

Name: _____

Class: _____

Battle of Brooklyn

Directions: Read documents A and B. Answer the questions in complete sentences.

Document A: The Battle of Long Island

***Historical Context:** Washington's army was nearly trapped at the Battle of Brooklyn Heights (or the Battle of Long Island). Though the British won the battle, Washington's men barely escaped. The officer who fought with George Washington at the Battle of Brooklyn describes the colonials' defeat in late August 1776 and retreat to New Jersey.*

You are no doubt surprised to hear of our sudden **retreat** from Long Island, but it was thought absolutely **essential** from our situation: We were under a necessity of marching out and attacking them upon their own ground, or suffering ourselves to have been starved into a surrender. First, because they were **entrenching** within 500 yards of our lines, which were very weak and incapable of withstanding their heavy cannon, and our men, from their situation, began to grow very uneasy; and secondly, because their ships might have run up the East River, and cut off our resources of **provisions**. The retreat was conducted with the greatest secrecy, and by six o'clock in the morning we had everything **embarked**. There never was a man that behaved better upon the occasion than General Washington; he was on horseback the whole night, and never left the ferry stairs till he had seen the whole of his troops **embarked**.

Source: A letter from a Pennsylvania Officer, (New York, August 31, 1775) that was published in the Pennsylvania Gazette on September 4, 1776

Vocabulary:

Retreat: to withdraw,

Entrenching: Established a position

Provisions: supplies

Embarked: board a ship

Document A:

1. **Sourcing:** Who wrote this?

2. **Close Reading:** According to the author, why did they retreat?

3. **How does the author describe how Washington handled the defeat?**

Document B:

Source: George Washington speaking to Continental Congress, August 31, 1776

Inclination as well as duty, would have persuaded me to give Congress, the earliest information of my removal of the Troops from Long Island, two nights ago; but the extreme **fatigue**, which myself and family have undergone since the **encampment** of the 27th made me entirely unfit to take a pen in hand. Since Monday, we have none of us has been out of the Lines, until we crossed the East River yesterday Morning, and for the 48 hours before that; I had hardly been off my horse and had never closed my Eyes, so that I was quite unfit to write till this Morning.

Our Retreat was made without any loss of Men or **Ammunition** and in better order than I expected, from Troops in the Situation ours were; we brought off all our Cannon and **Stores**, except a few heavy pieces, (which in the condition the Earth was, by a long continued rain) we found the situation **impracticable**; the Wheels of the Carriages sunk, and made it impossible for our whole force to drag them; We left but little **Provisions** on the Island, except some Cattle, which had been driven within our Lines and which after many attempts to force across the Water, we found impossible to do. I have enclosed a Copy of the Council of War held previous to the Retreat, to which I beg leave to refer Congress for the reasons or many of them that led to the adoption of that measure.

Vocabulary:

Fatigue: tired, exhausted

Encampment: Temporary Camp

Ammunition: bullets

Stores: Supplies

Impracticable: Impossible to do

Provisions: Supplies

Induced: cause

Document B:

1. Sourcing: Who is speaking?

2. Close Reading: How does Washington describe the effects of the battle? Was it mostly positive or negative?

3. Corroboration: Do the documents agree about the battle? Explain.