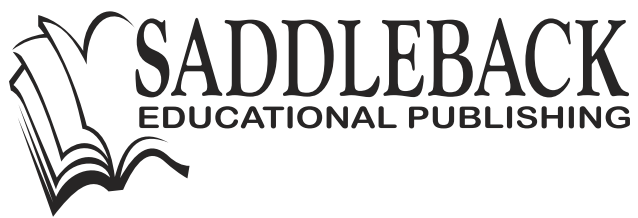


Focus **ON READING**

*My Brother
Sam Is Dead*

LISA FRENCH



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*Focus Your Reading**Vocabulary Words to Know*

Study the following words and definitions. You will meet these words in your reading. Be sure to jot down in your word journal any other unknown words from the reading.

ammunitions—explosives, bullets, and other materials used by the military

massacred—killed; slaughtered

prevail—to be successful through persistent effort

constitutes—forms; composes; makes up

vicious—fierce; savage; cruel

civil—polite; courteous

triumphant—proud of a victory or conquest

inscription—something specially written or engraved, often to autograph or dedicate something

subversion—working secretly to overthrow a government

cordial—warm; gracious

Things to Know

Here is some background information about this section of the book.

Captain (later General) Benedict Arnold was a skilled and daring Patriot leader in the early years of the Revolutionary War. In 1780, however, he betrayed his country, offering to hand the fort at West Point over to the British.

Lexington and **Concord** were the two Massachusetts towns near Boston where the first fighting of the Revolutionary War occurred on April 19, 1775.

Minutemen were the first volunteer soldiers in Massachusetts who met and trained regularly to fight for independence from Britain. They got their name from always having their muskets near at hand, so that they were ready to fight with just a minute's notice.

Lobsterbacks was a slang term for British soldiers. They got this name because of the long, bright red coats they wore as their uniform.

Tories, or **Loyalists**, were American colonists who supported King George III and the British Parliament.

Patriots, or **Rebels**, were American colonists who wanted independence from the British throne.

Yale University is one of the oldest private universities in the United States, established in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1718. This is the university that Sam Meeker attends.

Focus Your Reading

Questions to Think About

The following questions will help you understand the meaning of what you read. You do not have to write out the answers to these questions. Instead, look at them before you begin reading, and think about them while you are reading.

1. How does Sam's arrival change the atmosphere in the tavern?

2. What are the narrator's feelings about his brother, Sam? How does the author show these feelings to the reader?

3. What sort of relationship do Sam and his father seem to have?

4. What role does religion play in the life of the narrator and his community as a whole?

5. What is the importance of the Brown Bess to different members of the family?