

Unit 8 - Battle of Brooklyn

8A Introduction

The first few battles of the American Revolution went extremely well for the Americans. The Battle of Bunker Hill had shown the British just how hard these poor American farmers could fight. The British left Boston and sailed north to prepare. The American army (called the Continental army at the time) was led by General George Washington. He knew the British would attack New York City next, so he led his troops to Brooklyn to build forts. The British did indeed land in New York, but they had many more troops than Washington had expected, and they were able to fight past the American forts by sneaking through an unguarded trail.

Washington was faced with a tough decision: attempt to make a stand against a larger, better trained and equipped army, or retreat. Some say that winners never quit. Washington showed that there's a big difference between quitting and retreating.

8B Song Lyrics

*This is the Battle of Brooklyn,
It's going down.
Know when to hold 'em and fold 'em,
And so we're rolling out.
You know that we're supposed to be colder than the south,
The flow is so golden they're like, "Oh wow."*

So we signed the Declaration of Independence,
And it made Britain angry and **incensed**.
But it's a policy, an American **doctrine**:
If you don't let us vote, don't come a-knockin'.
But they came with their guns and their guns and their bombs,
And a fleet of ships, over a hundred strong.
It was hard though, they hit us up with an **embargo**,
And wouldn't let us trade our cargo.

We got cut like a barber, they surrounded New York Harbor,
And wouldn't let us trade or **barter**.
The ships were clouds that **forebode** a storm,
Told us of the war that was going to go on.
We had built forts and **fortified** them,
Made them strong to defend like a porcupine's skin.
Only problem: In Brooklyn we forgot a section,
That's a **defect**, or imperfection in the plan.
And they had more men than we did,
Even blind people could see we would be defeated.
They marched up with 34,000 troops,
That's a **formidable** army and scary too.
Plus our **inventory** ran so low,
The army had less ammo than Rambo.
We were **susceptible** to attacks, easily affected,
The huge fort we built up? They wrecked it.



Hook

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We sent a **dispatch**, which is a message,
To General George, like we need some help, kid.
We hadn't eaten, and our faces were **gaunt**,
Extremely thin and bony, and we're hating to march.
Our **haggard** faces showed our exhaustion,
Like, "The Brits didn't fight this hard in Boston!"
But George knew it was time to retreat,
So he waited 'til one night, when the Brits were asleep.
He started sending rowboats of Americans,
Across to Manhattan, the island.
We tried not to be **overt**, not obvious,
But the sun was coming up, and soon we'd all be dust.
But luck shined brighter than the sun did,
A fog rolled in thick as a rug is.
We escaped in the mist, and the British missed,
They couldn't see us from their British ships.
We lost the battle, yes, but Washington proved,
That in trouble he didn't get **flustered** or confused.
This is the lesson, get the picture like Kodak:
Know when to push on, and when to pull back.

Hook

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8C Words Defined

barter / defect / dispatch / doctrine / embargo / flustered / foreboding / formidable / fortify / gaunt / haggard / incense / inventory / overt / susceptible

Below you'll find each vocabulary word that was used in the song. Each word is followed by the part of speech, a simple definition and a meaningful sentence. Some words will also have synonyms, antonyms and other forms of the word listed.

1. barter (verb) to trade

At recess, the boys will often *barter* their baseball cards with one another.

2. defect (noun) an imperfection or fault

The toy cow was supposed to "moo" when his tail was pulled, but it had a *defect* and made no sound at all.

Other forms: *Defect* can also be a verb meaning "to leave, desert or abandon," as in: The man tried to *defect* from his country because the ruler was a harsh dictator.

3. dispatch (verb) to send off or away

The police will *dispatch* over a hundred volunteers to help search the nearby woods and fields for the missing child.

Other forms: A *dispatch* can also be a noun meaning "a message," as in: The soldier delivered the important *dispatch*.

4. doctrine (noun) a principle, position or belief system that is taught

The speech was full of religious *doctrine*, so I was bored and confused at the same time.

Synonyms: theory, belief, dogma

Other forms: If you are taught a *doctrine* until you believe it, you have been *indoctrinated* (verb).

5. embargo (noun) a prohibition or restriction, usually of trade

Because the government announced an *embargo* of all Cuban goods, I couldn't let the ship come in to dock.

6. flustered (adj) put into a state of confusion

The lawyer was so *flustered* by the judge's remarks that he accidentally knocked his glass of water on the floor.

Synonyms: distraught, rattled

Antonyms: clearheaded, composed

7. foreboding (adj) menacing; indicating something bad is coming

The huge waves and strong winds were a *foreboding* sign that a hurricane was brewing off the coast.

