

DE 250

1776 - 2026

Activity Book



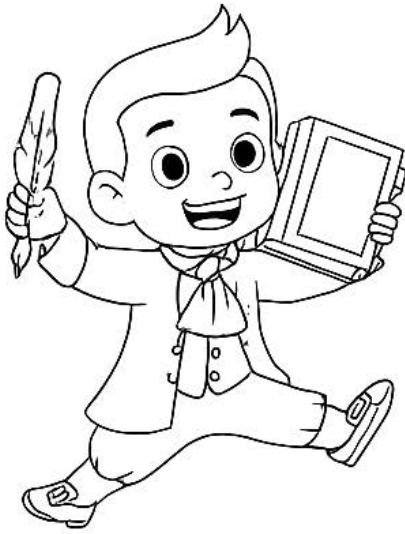


On July 4th, 2026, America will celebrate 250 years of being independent.

Delaware 250 is a group helping plan celebrations across the state. This special anniversary is a time to think about Delaware's story and how it helped our country. Delaware's story began long before 1776 and continues today. The people of our state have always played an important role in shaping our nation. This anniversary is a time to remember history and celebrate the stories that make Delaware and America special.

delaware250.org





This book belongs to



A long time ago, the three counties of Delaware were part of Pennsylvania, but Delaware had its own government and its own soldiers.

When the colonies started arguing with Great Britain, Delaware played a big role. In 1776, the Second Continental Congress met to talk about independence. Delaware sent three important leaders: **Thomas McKean**, **George Read**, and **Caesar Rodney**. One stormy night, Rodney rode through thunder and rain to cast the deciding vote for independence!

The people of Delaware worked hard to support the fight. They gave food and supplies to the army, cared for sick and hurt soldiers, and even made shoes and uniforms. Delaware soldiers were brave and fought in many battles during the war, even though the only battle in Delaware was the **Battle of Cooch's Bridge** in 1777.



Ride Rodney Ride!

Caesar Rodney jumped on his horse and rode as fast as he could for eighteen hours—more than eighty miles—through heavy rain and lightning.

Normally, the trip would take two days, but Rodney had to reach Philadelphia before an

important vote. He stopped only to change horses. Rodney burst into Independence Hall, tired and muddy, still wearing his riding spurs, just in time to cast Delaware's vote for independence. Because of Rodney's ride, Delaware helped the colonies declare independence, and the fight for freedom began.



Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania



DOVER

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation. — We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness — That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, — That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly we have suffered the longest Sufferance for these wrongs, which have been now nearly fifteen Years. But a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design that is not to alter only some of their particular Grievances, but that they will in all due time establish a Government, which shall have the same Object. Such has been the patient Sufferance of these Colonies, that they have now a unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America, — That the United Colonies by these presents do declare themselves free and independent States, absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

The Biggest Breakup Letter in History

The Declaration of Independence is the document that started our country. You could even call it the biggest breakup letter ever!

1. It explains why the colonies wanted to break up

Thomas Jefferson, who wrote the Declaration, said that Britain was not treating the colonies fairly. The colonies had rights and Britain was ignoring them.

2. It lists complaints

The Declaration has all the ways King George III treated the colonies unfairly, like making unfair taxes, closing local governments, and keeping British soldiers in the colonies.

3. It makes the split official

The colonies wrote: "We are free and independent states." They also signed the document, which made it official.

We, the Representatives of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. — And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

Barton Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
Geo. Walton

John Hooper
Joseph Hewes
John Adams

John Hancock

John Morrist
Benjamin Rush
Benjamin Franklin

George Wythe
John Linnard
John Lewis
Lewis Morris

Josiah Bartlett
Wm. Whipple
Sam. Adams

John Adams
Robt. Treat Paine
George Gerry

Samuel Chase
Wm. Paca
Thos. Stone
Edw. Carr of Carrollt

John Morton
George Taylor
John Smith

John Jay

Step. Hopkins

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee

James Wilson
G. Mifflin

Rich. Stockton
John Witherspoon
John Jay

William Ellery
Roger Sherman
John Huntington

Th. Jefferson
Wm. Harrison
Th. Nelson
Francis Pickens
Carler Braxton

Caspar Wray
Gerrit Smith
Theodorick Bland

John Kent
Abra. Clark

Oliver Wolcott
Northwell Traxton

Can you find the signatures of Delaware's Delegates?"



