



Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail

Free video and online interactive tour for classroom use and individual study
Access both at www.danielboonefootsteps.com or www.RandellJones.com

Courtesy of Randell Jones, author, *Before They Were Heroes at King's Mountain*



Questions

to consider in the classroom:
(for middle and high school grades)

1. The settlers in the Overmountain region of North Carolina moved there despite the Proclamation of 1763 by King George III of Great Britain declaring those lands as reserved for the Cherokee people.

Were these Overmountain settlers actual “outlaws” or were they exercising some perceived right to move into the frontier?

2. American Indian cultures did not believe that anyone could “own” the land. European cultures believed that people could claim ownership rights to land.

How did these different cultural views affect the relationships and communications between the two groups?

Were the Cherokees justified in attacking the settlers they saw as invaders?

3. These Overmountain and backcountry militiamen had learned to fight “Indian style.”

What is that style of fighting?

How did these militiamen use that style in their victory at Kings Mountain?

When and where were some of the conflicts with American Indians that schooled these men in fighting “Indian style”?

4. Urgent communication among communities was done by express riders?

Compare communication methods as they evolve from 18th century to today. When and what technologies were created? Put them on a timeline.

5. These militiamen marched over 200 miles.

What is a reasonable distance to walk each day through the woods? On horseback?

How would you make that same trip today? How long would you take by different means of travel: automobile, bicycle, ATV, skateboard? How would you carry your equipment and food?

What is the farthest distance you have walked at one time? Write a paragraph or more about the experience: where, when, weather, companions, purpose, how you felt before, during, after.

6. The people who gathered at Sycamore Shoals included members of the community and family members.

How and why did these people come along to the starting point for the march? Why did not everyone go on the march? What do you think those who stayed behind did while the militiamen were gone? How did the community show its support for the militiamen? Why did they not just wait of “the government” to

take care of the problem?

7.When British Major Patrick Ferguson made his threat, was he just bluffing or could he/ would he have brought his army over the mountains?

What would Ferguson have needed to know before he went over the mountains if he expected to win? How could he have gotten that information? How was he getting the information he had?

8.Major Patrick Ferguson was recruiting an army of “loyalists.”

Who were the “loyalists” and why would they want to fight for King George III? Did the loyalists live in one place? Where they of one ethnic group or nationality or speak one language?

9.“Whig rebels” wanted independence from Great Britain. You may think of them as “patriots” today, but that is only because the “Whig rebels” won the American Revolution. The “loyalists” thought of themselves as being “patriotic” to their beliefs, too.

How could people tell who was a “loyalist” and who was a “Whig rebel”? Did they wear uniforms or mark themselves in certain ways? What about in their own communities? How could people figure out who was a “loyalist” and who was a “Whig rebel”?

10.At the Battle of Kings Mountain, all the men fighting on both sides were Americans except for Major Patrick Ferguson.

How was it that Americans were fighting against each other during the American Revolution? When you hear today about a “civil war” taking place in another country, what is causing that?

11.What roles did women play during the planning and the fighting of the Battle of Kings

Mountain? African-Americans, enslaved and free?

12.At the Battle of Kings Mountain, many of the militiamen had their personal hunting rifles while the loyalists had military muskets given to them by the British army.

What were the advantages and disadvantages of each weapon type in the battle? What other weapons were used in the battle by each side and why?

13.After the battle, the captured loyalists were marched away as prisoners.

Why were the militiamen in a hurry to get away from the battlefield? How were the prisoners treated during the march?

14.After one week, the militiamen wanted some of the prisoners tried for crimes they had allegedly committed.

How were the trials conducted and by what authority? Were the sentences of the convicted as carried out just and legal or was the “court” actually “vigilante justice”?

15.After more than two weeks, the prisoners and their militia escorts descended upon the unsuspecting villagers at Bethabara.

Why did the militia leaders march the prisoners to Bethabara? How were all the men there treated by the community? What was the culture of the Bethabara community and how did that affect how they were treated by loyalists and by Whig rebels during the American Revolution? What was the political position of this community?

16.What questions would you ask your classmates to probe more into the story of the American Revolution in the South? •