

# SAR Historical Summary Guidelines

Current as of: March 6, 2017

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## A. An SAR Historical Summary

Our purpose for asking authors to create an **SAR Historical Summary** of their article is to use that summary to encourage young people to read the source article. These are the young people who will enter our SAR Elementary School Poster Contest and our SAR Middle School Brochure Contest. We know young people first turn to the Internet for information. In conjunction with Colleen O. Wilson, Director of SAR CAAH, we plan to publish the summary and the article (or a link to the SAR Magazine) on the Internet.

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## B. Authorship: "SAR Historical Summary"

1. Anyone, SAR member, non-member, is invited to write a draft, following these guidelines, on an American revolutionary war era historical event, person or document.
  2. Ideally, the subject would relate to one of the known NSSAR Americanism Contest topics or themes. (See **E. Topics / Themes** below )
  3. Papers not specifically related to known NSSAR Americanism Contest topics or themes could be a resource for high school students participating in the SAR Knight Essay Contest.
  4. The draft should be submitted to the Chairman of the **NSSAR History Committee** for consideration.
  5. The approving agent for published SAR Historical Summaries is the **NSSAR History Committee**.
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## C. Characteristics of an SAR Historical Summary:

1. Target Audience: Elementary school age, and middle school age children, who are entrants in SAR Americanism Poster and SAR Brochure contests. Also, high school students entering the SAR Knight Essay contest are a potential audience.
2. Medium: PDF format document
3. Primary Delivery: the Internet; Secondary Delivery: hardcopy document
4. Length: one to two pages in length, maximum
5. Reading Level: (see Section D – Reading Level)
6. Sections of Summary
  - 6.1. Overview
    - 6.1.1. Outline
    - 6.1.2. Include dates, facts, involved persons and figures related to the theme
  - 6.2. Key Points
    - 6.2.1. Select Key Points to highlight why certain principles, tenets, concepts, ideas related to the theme are important to us and to our nation
  - 6.3. Link to the Source Article
7. Availability

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- 7.1. Referenced on SAR.org webpages of Americanism Contests
  - 7.2. Apply a Search Engine Optimization (SEO) strategy in Summaries to increase hits on the Internet – Critical aspect to see that our summaries appear high in the search.
  - 7.3. Ideally, one could do a search on: “SAR Historical Summaries” and have our entire inventory of recommended historical summaries appear on the screen.
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### D. Reading Level:

1. While the target audience ranges from elementary school age children constructing a Poster through high school students preparing an essay, the target reading level is recommended to be: **8<sup>th</sup> Grade**.
  2. Preparing text to a target reading level is not a simple task, and may be beyond the skill of most writers. Consequently, the author, or the History Committee may need to seek professional assistance to position the draft text at the target reading level.
  3. Not achieving the target reading level on a paper should not be a bar against publication. Subsequent revisions could move the text closer to the desired reading level.
  4. MS Word contains a reading level check function – the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score. Set the Readability Statistics flag, (MS Word uses the Flesch Reading Ease scale to indicate the relative complexity of written text. This system uses an analysis that is based on the average number of syllables per word and words per sentence.)
  5. While Dr. Schrader’s source article “*The Stamp Act*” tested at Grade 12.6, he was able to create an SAR Historical Summary at Grade Level 7.3. He acknowledged this was not a simple task. Outside assistance may be needed at times to properly set the reading level of our published SAR Historical Summaries.
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### E. Topics / Themes:

The theme for the Poster Contest varies annually. The theme for the Brochure Contest is to choose one of the five (5) Foundational Documents of the United States: Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Federalist Papers. Several more topics will come from the articles written in support of the Anniversary of the 250th American Revolutionary War.

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### F. Origin:

This guideline is based upon the ‘History Committee Template Subcommittee Progress Report’ presented February 13, 2015 to the NSSAR History Committee. Committee members: *Dr. David Eugene Schrader; LtC Douglas MacDonald Wood USA; CDR Charles Roderick (Chuck) Lampman USN (Ret.); and Thomas Cayle Adams*

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## G. Example:

### SAR Historical Summary

Communicating Historical Events Connected with the American Revolution

#### **The Stamp Act**

By: Dr. David E. Schrader

#### **Overview**

After the French and Indian War the English government was badly in debt. In 1765 the Prime Minister decided to raise money by taxing on paper products in the American colonies. It was known as the Stamp Act. The American colonists were strongly against the Stamp Act. They said it was “taxation without representation.” The Stamp Act tax was only collected for less than four months. Yet in many ways it was the key event that led to the American Revolution. It unified the American colonies. It caused almost all the American newspapers to oppose English rule. And it started the growth of “Sons of Liberty” groups in the colonies.

#### **Key Points**

- The Stamp Act was passed to help England pay its debt from the French and Indian War.
- The Stamp Act lasted less than four months.
- The American colonists thought the Stamp Act was “taxation without representation.”
- The Stamp Act unified the colonies by leading to the Stamp Act Congress.
- The Stamp Act led the colonial newspapers to unite against English rule.
- The Stamp Act led to the “Sons of Liberty” groups throughout the colonies.
- The Stamp Act was a big step toward the American Revolution.

#### **References**

Morgan, Edmund S. “Colonial Ideas of Parliamentary Power 1764 – 1766.” *William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 3. (July, 1948). pp. 311 – 341.

Morgan, Edmund, and Helen Morgan. *The Stamp Act Congress: Prologue to the American Revolution*. Collier, 1976.

Schlesinger, Arthur M. “The Colonial Newspapers and the Stamp Act,” *The New England Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No 1. (March 1936). pp. 63 – 83.

Thomas, Peter D.G. *British Politics and the Stamp Act Crisis: The First Phase of the American Revolution*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.

Weslager, C.A. *The Stamp Act Congress*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1976.

#### **Link**

Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) Magazine article, Issue Fall 2015 Volume 110 No. 2: “250 Years Ago – The Stamp Act” by Dr. David E. Schrader, MASSAR

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