Write & sign your own Declaration of Independence

My Declaration

YOUR NAME

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Redcoats and Lobsters

During the American Revolution, British soldiers were called **Redcoats** because of their bright red uniforms. Patriots sometimes made fun of them and called them **Lobsters**, since their coats looked like a lobster's red shell! Redcoats fought against the Patriots, who wanted independence from Great Britain. The two sides faced off in many battles during the war for America's freedom.

REDCOAT



"You, sir, are a lobster"

PATRIOT



Date: _____ , _____
(month) (day) (year)

At _____, I was jolted awake by the sound of

(time of day)

_____.

(plural noun)

Sergeant _____ barked at us to get in

(name)

formation outside the _____.

(type of building)

We were ordered to march _____ miles toward

(number)

_____ to scout enemy movement. I

(place)

packed my _____, slung my _____

(object)

(object)

over my back, and grabbed a piece of _____

(food)

for the road.

Along the way, we saw _____s, passed a

(animal)

group of _____, and nearly stepped in

(plural noun)

a pile of _____.

(adjective)

(plural noun)

When we arrived, a guard shouted: " _____!"

(exclamation)

The _____ are coming!" I gripped my

(plural noun)

_____ tighter, took a deep

(object)

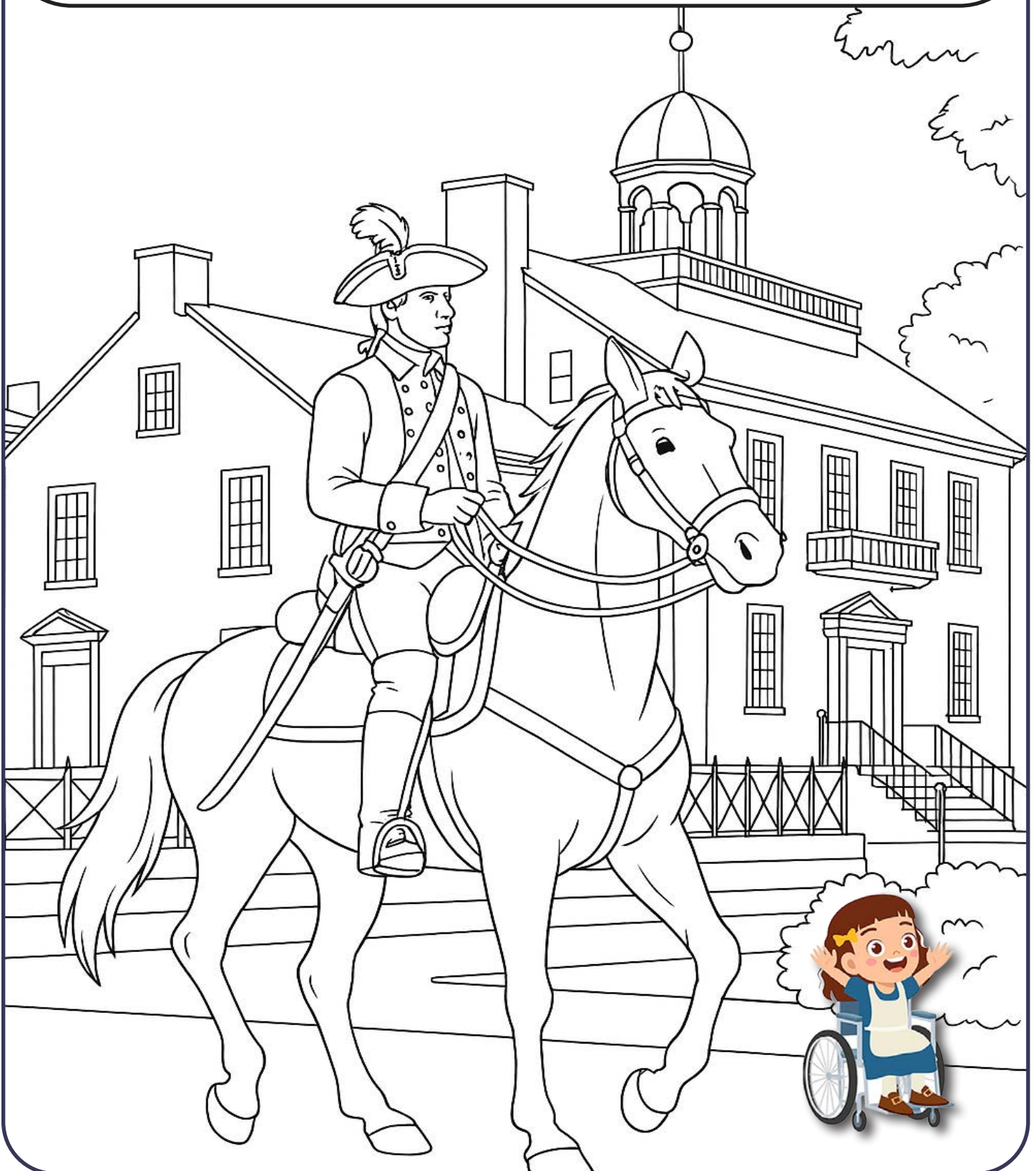
breath, and shouted, " _____!"

