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## The Continental Army and the Battles of Lexington and Concord by Naomi

### Structure:

- All About the Bigger Topic
- All About the Focused Topic
- The Story of a Big Moment, a Big Decision
- Why this Focused Topic is Important

### Chapter 1: All About the American Revolution

In order to understand about the Battles of Lexington and Concord, it is helpful to understand a little about the Revolutionary War because these were the first battles in that important war.

The Revolutionary War began in 1775 and lasted many years, until 1783. It was for the American colonies' freedom from Great Britain, their ruler at the time.

The King was making the colonists pay a lot of money in taxes. They had to pay every time they bought things like sugar or papers. The taxes were bad, but what made the colonists even angrier was that they had no say in the British Government. They couldn't even vote. James Otis made up the saying. He said, "Taxation without representation is **tyranny**." That means a ruler who would do such a thing is unfair.

In 1774, the Parliament of Great Britain passed really bad laws. This happened after the Boston Tea Party, when the colonists dumped tea worth more than \$1000 (which was worth a lot more at the time!) into the Boston Harbor. The colonists had to pay for the tea. These were called the **intolerable acts**. Also, there was a law passed that colonists weren't allowed to have meetings or choose their own government. And British soldiers could come stay in anyone's home!

The colonists got very angry about these laws. Some men made a congress that stated what they thought their rights should be. They sent it to the king, but he ignored them. He was really angry about the Boston Tea Party.

Then, the British came and tried to capture the colonists' supplies, like gunpowder. That was what the Midnight Ride was all about. So the colonists found out about it, and the war got started at Lexington.

### Chapter 2: All About the Battles of Lexington and Concord

The Battles of Lexington and Concord were the first battles of the American Revolution. These battles happened on April 19, 1775 in Middlesex County near Boston. They marked the beginning of military fighting between the British and patriots.

#### **The Secret Plan**

The British General Thomas Gage made a secret plan to sneak out in the early morning to go to Lexington and Concord. They wanted to capture Sam Adams and John Hancock who were colonial leaders and destroy all of the patriots military supplies.

But the patriots found out! Weeks before, the patriots heard that their supplies might be in danger, so they moved them from Concord. Sam Adams and John Hancock were warned about the planned attack and escaped from Lexington before the British could capture them. The night before, they learned more details about the British plans and Paul Revere and other men rode off on horseback to warn the people that the British were coming.

#### **Lexington**

The first shots of the war fired minutes after sunrise in Lexington. When the 240 British soldiers arrived on the Lexington Green at 5:00 a.m., 70 Colonial militiamen, or soldiers, were waiting for them. They had been waiting for more than four hours. These Colonial militiamen were also called minutemen because they could be ready to fight at a minute's notice. The British soldiers warned the minutemen to move, but the minutemen refused. Suddenly, a bullet shot through the air and the fighting started.

The Battle of Lexington only lasted about ten minutes. The patriots retreated. 8 patriots died and 10 were wounded.

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## **Concord**

After the fighting at Lexington, the British soldiers started moving to Concord, where they had more troops waiting. At 7:00 a.m., 700 Redcoats arrived in Concord, where hundreds of Colonial militiamen waited. The militiamen defeated many of the British troops.

## **Retreat to Boston**

As more and more patriots joined the fight, the British soldiers became outnumbered. The British began to retreat towards Boston. As they moved, patriots attacked from behind trees and bushes and buildings. By the time the soldiers reached Boston, 73 British soldiers were dead, and 174 were wounded.

In the end, about 100 patriots and about 300 Redcoats were killed or wounded.

## **Chapter 3: A Day in the Life of a Minuteman (Story)**

### **April 19, 1775**

It was 5:00 a.m. I sat up in my bed with my wooden hunting musket by my side. Earlier this morning we got a warning that the Lobsterbacks were planning a secret attack on Lexington. Well, it's not a secret anymore! I was feeling so nervous and tired because we had been up for over 4 hours. I'm only 19 years old and never had to fight. I hope I don't have to shoot my gun, I thought. Father told me, "We need to fight for our freedom."

Suddenly, I heard a drum beat. My heart almost jumped out of my chest. We ran out the door. In a few minutes, there were about 70 men moving through the fog onto the green grass. We didn't have fancy uniforms like the Lobsterbacks. Most of us were just wearing our regular farming clothes. Brown pants and a shirt and a plain brown hat. Father said that we didn't need uniforms, "That would just slow us down. That's why people call us the minutemen, because we are ready at a minute's notice."

"The Lobsterbacks are coming!" A man on horseback screamed. He rode up to Captain John Parker, the leader of the minutemen here in Lexington. Then I saw rows of soldiers marching towards us. All of them had on fancy red coats, white pants, and black hats.

I wanted to run, but no one else moved. Suddenly a gun went off and everyone started to fight. There were bullets and screaming coming from all around me. I felt a bullet go right through my arm and I fell to the ground. A few minutes later I heard the Lobsterbacks leaving. What happened? I thought.

## **Chapter 4: Why the Battles of Concord and Lexington were Important (Essay)**

The Battles of Concord and Lexington were so important to the war. They happened on April 19, 1775. They were important because they were all about the supplies for the war, and because they were the first battles of the war, so they pretty much started everything. Another reason they were important is because they proved the patriots weren't going to give up. Finally, a reason they were important is because they were a new style of fighting that the British didn't know about.

The British were marching to Lexington and Concord to find and destroy the Continental Army's supplies that they had secretly been hiding. If you know anything about wars, you know supplies are really important. The British had plans to destroy the supplies of the Continental Army before the war even began. That made these battles important.

These were also important because they were the first battles of the war and they started everything off. They happened on April 19, 1775, before any of the other battles. They even happened before the Declaration of Independence! Many people think the signing was the start of the war. No one knows who fired the first shots but it might have been someone hiding behind a tree. When the British heard that shot they charged forward. And the war was started.

The Battles of Lexington and Concord were important because they proved the patriots weren't going to give up. The British might have thought that they would just surrender because they weren't as strong. But they didn't. They stayed and fought. This made the British know they weren't going to give up. These Battles also made a new style of fighting. The British thought that they were going to fight like normal, like all in a line and just march toward each other. But the patriots didn't do that. They hid behind barns and sheds and in fields and they shot at the British from windows and that helped them to win. According to David Gregory in the book

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*The Revolutionary War, "They hid on hilltops, behind trees, and in barns. This scared the British. The British had no way of protecting themselves against this new style of fighting. The British quickly marched back to Charlestown."*

*This shows that the Battles of Lexington and Concord were very important. I hope you agree with my essay.*

**Sources**

The Revolutionary War by Josh Gregory

Liberty! How the War Began by Lucille Recht Penner

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battles\\_of\\_Lexington\\_and\\_Concord](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battles_of_Lexington_and_Concord)

<http://library.thinkquest.org/TQ0312848/boflandc.htm>