Other forms: *Foreboding* can also be a noun meaning "a prophesy." Also, clouds might *forebode* (verb) a storm if they indicate a storm is coming.

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8. formidable  (adj) causing fear or admiration

Even though Jasper was less than five feet tall, he was a *formidable* opponent in the boxing world.
Synonyms: impressive, mighty, daunting

9. fortify  (verb) to make strong; to protect against an attack

Tony decided to *fortify* his sagging roof by adding two pillars.

10. gaunt  (adj) thin and bony

The only survivor from the shipwreck looked *gaunt* after being stranded on an island with little food for three weeks.
Synonyms: skinny, bony

11. haggard  (adj) worn and wild-looking

The travelers had *haggard* faces after flying for more than twenty hours without sufficient leg room or a meal.
Synonyms: fatigued, exhausted, ashen

12. incense  (verb) to make extremely angry; infuriate

Gary was *incensed* when he received an F on his math final exam because he had studied for two solid weeks.
Other forms: *Incense* (noun) is also the name of the perfumed sticks you can buy to make your room smell good.

13. inventory  (noun) a supply of goods or materials

The bookstore had plenty of *inventory* – they had crates and crates of books – they just didn't have anyone to sell them to.
Other forms: *Inventory* is also sometimes used as a verb meaning “to take stock of, “ as in: As a waitress, I had to *inventory* the ketchup, mustard, salt and pepper at the end of my shift.

14. overt  (adj) open and observable; obvious

Billy made *overt* attempts to be exceptionally well behaved around the holidays.
Antonyms: hidden, sneaky, covert

15. susceptible  (adj) easily influenced or affected

The premature baby was *susceptible* to colds, sicknesses, and infection.
Antonyms: resistant

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8D Fix the Mistake

barter / defect / dispatch / doctrine / embargo / flustered / foreboding / formidable / fortify / gaunt / haggard / incense / inventory / overt / susceptible

Each of the sentences below has a mistake. The wrong vocabulary words have been used, so the sentences don't make sense. Rewrite each sentence using the correct vocabulary word from this unit.

1. The model immediately noticed the **embargo** in the evening gown, even though it was very tiny.

2. By **dispatching** with each other for various items, the Native Americans were introduced to different types of tools, foods and musical instruments.

3. The hostages were completely **overt** from being given only bread and water for two months straight.

4. Only **haggard** water polo teams made it to the state championship meet.

5. The **foreboding** babysitter was pulling her hair out because she couldn't get the triplets to stop crying.

6. The restaurant manager ordered me to count our **doctrine** of ice cream toppings.

7. Many homeless people are **fortified** to catching colds and the flu in the winter since they live on the streets.

8. China placed a total **inventory** on all American-made products.

9. It **flusters** me so much when drivers tailgate me that I often scream at them.

10. Diana tried to keep her feelings hidden, but it was the most **susceptible** display of affection I had ever seen.

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11. After the marathon, the runners looked **formidable** and in need of hot showers.

12. Nothing is more **gaunt** to a soldier walking through a village than the sound of absolute silence.

13. New York City was forced to **barter** all of its police officers during the riots.

14. The small country was so isolated that it created its own unique religious **defect**.

15. The cotton tent had been **flustered** with nylon so that it wouldn't rip.

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8E Pick the Winner

barter / defect / dispatch / doctrine / embargo / flustered / foreboding / formidable / fortify / gaunt / haggard / incense / inventory / overt / susceptible

Circle the word that best fits into the sentence. Then write a sentence below that uses the word you didn't pick in a meaningful way.

1. He was (**susceptible OR overt**) to having his feelings hurt on a regular basis because he was extremely sensitive.

2. As a beginning driver, I was (**flustered OR dispatched**) by the cat darting out in front of my car.

3. The government placed an (**inventory OR embargo**) on any products made by children in foreign countries.

4. The (**foreboding OR haggard**) clouds made the bride nervous since her wedding and reception were being held outdoors.

5. I cried when I saw the (**gaunt OR formidable**) little boy in the orphanage because he looked hungry and lonely.

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8F Draw the Relationships

barter / defect / dispatch / doctrine / embargo / flustered / foreboding / formidable / fortify / gaunt / haggard / incense / inventory / overt / susceptible

In each grouping of eight words below, draw straight lines between the synonyms (words that mean similar things) and squiggly lines between any antonyms (words that mean nearly opposite things). Every word should have at least one line connected to it. Some may have more.

1

send off	trade	principle that is taught	doctrine
barter			imperfection
	defect	dispatch	

.....

2

embargo	weaken	fortify	foreboding
ban			favorable
	confused	flustered	

.....

3

formidable	gaunt	haggard	mighty
anger			healthy
	thin	incense	

.....

