

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The War of 1812

The War of 1812 was a three-year war between the United States and Britain. James Madison was the US President at the time of this war. The War of 1812 was caused by the fact that Napoleon sold the Louisiana territory to the United States. He did this to make money for his own war in Europe. One of the countries that Napoleon was warring with was Britain.

France and Britain both wanted the United States to take sides in their war with Napoleon, but Madison strove to keep the US neutral. As the warring in Europe continued, this neutrality became more difficult to maintain.

The British troops began stopping American ships in order to force sailors with British heritage into working for the British navy. In addition to forcing sailors aboard American ships into serving in the British navy, British forces continued to occupy forts in America that were supposed to have been vacated after the Revolutionary War.

During this time, there was also a group of American politicians that wanted to take over Canada, which was currently owned by Britain. This group was called the War Hawks. They put continual pressure on Madison, trying to get him to agree to seize Canada. In 1812, The United States declared war on Britain.

During the War of 1812, American and British forces fought by sea and by land. The U.S.S. *Constitution* was one of the most famous American warships. It was nicknamed *Old Ironsides*. In 1813, British troops attacked the US from the Canadian border. The British, under the leadership of Commander Oliver Perry, won a battle with American forces on Lake Erie.

British forces marched on Washington, D.C. in 1814. Dolley Madison, the First Lady, had only left the White House a few days prior to the arrival of the British troops. When the British arrived, they found the White House empty, and they set it (as well as other buildings) on fire.

After their march on Washington, the British troops bombed Fort McHenry in Baltimore, Maryland. History tells us that this battle lasted twenty-five hours, and Americans watched the fort to see if the US flag was still flying above the fort. Francis Scott Key was one of the Americans that nervously watched the fort. He later wrote a poem about the battle. This poem was set to music and became the national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."

In December of 1814, the US and Britain signed a peace treaty. At the time, news traveled slowly, and many military leaders did not learn of the treaty until after more battles were fought. The Battle of New Orleans took place in January of 1815. Two thousand British soldiers and fifty American soldiers died during this battle, and it was a battle that should not have even happened due to the peace treaty. Even though the Battle of New Orleans did not need to happen, it made Andrew Jackson, the American general in charge, a national hero.

There is no clear winner to the War of 1812. Britain kept their land in Canada, but they also finally left the United States for good. Britain realized that the United States was now powerful enough to be able to defend itself, and the United States gained respect internationally. The War of 1812 put an end to the Federalist Party. Many Federalists had opposed the war, and they lost their political power after the war.

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## The War of 1812 Questions

### Fill In:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was the US President at the time of the 1812 war.
2. The War of 1812 was caused by the fact that Napoleon sold the \_\_\_\_\_ territory to the United States.
3. The group of American politicians that wanted to take over Canada, which was then owned by Britain was called \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The U.S.S. \_\_\_\_\_ was one of the most famous American warships and was nicknamed *Old Ironsides*.
5. The British, under the leadership of Commander \_\_\_\_\_, won a battle with American forces on Lake Erie.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ wrote the poem about the bombing of Fort McHenry in Baltimore, which later became the national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner."
7. The War of 1812 put an end to the \_\_\_\_\_ Party.

### Multiple Choice:

8. The War of 1812 lasted for:
  - a. One year
  - b. Two years
  - c. Three years
  - d. Four years
9. The War Hawks put pressure on the President to:
  - a. Seize Canada
  - b. Go into war with Britain
  - c. Sign a treaty with Britain
  - d. Side with France in the war

### True or False:

- \_\_\_\_ 10. Britain is considered the definite winner to the War of 1812.
- \_\_\_\_ 11. British forces never reached Washington D.C. during the War of 1812.
- \_\_\_\_ 12. Once the treaty was signed between the U.S. and Britain, in December 1814, all the fighting and battles stopped immediately.

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## The War of 1812 Answers

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