

Read the story. Then answer the questions that follow.

# Soldiers, Sleds, and Sam

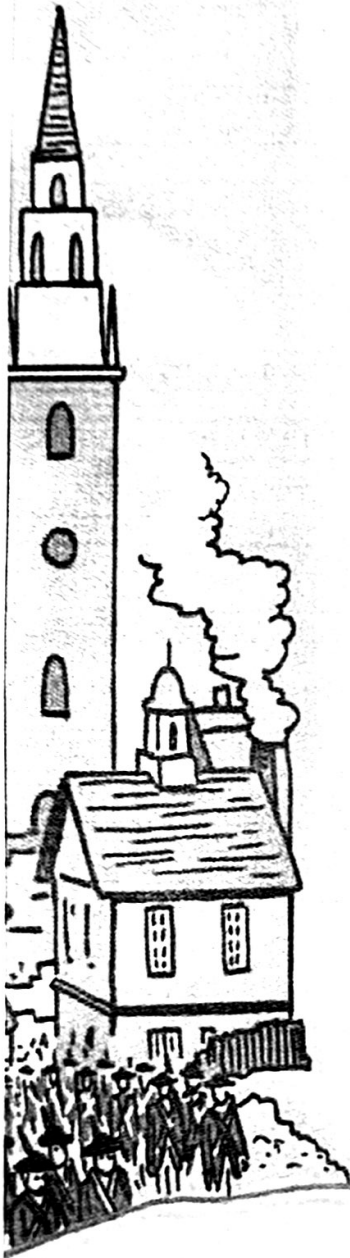
by Elizabeth Weiss Vollstadt

- 1 The snow squeaked beneath their boots as the three boys tramped toward Sherburn's Hill, their favorite sledding hill in all of Boston. The streets were quiet that snowy January morning in 1775, with only a tight group of British soldiers marching boldly past the silent houses.
- 2 The boys ignored the soldiers, being used to them. A few thousand British troops were now in Boston, hoping to crush the colonists' growing **rebellion** against the king and his laws.
- 3 "Hurry, Sam," called Edward. "We're going to be late again!"

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**rebellion** = a fight or protest against a ruling power

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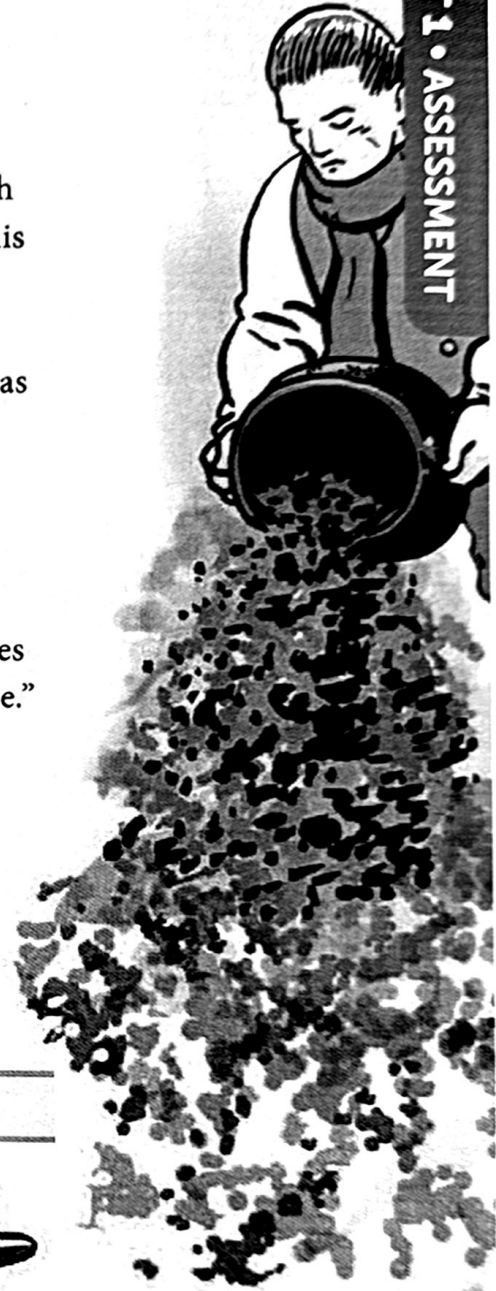


