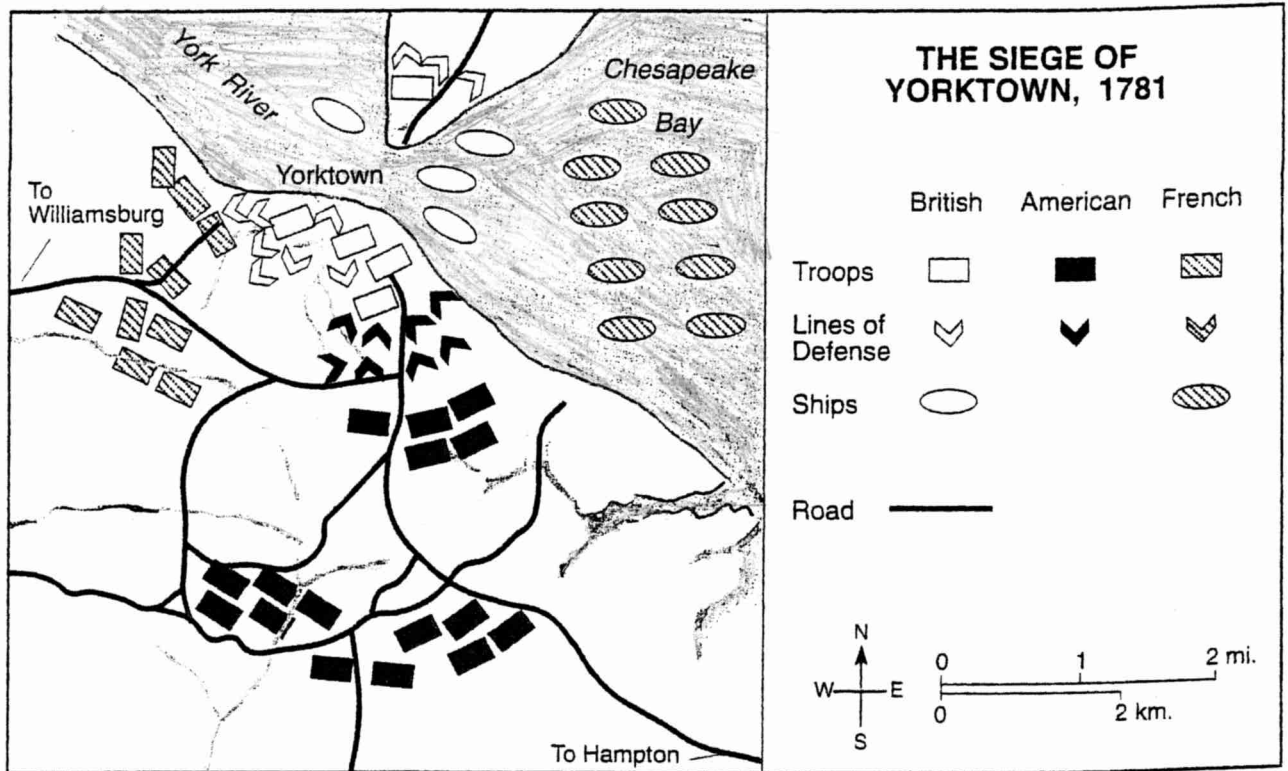


CHAPTER 10
The Siege of Yorktown

Geography Challenge
Geography Worksheet 20

In the summer of 1781, British General Cornwallis marched his troops northward out of North Carolina and set up camp at Yorktown. While Admiral De Grasse and a French fleet fought off Britain's naval forces at Chesapeake Bay, Generals Washington and Rochambeau led American and French troops southward toward Yorktown. The map below shows the positions of the British and of the Americans and their French allies at Yorktown. Study the map and answer the questions that follow.



1. What body of water is east of Yorktown? _____
2. What body of water is northwest of Yorktown? _____
3. Why might Cornwallis have chosen Yorktown as a location for his camp? (See textbook, page 213.) _____

4. What prevented Cornwallis from receiving supplies or reinforcements?

5. Who controlled roads leading from Yorktown to the south? _____

6. Who controlled roads leading from Yorktown to the west? _____

7. On October 16, 1781, a storm prevented Cornwallis and his troops from retreating across the York River. Based on the map, how might the weather have influenced Cornwallis's decision to surrender?

8. **Geographic Theme: Place** Based on the map above and information in your textbook on pages 212–213, explain how the geography of Yorktown led to the defeat of the British.

The End of the War

The war dragged on into its sixth year. In Britain, opposition to the war grew. Some British leaders began to think American independence would not be so bad.

The last year of the war was fought mostly in Virginia. Britain's General Cornwallis had set up a base at Yorktown on the Chesapeake Bay. From there his army could receive supplies by ship from New York.

- **Who was the commanding British General?**
- **What was the advantage for General Cornwallis to have a base set up at Yorktown?**

Meanwhile, French forces under the command of General Jean Rochambeau arrived in Rhode Island to help American troops. Washington learned that a large French fleet had also arrived from the West Indies. Here was a golden opportunity. The French fleet could cut Yorktown off from re-supply by sea. At the same time, he could cut Cornwallis off from the North. Cornwallis would then be trapped on land.

- **What country helped the Americans? How?**

Washington and Rochambeau marched south. When British ships tried to reach Cornwallis, French ships drove them back. The American and French troops began to bombard Yorktown. Cornwallis saw that he had no way out. On October 19, 1781, he surrendered his army of 8,000.

- **Was Washington's plan successful?**

Back in London, British leaders took the news hard. "It's all over!" gasped Lord North. Indeed, he and other British leaders were soon forced to resign. The defeat at the **Battle of Yorktown** convinced Britain's new leaders to begin peace talks with the Americans.