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The Revolutionary War The Americans had the advantage of fighting at home, but Britain was a much stronger military power. There were victories and defeats on both sides during the seven years of war. The first aim of the American army led by George *Washington was to force the British, called *Redcoats because of the colour of their uniform, to leave Boston. On 17 June 1775 the British fought and won the Battle of *Bunker Hill, but they lost so many soldiers that their position in Boston was weak and in March 1776 they were forced to leave. The Continental Congress suggested that Britain and America should make an agreement, but Britain refused and so, on 4 July 1776, members of the Congress signed the *Declaration of Independence. This document, written by the future President Thomas *Jefferson, gave the Americans reasons for wanting to be independent. It included ideas that were rather new, e.g. that ordinary people had certain rights that governments should respect. Since the British king *George III refused to accept this, Americans had the right, and the duty, to form their own government. Later in the same year the British took control of *New York and *Rhode Island, and Washington's army moved away into *Pennsylvania. The defeats discouraged many Americans, but at Christmas, when soldiers were not expecting an attack, Washington surprised the British by taking his army across the Delaware River to Trenton, *New Jersey, and

defeating the Hessians, German soldiers paid by the British to fight for them. A story often told is that, before crossing the river, Washington threw down a silver dollar, thinking that if any guards were near they would hear the noise and come. Since nobody came, he knew it was safe to attack. Washington's army spent the winter at *Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. It was very cold and the new government of the United States did not have money to provide soldiers with warm clothes and food. Many became ill, and many more lost their enthusiasm for the war. But in the spring of 1777 they received help from two different sources. A German, General von Steuben, came to train the American soldiers, and the Marquis de *Lafayette brought French soldiers to fight on the American side. With this help, the Americans won a victory at *Saratoga, New York. France and also Spain supported the United States because they thought that if Britain became weaker in North America, it would also be weaker in Europe. Over the next few years, neither side was strong enough to defeat the other completely. But in 1781 Washington saw a perfect opportunity to win. The British General *Cornwallis had taken his army to *Yorktown, Virginia, where he was too far away to get supplies or help. Washington marched south to meet him, while French ships made sure that the British could not receive help by sea. Cornwallis realized how bad his position was and surrendered. In 1783, after a period of talks, Britain recognized the United States of America, making the US completely independent and giving it the western parts of North America. (百考试题外语编辑整理) 更多信息请访问：百考试题外语站点 百考试题外语

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