- 4 Sam struggled to keep up with his brother and their friend Joshua, but his stiff right leg slowed him down. Every step reminded Sam of that awful day last spring when a British officer had come to his father's blacksmith shop. Sam had been proudly holding the horse's leg for his father, but when the officer entered, the surprised horse had kicked hard, and a bone in Sam's leg cracked. The break hadn't healed properly after that. Since the bone was never set right, his leg still hurt.
- 5 Now Sam's cheeks turned red when Joshua said, "I thought we were going to get there early today before General Haldimand's **aide** came out."
- 6 Sam protested, "It's not my fault the aide sprinkles ashes on our sledding hill when he cleans the general's fireplace."
- 7 Joshua looked up and groaned, "Oh no, late again." A man was standing in the middle of Sherburn's Hill, trampling the snow and scattering ashes.
- 8 "Well, that's it," said Edward, kicking the sled. "If we'd gotten here sooner, we could have had a few good runs before he ruined our hill."

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**aide** = assistant

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- 9 Sam jammed his icy fingers into his pockets, lifted his chin, and said, “I may be slow, but I’m not afraid of the **Redcoats**. I’ll get the aide to stop.”
- 10 The two older boys hooted with laughter. “You?” said Joshua. “What can you do?”
- 11 “I’ll—” Sam hesitated. What could he do? Then he looked at the aide again and said, “I’ll tell him to scatter the ashes someplace else.”
- 12 He started up the hill, Edward and Joshua following. The cold wind bit into Sam’s cheeks, but he kept going until he reached the aide.
- 13 “Please, sir,” Sam said, “I . . . I’d like to make a request.” Sam wanted to run, but he had come too far. “Could you scatter the ashes someplace else? They ruin the snow and we can’t sled.”
- 14 The aide laughed, but it wasn’t a happy sound. “It is not for colonist children to tell the British army what to do. Now run along before I—”
- 15 Sam didn’t hear the rest, as Edward grabbed his arm and pulled him away.
- 16 “Come on,” he said.
- 17 Sam followed Edward and Joshua, but his thoughts raced. This was so unfair! Sledding was the one time he could go fast without worrying about his injured leg. “Stop!” Sam called suddenly. “I’m going to see General Haldimand himself.”
- 18 “Then you’re going alone,” said Joshua. “He’ll never listen to us.”
- 19 Edward looked at Joshua. “We’d better stay with Sam,” he said. “Ma will blame me if anything happens to him.”
- 20 Sam headed for the general’s house. He could feel his heart—thump . . . thump . . . thump—like the steady beat of a drum. He stopped at the heavy wooden door, his knees shaking. But he lifted his hand, made a fist, and pounded as hard as he could. A young soldier opened the door.

**Redcoats** = British soldiers

- 21** “Who is it, private?” a voice boomed from inside. “Let them in and close the door! The wind will blow my fire out!” The three boys crowded into the hall to find a big man in a red uniform standing in a doorway. “I’m General Haldimand,” the man said. He led them into his office. Flames leaped about in a huge stone fireplace.
- 22** Sam swallowed. “Well, sir . . .” he began. He told the general about the hill and the ashes. “We are free citizens of Boston, and you have no right to destroy our hill,” he continued.
- 23** General Haldimand frowned, and Edward tugged at Sam’s sleeve. “Let’s go,” Edward whispered, but this time Sam stood his ground. For ten long seconds, no one moved.
- 24** Then the general raised his hands. “You win, my lad,” he said, smiling. “There are already bad feelings between our army and the people of Boston. I shall not add to them, and I will give orders that my aide repair the damage and no longer scatter ashes on your hill.”
- 25** Back outside, Joshua and Edward whooped and shouted in the falling snow. Edward draped his arm around Sam’s shoulder, and Joshua patted Sam on the back. “You can have the first sled ride tomorrow,” he said.
- 26** Sam’s eyes shone. His sled would fly faster than anyone’s! The boys tramped home together through the snow, and no one told Sam to hurry up—not once.







# Respond to Text

## Reread/Think

### 1. PART A

What inference can be made from paragraphs 1 and 2?

