

Instructions

Oath of Allegiance

You'll need:

- 1 oath of allegiance

When the American Revolution began, people had to decide whether to be loyal to the crown or fight for independence. Looking back, it seems like an easy choice to make. Who wouldn't want to be a Patriot? But back then the choice wasn't so easy. If you were a Patriot who lived in an area where there were many Loyalists, or a Loyalist who lived where there were many Patriots, you would be in danger all the time. Many colonists still had relatives in England and becoming a Patriot would mean breaking ties with their home country. And what if George Washington didn't win the war? If the British would have won, the Patriots would have been considered traitors and could have everything take from them – even their lives.

So, will you sign George Washington's oath of allegiance? Read the oath and pretend that you don't know the outcome of the war. Think hard about what the decision would mean for you.

Analyze and Transcribe Your Own Letter

You'll need:

- 1 Robert Howe 1780 original letter scan
- 1 "Analyze a Written Document" Worksheet
- 1 rolled typed transcription of Robert Howe's letter (DO NOT OPEN)
- 1 piece of blank paper (aged-looking paper in box)
- 1 quill pen
- 1 ink packet made into ink (instructions are on the packet)

Conservators and curators that work in museums often need to be able to transcribe (or recopy) historical letters and documents stored in their collections. This allows people to learn things about the past directly from the people involved in certain events. Sometimes reading other people's handwriting can be tricky and handwriting styles have changed over the years.

Your job is to take Robert Howe's original letter and see if you can figure out what he was writing about. Fill out the "Analyze a Written Document" worksheet to help gather your findings. Then, recopy his letter yourself onto your blank sheet of paper. You will be using a quill pen and ink set to do this. Think about how easy or difficult this task is compared to using a regular pencil or ballpoint pen today. Once you have finished this step, then you can open the rolled typed transcription of the letter and see how you did!