

Great Awakening Document A (Modified)

Mr. Whitefield went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia, where there were many helpless children unprovided for. The sight of their miserable situation inspired the benevolent heart of Mr. Whitefield with the idea of building an Orphan House there, in which they might be supported and educated. Returning northward, he preached up this charity, and made large collections.

I happened to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I realized he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently decided he should get nothing from me [Franklin thought the Orphan House should be built in Philadelphia], I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pieces in gold. As he proceeded I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and I decided to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all.

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words and sentences so perfectly, that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his audiences, however numerous, were completely silent. He preached one evening and I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand.

Vocabulary

Benevolent: kind

Oratory: speech

Source: The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, 1793. Ben Franklin was a good friend of George Whitefield, though he did not agree with his religious beliefs.

Great Awakening Document B (Modified)

I was born Feb 15th 1711 and born again October 1741—

When I heard that Mr. Whitefield was coming to preach in Middletown, I was in my field at work. I dropped my tool and ran home to my wife and told her to hurry. My wife and I rode my horse as fast as I thought the horse could bear . . .

When we neared Middletown, I heard a noise like a low rumbling thunder and soon saw it was the noise of horses' feet. As I came closer it seemed like a steady stream of horses and their riders, all of a lather and foam with sweat, their breath rolling out of their nostrils with every jump; every horse seemed to go with all his might to carry his rider to hear news from heaven for the saving of souls, it made me tremble to see the sight, how the world was in a struggle.

When we got to the meeting house there were 3 or 4000 people assembled. I turned and looked back and the land and banks of the river looked black with people and horses all along the 12 miles.

When I saw Mr. Whitfield he looked almost angelic; a young, slim, slender, youth. And hearing how God was with him everywhere put me into a trembling fear. I saw that my righteousness would not save me . . .

Source: Nathan Cole was a farmer from Middletown, Connecticut, who heard George Whitefield preach in 1741. The experience convinced Cole to find salvation and become born-again. The excerpt above is from his personal account (undated).

Great Awakening Document C (Modified)

Boston Evening-Post, July 15, 1745

To George Whitefield,

You have sown the harmful seeds of separation and disorder among us. By supporting the new churches, by claiming that our Ministers are unacquainted with Christ, you have stopped the spread of the Gospel, and hurt the Peace and good Order. You have hurt the very being of our Churches.

I ask you not to preach in this parish. . .

I do not expect that you will pay attention to what I have written, but I still choose to declare that you are a dangerous man, harmful to the religion of Jesus Christ.

Nathanael Henschman, Pastor of the first Church in Lynn.

Source: Nathanael Henschman was a minister in Lynn, Massachusetts. He blamed George Whitefield for breaking up all of New England's churches. The document above is a letter to the newspaper in which he addresses Whitefield.

Name _____

Why was George Whitefield so popular?

Document A Ben Franklin	Source: author, type of document, date	Summarize: main idea
Hypothesis 1: According to Document A, why was George Whitefield so popular?		
Document B Nathan Cole	Source: author, type of document, date	Summarize: main idea
Hypothesis 2: According to Document B, why was George Whitefield so popular?		
Document C Nathanael Henchman	Source: author, type of document, date	Summarize: main idea
Hypothesis 3: According to Document C, why was George Whitefield so popular?		