Snowball Technique

Step-by-Step

Introduce Resource Materials:
Begin by providing your students with various resource materials, such as texts, photos, and documents, that contain information relevant to the topic you’re teaching.

Individual Work:
Give your students approximately 10 minutes to read through the provided material. During this time, they should focus on identifying the key facts and essential details.

Graphic Organizer:
After reading, instruct the students to write down the main details on a graphic organizer. This organizer will serve as a tool to help them organize and synthesize the information.

Partner Collaboration:
Now, the students pair up with another student to form pairs. Each student takes turns becoming the “teacher” and explaining the information they gathered from the resource materials to their partner. This process allows them to reinforce their understanding and communication skills.

Group Formation:
Next, two pairs join together to form a group of four. Within this new group, the students repeat the process of sharing and explaining the information they have gathered. They also compare their notes and add any additional details to their graphic organizers.

Snowball Effect:
The groups of four members then combine to form groups of eight members, and the process continues. The students go over the key details once again, and each group member adds any new information to their organizers. This snowballing effect continues until the entire class works together as one large group.
Variations

Variation #1 - Jigsaw Activity

In this variation, divide the class into small groups and assign each group a different topic or concept to research and become experts on. After working alone and collaborating with a partner, the groups join with another group researching a different topic. In these new groups of four, each member presents their findings and shares their expertise. Finally, students move into groups of eight, where each member shares their results from previous groups. This method of communication creates a comprehensive understanding of all topics covered.

Variation #2 - Expert and Home Groups:

For this variation, divide the students into groups of four or five members, called the “Expert Group.” Each Expert Group discusses one portion of a task. After a specific time, the students move to “Home Groups,” which consist of one person from each Expert Group. In the Home Group, students share the information they gathered from their Expert Group.

This variation ensures that each student is responsible for teaching the Home Group a specific piece of information.

Variation #3 - Literature Circles:

Assign different books to small groups of students to read and analyze. Each student reads the book independently, then collaborates with a partner to discuss and analyze the texts. The two pairs of students then form a group of four to discuss the books. Finally, the class discusses the connections between the novels.

Variation #4 - Creative Writing:

Assign each student a different writing prompt or theme to develop into a short story or poem. After working independently, students collaborate with a partner to peer-edit and give feedback on their writing. The two pairs of students then join another group to share and workshop their writing, discussing different literary techniques and styles. Finally, the class works together to create a literary magazine featuring each students’ best writing pieces.
This section contains materials to practice using the ‘Snowball Technique.’ All of the sources tell about Cornwallis’s surrender at Yorktown on October 19, 1781.

The following materials are included:

• 4 texts
• 1 map
• 3 paintings
• This link goes to three videos on History.com. You will find the following videos:

  SIEGE OF YORKTOWN VIDEOS

  • American Victory at Yorktown (2 minutes)
  • Yorktown (3 minutes)
  • Washington at Yorktown (4 minutes)
  • The video Lord Cornwallis Surrenders to George Washington on Youtube is from Discovery Education.

Instructions:

1. The materials are designed for groups of four. Plan how the students will pair up and how pairs will partner together in groups of four before assigning materials. Be sure that when students are in groups of four, they have one set of materials.

2. Assign each student --

   • 1 text
   • 1 illustration
   • 1 video to watch (if Internet access is available)

3. The resources may be viewed on electronic devices if students have access to the Internet.

   If computers, iPads, etc. are not available in your classroom, print the texts (one text for each student). Instead of printing the paintings/map for students, one option is to show them to the entire class on a SmartBoard or similar device. You can omit using the videos.

4. As students view the material, have them create graphic organizers detailing the information. These organizers may be in the form of maps or webs.

5. After each individual reviews his material and creates a graphic organizer, partner students in pairs. Have the students compare notes and add additional details to their organizers. Be sure students understand they must explain information to partners.

6. Once pairs finish their organizers, have students move together in groups of four. Repeat the process of comparing notes and adding details to the organizers.
A SHORT HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES FOR SCHOOL USE
BY
EDWARD CHANNING
YORKTOWN.—From Wilmington Cornwallis marched to southeastern Virginia, where a British force under Benedict Arnold joined him. He then set off to capture Lafayette, who had been sent to defend Virginia from Arnold. But Lafayette retreated to the back country, till reinforcements came. When Cornwallis could drive him no farther, the British army retreated to the coast, and fortified itself at Yorktown.

In August Washington received word that a large French fleet under De Grasse was about to sail from the West Indies to Chesapeake Bay. He saw that the supreme moment had come. Laying aside his plan for an attack on New York, he hurried southward, marched his army to the head of Chesapeake Bay, and then took it by ships to Yorktown. The French fleet was already in the bay. Some French troops had joined Lafayette, and Cornwallis was already surrounded when Washington arrived. The siege was now pressed with overwhelming force, and Cornwallis surrendered on October 19, 1781.

END OF THE WAR.—Swift couriers carried the news to Philadelphia, where, at the dead of night, the people were roused from sleep by the watchman crying in the street, "Past two o'clock and Cornwallis is taken." In the morning Congress received the dispatches and went in solemn procession to a church to give thanks to God.

When the British prime minister, Lord North, heard the news, he exclaimed, "All is over; all is over!" The king alone remained stubborn, and for a while insisted on holding Georgia, Charleston, and New York. But his advisers in time persuaded him to yield, and (November 30, 1782) a preliminary treaty, acknowledging the independence of the United States, was signed at Paris. The final treaty was not signed till September 3, 1783.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES
BY JOHN BACH McMaster
WASHINGTON'S LAST BATTLE.

