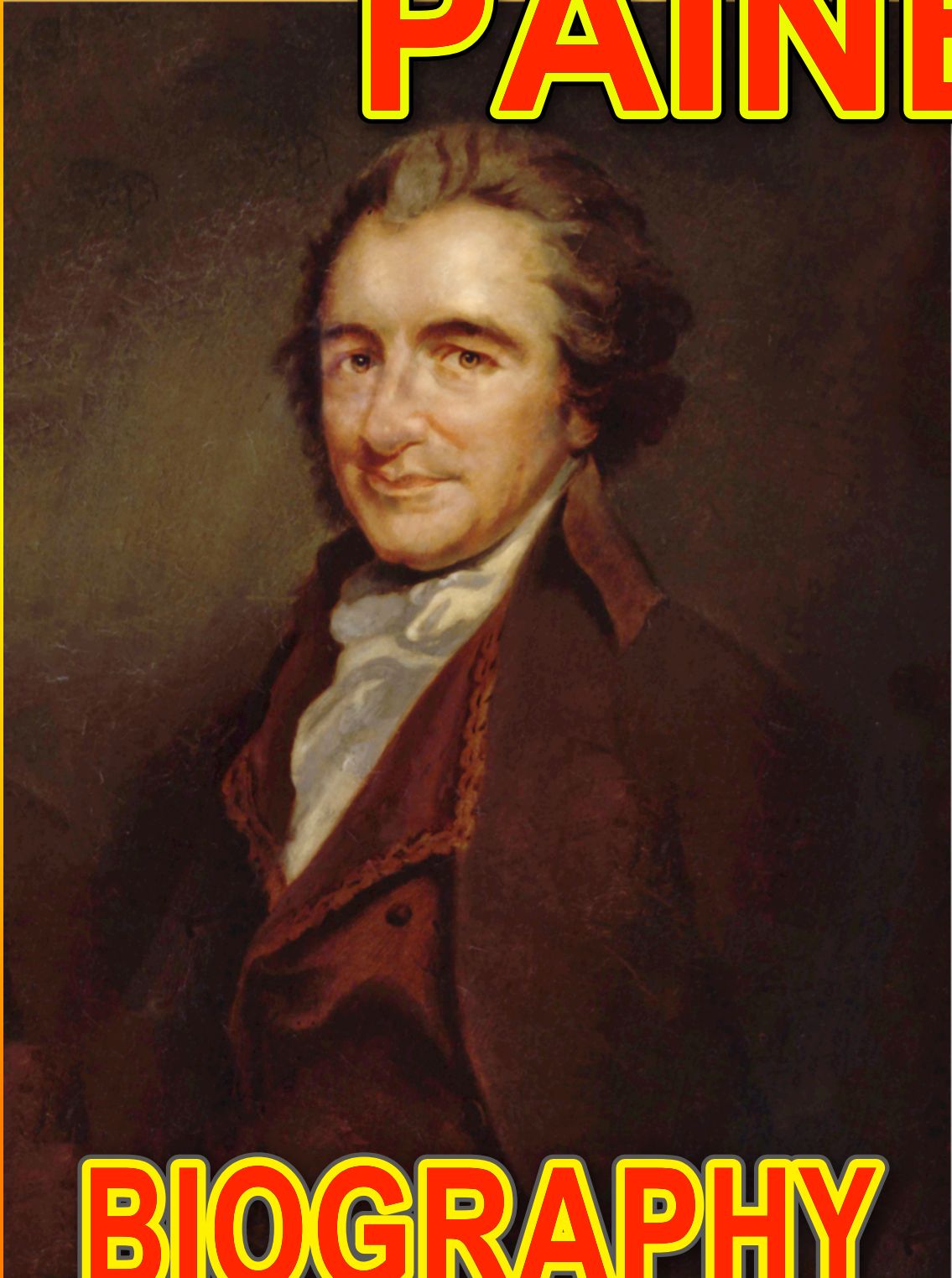


THOMAS PAINE



BIOGRAPHY

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Thomas Paine was born in England in 1737. He worked for his father's rope-making business, and later as an excise officer collecting taxes. Paine's life in England was not easy, as his wife and child died in childbirth, and the rope-making business then failed. What's more, in 1772, Paine published a piece of writing that argued for excise officers to be paid more, which led to him losing his job at the excise office.

But Paine's fortunes changed when he met intellectual Benjamin Franklin in England. Franklin recognized Paine's writing skills, and encouraged him to move to America, which was building towards a revolution against Britain at the time.

Using Franklin's connections, Paine moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and found work as a magazine editor at the beginning of 1775. He also started writing and publishing his own writings, including his views against the slave trade.

In April 1775, the battles of Lexington and Concord marked the real start of the Revolutionary War. Paine supported the idea of America going fully independent from Britain, and he wrote about his ideas in a piece called 'Common Sense'. It sold more than 500,000 copies and brought the issues of revolution and independence to a wider audience. On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was signed.

During the war, Paine wrote the 'Crisis' papers, which inspired patriot troops when times were hard. George Washington had them read to all his troops at Valley Forge to bring them strength during the harsh winter. The first "Crisis" paper begins like this:

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny like hell is not easily conquered yet we have this consolation with us, the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly; it is dearness only that give everything its value."

After the Revolutionary War, Paine traveled to Europe. There, he supported the French Revolution, and ended up in prison. But he later returned to America, and he died on June 8, 1809, in New York.

Understanding words

Before we can understand a story we have to know what all of the words mean. Let's try one...

a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'supported'.

b From that sentence, suggest what 'supported' means.

c Write a new sentence using the word 'supported'.

d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'supported'.

e Draw a small picture showing what you think 'supported' means.

Finding key words

Next, we need to find the key words that tell us what the story is about...

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list like the one below. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym). You don't have to use all the spaces, but you should not use more.

Key word	Synonym (similar word)
Example: views	opinions

Sequencing

Sequencing means getting the events in the right order. Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense.

Paine also wrote pieces that George Washington used to inspire his troops at Valley Forge.

After Paine met Benjamin Franklin, he moved to Pennsylvania.

In 1776, the Declaration of Independence was signed.

At the time, America was heading towards revolution against British rule.

'Common Sense' brought ideas of revolution and independence to a wide audience.

Thomas Paine was born in England in 1737.

In 1775, the Revolutionary War began, and Paine wrote 'Common Sense'.

Get to the facts

1 Where was Thomas Paine born?

2 Who did Paine meet in England?

3 Where did Paine move to?

4 What did Paine write in 1775?

5 Who read Paine's 'Crisis' papers to troops?

Make a story...

When you read a description it often gives you ideas about how the event might be described differently.

Valley Forge

Imagine you are a soldier spending winter in harsh conditions. You feel miserable, and have little hope. But then you hear a reading of Paine's 'Crisis' paper... (now complete the story)

Below is a plain text version for printing:

Understanding words:

- a Write the sentence in which you found the word 'supported'.
- b From that sentence, suggest what 'supported' means.
- c Write a new sentence using the word 'supported'.
- d Use a dictionary to find words with a similar meaning (synonyms) to 'supported'.
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Finding key words:

Read the story and underline the key words. Write the most important of these key words in a list. Write next to it a word that means a similar thing (a synonym).

For example:

Key word – views Synonym – opinions

Sequencing:

Write these sentences in the correct order, so they make sense:

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