4

inventory	stock of goods	susceptible	incense
overt			perfume
	inaccessible	hidden	

8G Understanding What You Read

barter / defect / dispatch / doctrine / embargo / flustered / foreboding / formidable / fortify / gaunt / haggard / incense / inventory / overt / susceptible

Read the passage below. Then answer the questions.

In March of 1776, after the yearlong Siege of Boston, the British fleet set sail for Canada to regroup and reorganize. General George Washington, expecting the British to attack New York City next, marched his troops to Manhattan and Brooklyn to fortify their position by building forts.

The British did just as Washington expected, sailing for New York Harbor and unloading many of their troops on Staten Island, between New Jersey and Brooklyn. However, Washington hadn't anticipated the size of the British army. More British soldiers had sailed from England, and they had also hired German mercenary soldiers to fight. In all, the British commanded a truly formidable army: They sent some 34,000 troops to New York. Washington had his forts, but he only had 9,000 men. Many of them were farmers who had left their farms to help. Having just marched from Boston with very little food, they were already gaunt, their faces haggard with exhaustion.

Things turned bad for the Americans when a British spy discovered a weakness in the American line. At night, the British marched through the weakly guarded Jamaica pass and came up on a group of Americans from the side. Those Americans fought back, but most of the soldiers were killed. The American soldiers pulled back to forts in Brooklyn Heights, dangerously close to the East River. Washington took inventory of the situation. He realized that if the British pressed on and pinned the Americans against the river, Washington and his men might have no choice but to surrender.

Therefore, during the night of August 30th, Washington decided that he had to evacuate Brooklyn and bring his soldiers to Manhattan. But moving 9,000 soldiers across the river wouldn't be easy. After all, there was no Brooklyn Bridge in 1776. Instead, they had big rowboats. But the process did not go as quickly as Washington had hoped, and by sunrise many men were still in Brooklyn, dangerously open to enemy attack. The first rays of light coming over the horizon were as foreboding as thunderclouds to the soldiers that morning. Luckily, just as the sun came up, an unusually thick fog rolled into New York Harbor, hiding the Americans from view.

Washington did retreat, eventually allowing the British to occupy all of New York City, which they held for the rest of the war. But his move caught the British completely by surprise, and his technique earned him praise from both Americans and the British. Certainly, his luck and smarts helped the Americans win their war of independence.

1. Which of the following describes Washington's knowledge of what the British would do after the Siege of Boston?

- (A) He knew where they would sail, and he realized how big the army was.
- (B) He knew where they would sail, but he didn't realize how big the army was.
- (C) He didn't know where they would sail, but he realized how big the army was.
- (D) He didn't know where they would sail, and he didn't realize how big the army was.

2. Which of the following mottos best fits the George Washington described in this passage?

- (A) We will shell them on the beaches...we shall never surrender.
- (B) Live and let live.
- (C) You have to know when to strike and when to retreat.
- (D) The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.

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3. When “Washington took inventory of the situation,” he

- (A) scattered his troops
- (B) created fortifications
- (C) requested back up
- (D) gathered information of his current situation

4. According to the text, the British army was made up of

- (A) British soldiers and hired troops from Germany
- (B) British soldiers and Americans who opposed independence
- (C) English and British soldiers
- (D) Ships and cannons, mostly

5. Why was the sunrise described as “foreboding” in this passage?

- (A) because sunlight makes it easier to travel by boat
- (B) because sunshine might make the British troops lazy
- (C) because the sun would expose the American forts
- (D) because the sun would let the British see the American retreat

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8H Thinking Creatively

barter / defect / dispatch / doctrine / embargo / flustered / foreboding / formidable / fortify / gaunt / haggard / incense / inventory / overt / susceptible

Answer each question below. Don't be afraid to think creatively.

1. If you could **barter** one item from your bedroom for something you've always wanted, what would those items be?

2. What is the most **foreboding** thing you can think of?

3. What is the [insert your name here] **Doctrine**?

4. Why should poverty **incense** us?

5. Describe a TV show named *Susceptible to Laughter*.

Word Breakdown

Incense, as a noun, is that sweet-scented perfume stick that you can burn to smell flavors such as "apple fantasy" and "Egyptian musk." The word *incense* comes from the Latin *insensum*, which literally means "something that's burnt." Thus, *incendiary* means "causing fire," and if something *incenses* you, it metaphorically sets you on fire: You get upset.

The word *sense* has nothing to do with *incense* except that they rhyme. *Sense* comes from the Latin *sensus*, meaning "to perceive." Still, Spike Lee plays with the two words together in his movie *Mo' Better Blues*. In a famous scene, one character complains to another that, "It makes no sense. It *incenses* me that our own people don't realize our own heritage."