Washington had been fighting for seven years to drive the British soldiers out of this country. But there were still two strong British armies in America. One of these armies was in New York. It had been there for years. The other army was far away at Yorktown in Virginia. The British general at Yorktown was Cornwallis. You have read how Washington got away from him at Trenton. The King of France had sent ships and soldiers to help the Americans. But still Washington had not enough men to take New York from the British. Yet he went on getting ready to attack the British in New York. He had ovens built to bake bread for his men. He bought hay for his horses. He had roads built to draw his cannons on.

He knew that the British in New York would hear about what he was doing. He wanted them to think that he meant to come to New York and fight them. When the British heard what the Americans were doing, they got ready for the coming of Washington and the French. All at once they found that Washington had gone. He and his men had marched away. The French soldiers that had come to help him had gone with him. Nobody knew what it meant. Washington’s own men did not know where they were going. They went from New Jersey into Penn-syl-va-ni-a. Then they marched across Penn-syl-va-ni-a. Then they went into Mary-land. They marched across that State, and then they went into Vir-gin-i-a.

By this time everybody could tell where Washington was going. People could see that he was going straight to York-town. They knew that Washington was going to fight his old enemy at York-town.

But he had kept his secret long enough. The British in New York could not send help to Cornwallis. It was too late. The French ships sailed to Vir-gin-i-a, and shut up Yorktown on the side of the sea. Washington’s men shut it up on the side of the land. They built great banks of earth round it. On these banks of earth they put cannons. The British could not get away. They fought bravely. But the Americans and French came closer and closer.

Then the British tried to fight their way out. But they were driven back. Then Cornwallis tried to get his men across the river. He wanted to get out by the back door, as Washington had done. But the Americans on the other side of the river drove them back again. Washington had now caught Cornwallis in a trap.

The Americans fired red-hot cannon balls into Yorktown. These set the houses on fire. At last Cornwallis had to give up. The British marched out and laid down their guns and swords. The British army in New York could not fight the Americans by itself. So the British gave it up. Then there was peace after the long war. The British pulled down the British flag and sailed away. The country was free at last.

Stories of Great Americans for Little Americans
by Edward Eggleston
Cornwallis now saw clearly that he could not hope longer for success in the south, and having taken on fresh supplies, he marched northward to try his luck at Yorktown, Virginia. Washington, with an army of French and American troops, was at the time in camp on the Hudson River, waiting for the coming of the French fleet to New York. That city was still in the hands of the British. As soon as this fleet should arrive, Washington expected to attack the British army in New York by land, while the fleet attacked it by sea. But the French fleet was well on its way to the Chesapeake instead of to New York as expected. When this information came to Washington, he worked out a bold and brilliant scheme. It was to march his army as quickly and as secretly as possible to Yorktown, a distance of four hundred miles, there join the American army under Lafayette, and, combining with the French fleet on its arrival, capture the British under Cornwallis. This daring scheme succeeded so well that Cornwallis surrendered his entire army of eight thousand men on October 19, 1781. This important event, which practically ended the war, we shall speak of again. The surrender at Yorktown ended the fighting, although the treaty of peace was not signed until 1783. By that treaty the Americans won their independence from England. The country which they could now call their own extended from Canada to Florida, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River.

Stories of Later American History, by Wilbur F. Gordy

**Washington marches against Yorktown, and takes it and the army of Cornwallis.**—Washington, with his army, was then near New York City, watching the British there. The French king had done as he agreed, and had sent over warships and soldiers to help us; but so far they had never been able to do much. Now was the chance. Before the British knew what Washington was about, he had sent the French war-ships down to Yorktown to prevent Cornwallis from getting away by sea. Then, with his own army and some French soldiers besides, Washington quickly marched south to attack Yorktown by land.

When he got there he placed his cannon round the town, and began battering it to pieces. For more than a week he kept firing night and day. One house had over a thousand balls go through it. Its walls looked like a sieve. At last Cornwallis could not hold out any longer, and on October 19th, 1781, his army came out and gave themselves up as prisoners. The Americans formed a line more than a mile long on one side of the road, and the French stood facing them on the other side. The French had on gay clothes, and looked very handsome; the clothes of Washington's men were patched and faded, but their eyes shone with a wonderful light—the light of victory. The British marched out slowly, between the two lines: somehow they found it pleasanter to look at the bright uniforms of the French, than to look at the eyes of the Americans.

The Beginner's American History, by D. H. Montgomery
Surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown (1781)

This painting depicts the forces of British Major General Charles Cornwallis, 1st Marquess Cornwallis (1738-1805) (who was not himself present at the surrender), surrendering to French and American forces after the Siege of Yorktown (September 28 – October 19, 1781) during the American Revolutionary War. The United States government commissioned Trumbull to paint patriotic paintings, including this piece, for them in 1817, paying for the piece in 1820.
"Battle of Yorktown" (1781), Auguste Couder, 1836
Siege of Yorktown (1781)

Surrender of the British army of Lord Cornwallis to the combined armies of the United States of America and France commanded by Generals George Washington and Rochambeau at Yorktown and Gloucester, October 19, 1781. F: United States Army. G: Army Navy of France under the command of Count De Grasse. H: Chesapeake Bay. I: River of York. Hand-colored copper-engraving (crude in style); imaginary perspective view of Yorktown surrender, with many massed troops and mounted officers on plain at left, warships close to shore at right; uniform coloring incorrect. This is one of the few documents featuring the French naval blockade and land victory.
Visit my website at
http://bookunitsteacher.com/

Texts, paintings, and the map are all in the Public Domain.

Teachers Pay Teachers
http://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Gay-Miller

Visit me on Pinterest at
http://www.pinterest.com/linda-gay-miller/