(exclamation)




Continental Dragoons

Dragoons were soldiers trained to fight on horseback and on foot. They carried swords and short, light muskets. These cavalymen also acted as scouts, gathering information and reporting back to the army.



Delaware Adventure Bingo

<input type="checkbox"/> Fort Delaware State Park DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Mobility and Command Museum DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Copeland Maritime Center at the Kalmar Nyckel Shipyard DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> John Dickinson Plantation DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Seaford Historical Society Museum DATE VISITED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Governor Ross Mansion DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> John Bell House DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Nanticoke Indian Museum DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware Public Archives DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Rehoboth Beach Historical Museum DATE VISITED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Zwaanendael Museum DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware State Police Museum DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> 	<input type="checkbox"/> Old State House DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Harrington Historical Society Museum DATE VISITED:
<input type="checkbox"/> The Amstel House DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware Aviation Museum DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Cannonball Maritime House DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Fort Miles Historical Area - Cape Henlopen State Park DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Old Town Hall Museum DATE VISITED:
<input type="checkbox"/> Hagley Museum and Library DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Historic Odessa Foundation DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Read House and Gardens DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Bowers Beach Maritime Museum DATE VISITED:	<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware History Museum DATE VISITED:

How many of these Delaware landmarks can you visit?

When you've visited five in a row, tell someone about your favorite place and what made it special!



Battle of Cooch's Bridge

The only battle of the Revolutionary War fought in Delaware took place on September 3, 1777, at Cooch's Bridge in New Castle County. General William Maxwell and his soldiers tried to slow down the British Army on its way to Philadelphia. This delay helped General George Washington's army get ready for the fight ahead.



Take a look around Battell's Tavern and spot **five** differences



Battell's Tavern (The Golden Fleece)

Battell's Tavern in Dover was the site of one of the most important moments in Delaware history. In 1787, delegates met here to talk about the new plan for America's government, called the U.S. Constitution. On December 7, Delaware voted **yes**, making it the **first state** to approve (ratify) the Constitution!



The Battle of Camden

On August 16, 1780, the American Army faced the British in Camden, South Carolina. On the right side of the battle line were troops from Delaware and Maryland. They kept fighting even after many other soldiers had run from the battlefield. Their leader, Baron de Kalb (shown here holding his sword), stayed with them until the very end. When the British army turned all its power on their line, the brave troops were finally forced to retreat, and Baron de Kalb was badly wounded.





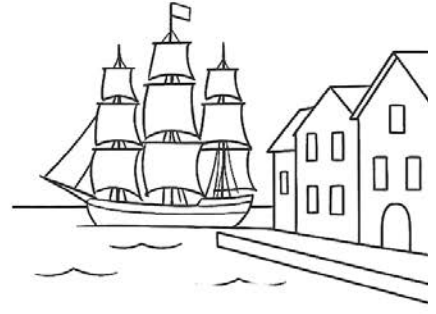
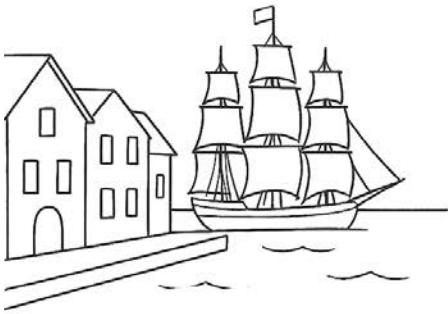
The Sound of Fifes and Drums

During the war, soldiers listened to drums and fifes to know what to do. The beat of the drum told them when to turn, march, or even load and fire their muskets! Music also helped wake them up in the morning, kept them moving during long days, and lifted their spirits in camp.