- Ⓐ The boys have never been sledding.
- Ⓑ The boys are interested to learn about the soldiers.
- Ⓒ The soldiers have been in Boston for a long time.
- Ⓓ The soldiers are avoiding the boys.

### PART B

Fill in the bubble **before one** sentence that **best** supports the answer to Part A.

Ⓐ The snow squeaked beneath their boots as the three boys tramped toward Sherburn's Hill, their favorite sledding hill in all of Boston. Ⓑ The streets were quiet that snowy January morning in 1775, with only a tight group of British soldiers marching boldly past the silent houses.

Ⓒ The boys ignored the soldiers, being used to them. Ⓓ A few thousand British troops were now in Boston, hoping to crush the colonists' growing rebellion against the king and his laws. (paragraphs 1 and 2)

### 2. PART A

What does the word properly mean in paragraph 4?

- Ⓐ correctly
- Ⓑ hopefully
- Ⓒ painlessly
- Ⓓ quickly

### PART B

Which phrase from paragraph 4 is the **best** context clue for the meaning of properly?

- Ⓐ "that awful day last spring"
- Ⓑ "proudly holding the horse's leg"
- Ⓒ "a bone in Sam's leg cracked"
- Ⓓ "the bone was never set right"

3. Reread paragraph 5. Why do Sam's cheeks turn red?
- (A) He is in pain.
  - (B) He is out of breath.
  - (C) He is very cold.
  - (D) He is embarrassed.
4. What conflict are the three boys trying to solve at the beginning of the story?
- (A) They are arguing with each other about who is faster.
  - (B) They are unable to go sledding on their favorite hill.
  - (C) They are angry about how the British soldiers talk to them.
  - (D) They are cold and have nowhere to go to get warm.
5. What is the **most** important plot event in paragraphs 7–10?
- (A) Joshua looks up and groans.
  - (B) Edward kicks his sled.
  - (C) Sam decides to stop the aide.
  - (D) The older boys laugh at Sam.
6. Reread paragraphs 9–11. What does the dialogue reveal about Sam?
- (A) Sam plans to trick the older boys.
  - (B) Sam believes in himself.
  - (C) Sam can run faster than the older boys.
  - (D) Sam likes to make jokes.
7. Reread paragraph 17. Which word **best** describes Sam in this moment?
- (A) worried
  - (B) determined
  - (C) confused
  - (D) frightened

8. Which detail from paragraphs 17–21 should be included in a summary of the story?

- Ⓐ Sam says he is going to speak to the general directly about their hill.
- Ⓑ At the general's house, a young soldier opens the door for Sam.
- Ⓒ The general tells the private to close the door so the fire stays lit.
- Ⓓ In the general's office, the boys see flames in a huge stone fireplace.

9. Fill in the bubbles **before two** sentences that **best** support the inference that Sam is feeling worried.

Ⓐ Sam headed for the general's house. Ⓑ He could feel his heart—thump . . . thump . . . thump—like the steady beat of a drum. Ⓒ He stopped at the heavy wooden door, his knees shaking. Ⓓ But he lifted his hand, made a fist, and pounded as hard as he could. Ⓔ A young soldier opened the door.  
(paragraph 20)

**10. SHORT RESPONSE** Write a summary of "Soldiers, Sleds, and Sam" that includes the theme.

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- 11.** Which phrase **best** describes how Joshua and Edward feel at the end of the story?
- Ⓐ grateful to the general
  - Ⓑ frustrated with Sam
  - Ⓒ afraid of the general
  - Ⓓ proud of Sam

**12.** Fill in **one** bubble in each row to show how the setting changes in the story.

	First	Second	Third
the general's house	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ
a quiet, snowy street	Ⓓ	Ⓔ	Ⓕ
the sledding hill	Ⓖ	Ⓗ	Ⓘ

**Write**

**EXTENDED RESPONSE** How does the theme of “Soldiers, Sleds, and Sam” develop in the story? Use details from the story to support your response.

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**WRITING CHECKLIST**

- I stated the theme of the story.
- I used at least two details from the story to explain how the theme develops.
- I described the problem and solution.
- I used complete sentences.
- I used correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.