MAJESTY'S** Troops as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper Sense of their Duty, to His **MAJESTY'S** Crown. I do further order, and require, all His **MAJESTY'S Subjects**, to retain their taxes due or that may become due, in their own Care, till such a Time as Peace may be again restored to this at present most unhappy Country.

GIVEN under my Hand on board the Ship WILLIAM by Norfolk, the 7th Day of November in the SIXTEENTH Year of His MAJESTY'S Reign.

DUNMORE

Vocabulary:

Majesty: The king

Subjects: Citizen of a country

1) What did the Proclamation do?

2) How did you think the Proclamation would hurt the American war effort?

3) How do you think Patriot slave owners reacted to the Proclamation?

4) How do you think General Washington reacted to the Proclamation?

Part 2: African Americans Choose Sides

Directions: Answer the questions in complete sentences.

African Americans, on both sides, fought bravely in many major battles. These soldiers were paid less than white soldiers and often received worse weapons and clothing.

Historians estimate that at least 800 enslaved African Americans succeeded in their escape to join the British after the issuance of *Lord Dunmore's Proclamation* in hopes that they would gain their freedom after the war. His Proclamation inspired *thousands* more to follow the British during the war.

On the other hand, it is estimated that 5,000 free black Patriots fought for the American side in hopes that *their* participation would lead to more freedom and civil rights for African Americans. Early in the war, African Americans fought alongside whites. By 1775, General Washington stopped the **recruitment** of black soldiers in the Continental Army, as he feared the prospect of armed slave revolts.

General Washington changed his policies throughout the war; he allowed the **enlistment** of free blacks with "prior military experience" in January 1776 and extended the **enlistment** terms to "all free blacks" in January 1777 in order to increase the number of soldiers in the Continental Army. Because the states constantly failed to meet their **quotas** of manpower for the army, Congress approved the **enlistment** of "all blacks, free and slave," in 1777. Of the Southern states, only Maryland allowed African Americans to **enlist**.

The concept of freedom was very important to blacks on both sides. Some slaves who fought with the Patriots gained their freedom from their owners after the war was over; many did not. In an effort to keep their promise, the defeated British government refused to return former slaves who joined their side to their owners at the end of the war. Historians estimate that 3,000 to 4,000 slaves and freed black people were secured safe passage and their freedom to Nova Scotia, Jamaica, and Britain after the war.

In the new United States of America, many years would pass before slavery would be **abolished** and African Americans would gain the rights equal rights. An estimated 100,000 African Americans escaped, died, or were killed during the American Revolution.

Vocabulary:

Recruitment: Getting people to join the army

Enlistment: To action of joining the army

Quotas: Amount of soldiers provided to the army by each state

Abolished: Put an end to

1) Why did African Americans join the British? Why did they join the Americans?

2) Would it have been better for them to stay neutral? Why or why not?