Privateers for Hire

During the Revolutionary War, British *privateers*—sailors with permission from the king to attack enemy ships—raided towns along Delaware’s coast. To fight back, Delaware’s leaders hired their own privateers. These local sailors used their ships to guard the Delaware Bay and River and protect nearby towns.



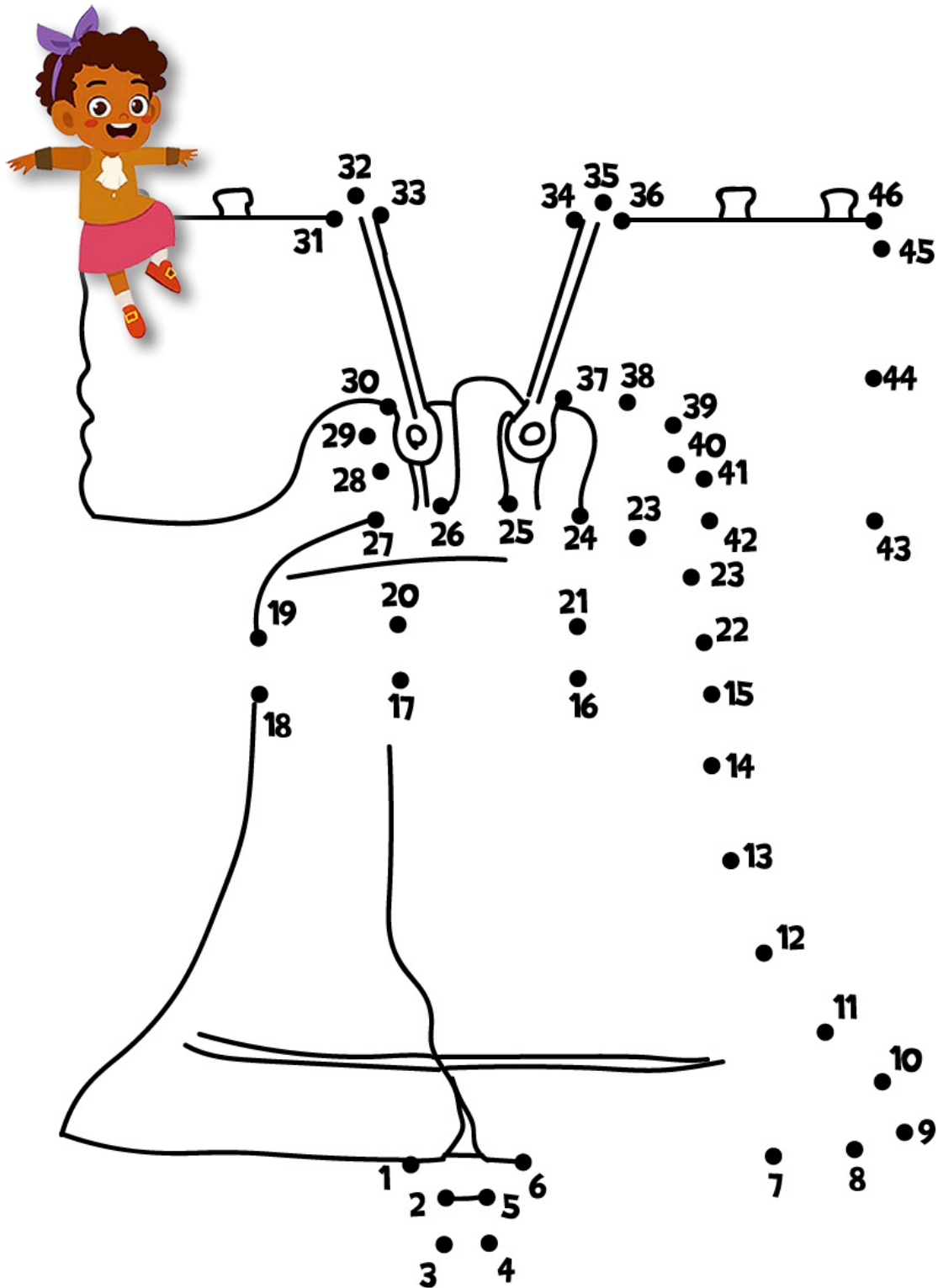
Imagine you’re a Delaware privateer!

What would you name your ship?

Draw a picture of your ship and the flag you’d fly.

