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#### Woodbridge Historical Essay 2025-2026

The American Revolution was the war between Great Britain and its colonies. Due to unfair treatment and taxes, the colonists chose to revolt. They didn't want an unfair government. There were 13 colonies. Great Britain didn't want to have their land taken away, so they fought back. At the Battle of Lexington and Concord, April 19, 1775, the first shots were fired and the war officially started. The colonists were weaker since they had a smaller army. Though, they had a home field advantage, recruited troops easily, had France as their ally, fought harder for their freedom, and George Washington as their leader. The British underestimated the Americans and did so for many battles. At the Battle of Yorktown, the British finally surrendered after being cornered and let the Americans have their freedom. The 13 colonies became the United States of America after 8 years in 1783. I would be a patriot because of the British's treatment towards the colonies, the Hessians ransacking civilian homes, and wanting slavery gone.

My first reason for being a patriot is because the British mistreated the colonists. They put them in cells without fair trials, harmed them when suspected of committing a crime, even if they didn't do it, and treated them less than. As said in the Historic Tour of Woodbridge Volume X; The Revolution War Comes to Woodbridge Compiled by The Woodbridge Township Historic Preservation Commission, it states, "Town elder Jonathan Inslee, captured by Royal - ists, was marched through the cold countryside and forced to wade through the river at a ford. Arriving in New Brunswick, Jonathan, still in his soaking-wet clothes, was shoved into a cold cell. His wife, Grace Moore Inslee, badgered the jailers until they released her husband. However, the damage was done. Jonathan died soon after because of this brutal treatment." According to "The War for

American Independence Patriot, Loyalist, or Neutral: You Decide,” troops and the government were often more fond of the southern colonies, who were wealthy and were loyal to Britain, while the northern colonies were more patriotic. It says, “Most Loyalists who opposed independence tended to be wealthy landowners, Anglican clergymen, or people with close business or political ties to Britain.”

The second reason for my stance is the British stealing food and ransacking towns. They had British raiding parties to forage food across Woodbridge to Central Jersey. This made the residents have to fight back with weapons as Hessian mercenaries forced themselves in. People were so fearful of the raiders that they stayed in place. As the Woodbridge brochure puts it, “in Woodbridge, believing that the raiding force in Spanktown was dauntingly large, defied orders and stayed in place. Woodbridge residents, particularly the women, had to use every weapon at their disposal to protect their homes and families. Hessian mercenaries routinely forced their way into residences, plundering relentlessly.” This shows how scared they were of the British and Hessian mercenaries attacking and stealing from them, their only supplies being stolen from them. Having to defend themselves with weapons against highly trained soldiers that could kill them at any time would be scary to anyone, especially the civilians they were targeting.

Another reason would be wanting slavery gone. Making people work without compensation and with cruel treatment wouldn't fit in with the ideals of America. With colonists fighting for freedom, we can also fight for slave's freedom. In the Woodbridge brochure, it says, “After fighting for liberty and justice for all, some found slavery to be incompatible with the principles of the new nation.” Later on in the paragraph, it quotes Dr. Moses Bloomfield: a man

who freed his slaves, “As a nation, we are free and independent – all men are created equal, and why should they, my fellow citizens – my equals, be held in bondage? From this day forth they are emancipated and I here declare them free and absolved from all servitude to me and my posterity.” In other words, the people of the new nation wanted every man to be free, no matter their physical appearance or where they come from. In the book, “New Jersey in the American Revolution,” shows more proof that they hoped for the freedom of slaves. On page 132-133, it says, “In 1775, a strong petition asking for an act ‘to set free all of the slaves now in the Colony’ was presented to the assembly by fifty-two Quakers from Chesterfield in Burlington County.” The quote showed that the civilians were actively making petitions to try and help the slaves, to stop the on-going abuse against our fellow American citizens who were made to work without compensation.

The American Revolution was a war between the American colonies and Great Britain for freedom. Because of unfair trials, laws, and overall just unfair treatment, they wanted to separate from Great Britain. The 13 American colonies ended up winning the war in 1783, after the British surrendered in Yorktown. Patriots are people who support their country. They defend and protect it from danger/enemies. Loyalists are people who are loyal to a ruler/government, even during a revolution. Quakers are people who wanted peace and stayed neutral during the revolution. Often due to religious reasons, like wanting to be a pacifist. They think both sides are good people and don't want anyone to be harmed in war. I would be a patriot. As you could see with all the laws, like tax on paper, tea, etc, the British Government was treating them unfairly. I would not want to be controlled and treated less than based on who I was, so I would also want to revolt. I would want my rights and freedom.

### Works cited

“Historic Tour of Woodbridge Volume X The Revolution: War Comes to Woodbridge.”  
Woodbridge Township Preservation Commission, 2018. Brochure.

Mitnick, Barbara J. *New Jersey in the American Revolution*. New Brunswick, N.J. Rutgers University Press, 2005.