Delaware's Liberty Bell

Delaware's Liberty Bell is on Legislative Mall in Dover. It was made in France in 1950, along with a bell for every state. The bell looks and sounds just like the original Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, which rang to celebrate American independence in 1776.



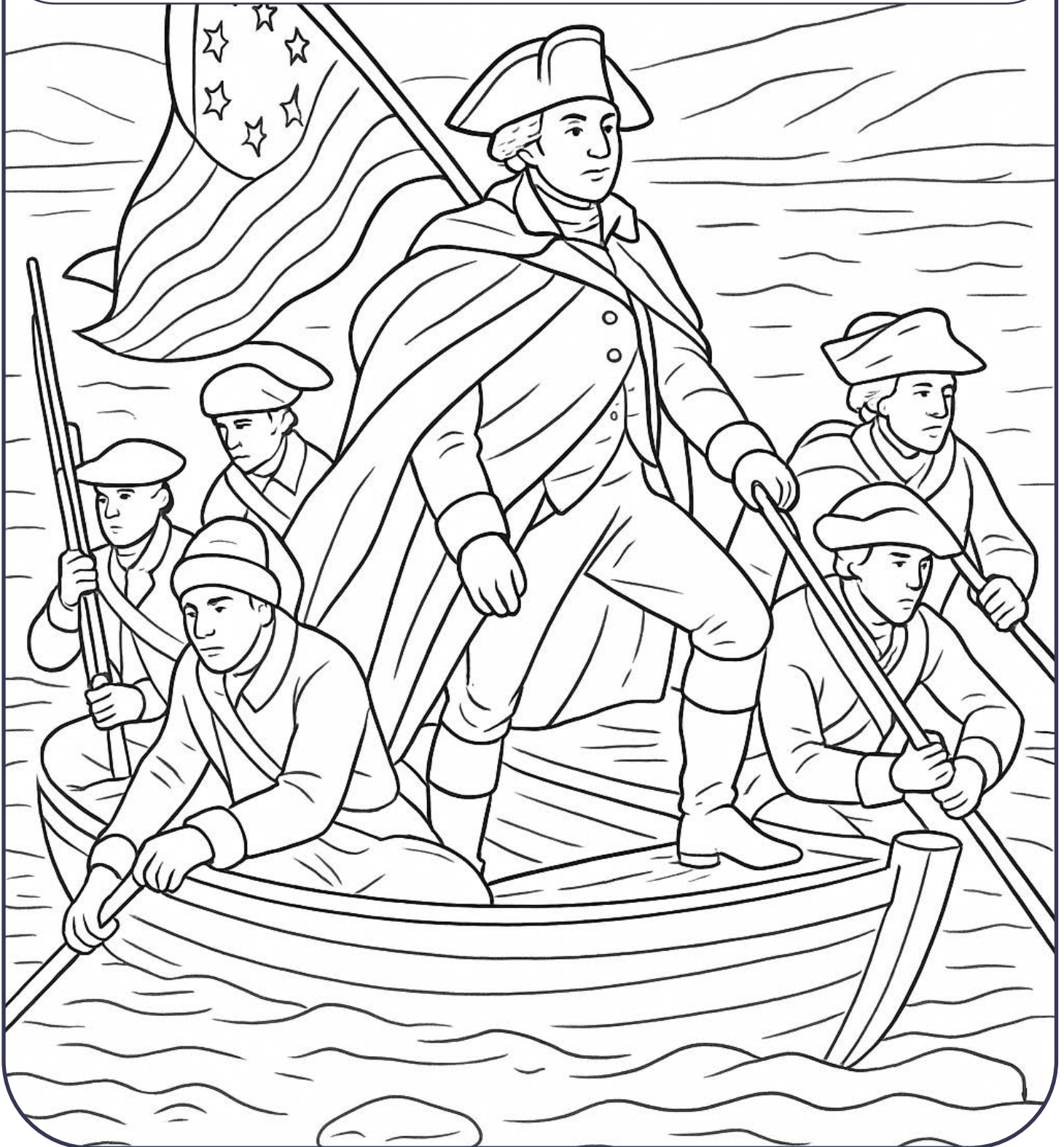
New Castle Court House

New Castle was the first capital of Delaware. It was here in 1776 that the people of New Castle, Kent, and Sussex Counties declared independence from both Pennsylvania and Great Britain. The New Castle Court House is one of the oldest courthouses in the United States and has been the site of many important events in Delaware's history.



Washington Crossing The Delaware

Just north of Delaware, General George Washington, the leader of the Continental Army, secretly crossed the icy Delaware River from Pennsylvania into New Jersey with his troops on Christmas Night in 1776. After a long freezing trip, Washington and his soldiers surprised the enemy and won an important battle the next morning. It was a brave and very cold adventure that helped America win its freedom!



Patriots v.s. Loyalists

Not everyone in the colonies agreed about breaking away from Great Britain. Some people were Loyalists, or Tories, who wanted to stay part of Britain. Others were Patriots, or Whigs, who wanted independence and a new country. At first, most colonists were Loyalists, but by the end of the war, many had become Patriots.

F I R A T I O N S L S K E C E J V S
B R K V E I B E S O O B S X A V D P
S F E P E H W L Q Y L G T H A H D M
H E I E R E D G F A D B A N X O S A
D Y I F D I Y O D L I A V T O M H O
R A C I E O V R J I E Y E W E E M M
U Z X I S R M A J S R O R L N F U Z
M C I M Q C F R T T G N N P W R S F
A Z U M C G Y Y R E W E N K I O K O
W I Q N A S D J E U E T L M S N E F
E T P E L I B E R T Y R J N S T T B
W Z Y O H A Q R J C S J K I M P H Z



Find these
hidden words!

MUSKET
SOLDIER
PRIVATEER
RATIONS
LIBERTY
DRUM

BAYONET
FIFE
FREEDOM
HOMEFRONT
TAVERN
LOYALIST

Fightin' Blue Hen Chickens

During the Revolutionary War, soldiers from Delaware brought along some game chickens from Kent County. These birds came from a famous Blue Hen known for being strong and brave in fights. The Delaware soldiers were so fearless in battle that people started comparing them to their fighting chickens—and that's how Delaware got its nickname, the *Fightin' Blue Hens*!



What is a Delaware Hundred?

The idea of a *hundred* came from Great Britain. In the late 1600s, William Penn used this system to divide Delaware's counties into areas of about one hundred families. Each hundred was used to collect taxes and hold local meetings. Delaware is the only state that still uses hundreds today!



Unscramble these Delaware Hundreds

QMPONUINIIPAKP _____

IDBLAKBR _____

NBDYWIERAN _____

DEPEARNC _____

DRE NOLI _____

UKDC KRCEE _____

IILLOMISPN _____

RACED KREEC _____

OGDASBOR _____

ROOGUMB _____

EIOTACNKN _____

ANSWERS: APPOQINIMINK, BLACKBIRD
 BRANDYWINE, PENCADER, RED LION
 DUCK CREEK, MISPELLION, CEDAR CREEK
 DAGSBORO, GUMBORO, NANTICOKE



Black Delawareans

Black Delawareans were an important part of the fight for independence. Some served as soldiers and drummers in the Delaware Regiment. Others worked on farms, carried food and supplies, or helped care for the sick and wounded. They fought for freedom even when they did not have the same rights as others.

***Did You Know?** Edward Harmon was a free Black soldier from Sussex County who fought bravely in the Revolutionary War. He served until the end of the war and later received a special pension for his service.*

Women of Delaware

Women played a big part in the Revolution! They cooked for soldiers, sewed uniforms, and cared for the sick. Some traveled with the army as “camp followers,” helping wherever they could. Others ran businesses, farms, and taverns while their husbands were away.

Washed Clothes



Helped The Sick



Cooked Meals



Match the Job!

Draw a line to match each woman's job with the tool she might have used.

Helpers From Spain

Delaware wasn't alone in the fight for independence. People from other countries helped too! Spain sent supplies and soldiers, and a Spanish leader named **Bernardo de Gálvez** helped fight the British along the Gulf Coast. The fight for liberty reached far beyond Delaware's borders!

***Fun Fact:** Spain's Governor Bernardo de Gálvez sent food, guns, and soldiers to help the American cause.*



Many People, One Revolution

The American Revolution wasn't fought by just a few famous leaders. People of all backgrounds helped in the fight for freedom on the battlefield, at home, and across the world.



Lenape and Nanticoke: The First Delawareans

Long before the American Revolution, the **Lenape** and **Nanticoke** peoples lived across the land we now call Delaware. They built villages near rivers, fished, hunted, and grew crops like corn and beans.

During the Revolution, they worked to protect their land and people. Some built friendships with nearby towns, while others moved away to avoid the fighting. Both nations kept their traditions alive.



Think About It!

If you lived during the American Revolution, how would you help the fight for freedom? Would you carry supplies, write letters, fight in battle, or care for the soldiers? Draw or write your answer below!

Quiz

1. Cooch's Bridge was the only Revolutionary War battle fought in Delaware.

True False

2. The Delaware Continentals nickname was the Fightin' Blue Crabs.

True False

3. Caesar Rodney rode a horse in the middle of the night to Boston.

True False

4. Dover has always been Delaware's state capital.

True False

5. Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence.

True False

6. Delaware citizens provided food and supplies for the army.

True False

7. The soldiers used walkie-talkies to communicate with each other.

True False

8. Baron de Kalb signed the Declaration of Independence for Delaware.

True False

9. The British used privateers to attack Delaware's waterways.

True False

10. British soldiers wore blue coats.

True False

11. Soldiers trained to fight on horseback were called "dragons."

True False

12. Women who cooked for soldiers, sewed uniforms, cared for the sick, and traveled the army were known as "camp followers."

True False

13. Spanish leader Bernardo de Gálvez sent helicopters to help the American cause.

True False

14. Washington crossing the Delaware happened in Delaware.

True False

15. The Lenape and Nanticoke were some of the first people to live in Delaware.

True False

16. On December 7, 1787, Delaware became the first state to ratify the U.S. Constitution.

True False

17. Everyone in the colonies agreed about breaking away from Great Britain in the 1770s.

True False

18. Delaware's Liberty Bell has been at Christiana Mall since 1950.

True False

19. Soldiers listened to drums and fifes to know when to load and fire their muskets.

True False

20. Delaware is divided into one hundred British hundreds.

True False

SCORE:

20 correct - Huzzah! You are a true Delaware patriot!

15-19 correct - Excellent knowledge of history!

10-14 correct - You're paying attention! Good work!



Road To Liberty

Step Into the Story of Delaware's Fight for Freedom

Students visiting the Delaware Public Archives can now play our fun, brand-new board game while learning about Delaware's role in the American Revolution!



Ages 7+
10 Minutes
2 to 5
Players

Research Room Hours
Monday-Friday 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
121 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. North
Dover, DE 19901



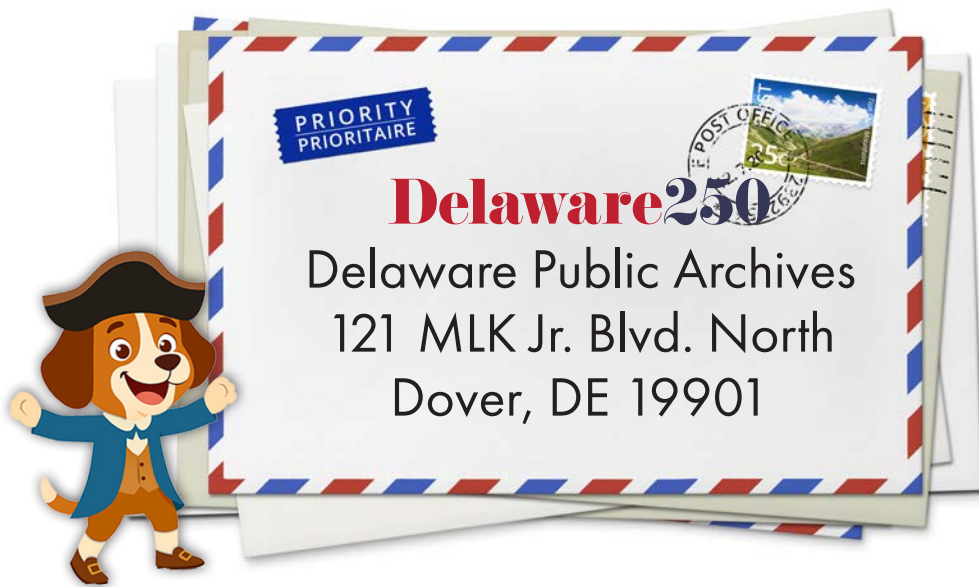
Scan the QR Code to download the board game!

To me, **Delaware** is...

It might be a place, a memory, a feeling. Your thought on Delaware's history, or your hope for the future. It might be food, a song, a family tradition.

**Whatever Delaware means to you,
we want to hear it!**

The 250th anniversary of America's independence is a chance to reflect on Delaware's past and present, and to look to the future. Write to us and tell us what Delaware means to you.



Share your voice and be part of #DE250!

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