

Discussion Questions -- American Revolution, Part 1

1. What year did the French and Indian War end? (1763)
2. What item did the English tax to pay for the French and Indian War? (windows)
3. From what did the British Army provide protection for the Americans? (French, Spanish and Indian warriors)
4. What right did the English take away from the Americans following the French and Indian War? (trial by jury in some instances)
5. Why didn't the members of Parliament understand how the Americans felt? (England was far away and communication was slow and difficult.)
6. Did the British import taxes help reduce England's war debts when they were first passed? (no)
7. What things did the Stamp Tax tax? (paper for contracts, newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, etc.)
8. How did the "Stamp Act Congress" react to the Stamp Act? (decided colonists should no longer buy British goods)
9. How did Parliament react to the Stamp Act Congress's decision to create a boycott? (passed the Declaratory Act)
10. What did the Declaratory Act do? (gave Parliament complete control over the colonies)
11. What did the Townshend Acts do? (dissolved the Massachusetts legislature and threatened to close others)
12. What American city did British soldiers march into in 1768? (Boston)
13. What was the "Boston Massacre" and when did it occur? (answers will vary, March 5, 1770)
14. How many colonists were killed in "The Boston Massacre?" (five)
15. What was "The Boston Tea Party" and when did it occur? (To protest British tax policies on tea, colonists, many dressed as Indians, boarded a ship in Boston Harbor and tossed the tea overboard. December 16, 1773)
16. Why was tea so important to the colonists? (one of the few flavored drinks to be had)
17. How did Parliament react to "The Boston Tea Party?" (passed the Intolerable Acts)
18. What were the four parts of the Intolerable Acts? (closed Port of Boston until the tea was paid for; allowed British soldiers to live in colonists' houses without permission; gave colonial governors, appointed by the king, greater powers; allowed British soldiers to change judges)
19. How did the colonists react to the Intolerable Acts? (called First Continental Congress which proclaimed the Acts unlawful; said Massachusetts should create a new legislature; declared if patriot was jailed, colonists could jail British officials; advised people to prepare for a British attack)

Name _____

Window Taxes



In the program, Prime Minister George Grenville mentioned that taxes on windows did not produce enough money to pay down England's war debts. Window taxes were used for a long time in Great Britain because tax collectors could easily establish how much a person owed by simply counting the windows in his or her house.

However, as the picture above shows, people were able to get around the tax by boarding or bricking up their windows -- which they did. When people boarded or bricked their windows, little sunlight was able to get into crowded apartments.



Doctors complained their patients, especially those in crowded cities, didn't get enough sunlight. So in the mid-19th century, the window tax was replaced by a house tax, which prompted the newspaper cartoon, above right.

Count the windows in the picture at the top of the page, including those that have been boarded up. How many windows are there? Suppose the owner had to pay a tax of one shilling per window -- and they *weren't* boarded up. How many shillings would he have to pay? After boarding up the windows, what would his new tax be? What is the difference between the two tax rates?

Name _____

A Pre-Revolution Time Line

Directions: Using the list in the box, fill in the events and laws that led up to the American Revolution. Write the event or law below each year. You may need to do some online research to complete this exercise.

Boston Tea Party, Stamp Act Congress, Intolerable Acts, The French and Indian War ends, The First Continental Congress, The Boston Massacre, The Boston Tea Party, The Stamp Act, The Townshend Act, The Declaratory Act

1763

1765

1766

1767

1770

1773

1774

Name _____

The Sons of Liberty



At first, The Sons of Liberty was a small group of shopkeepers and craftsmen who demonstrated against various British policies. But the organization grew quickly after it was founded, in 1765. In the picture above, members of the group are raising a "liberty pole," around which people would gather to voice their anger at British laws and actions. The British army would take down these poles, but new ones would quickly spring up. As The Sons of Liberty organization grew, some new members included lawyers and publishers and other educated persons, but most members were not highly educated. In short order, there were Sons of Liberty groups in all 13 colonies.

The Sons of Liberty started many demonstrations and a few violent actions. To protest the Stamp Act, they burned down the office of Andrew Oliver, a man who sold the stamps. They burned a British ship, the HMS Gaspée, used to enforce unpopular trade regulations.

The Sons of Liberty were the persons who planned and took part in the Boston Tea Party.

Many of America's most famous patriots, including John Hancock, Patrick Henry, Paul Revere, Haym Solomon and Benjamin Rush, among others, were members of the organization.

Pretend you are a member of the organization, and write a speech, "Why the Stamp Act Must be Abolished," to be given at a liberty pole.

Name _____

More on the Stamp Act



A Stamp Act Demonstration in New York, 1765. The sign says, "The Folly of England and the Ruin of America."

According to some historians, the Stamp Act of 1765 was the "spark that lit the paper that became the American Revolution." The colonists' reaction to the new law was swift and sometimes violent. There were several reasons for the anger. First, it was the first time that Americans were directly taxed. Before, taxes were in the form of duties on imported goods. Although people were aware of the tax, it was mostly hidden in the cost of purchased goods. Now, people who had to buy the paper -- and the stamps -- had to pay extra money every time the stamps were purchased. They saw the tax at every purchase. Second, most of the people who were taxed were the most educated and influential colonists -- among them, lawyers and publishers. If they were angry, they could let everyone know about it.

As previously mentioned, a Sons of Liberty group in Boston burned down the office of a stamp merchant. In New York, a poster went up saying that stamp merchants and their property could be in danger. Stamp merchants, fearing for their safety, began to resign their posts.

Benjamin Franklin was called to testify about the Stamp Act before Parliament. His testimony lasted four hours and he answered 174 questions. Franklin was adamant. He said the law must be repealed if relations between the mother country and her colonists were to be healed. Parliament repealed the act one year after it passed. But the Declaratory Act, which came after it, also angered the Americans because it reaffirmed that Parliament could tax colonists as it pleased. On the back of this page, explain the saying, "The power to tax is the power to destroy."

Name _____

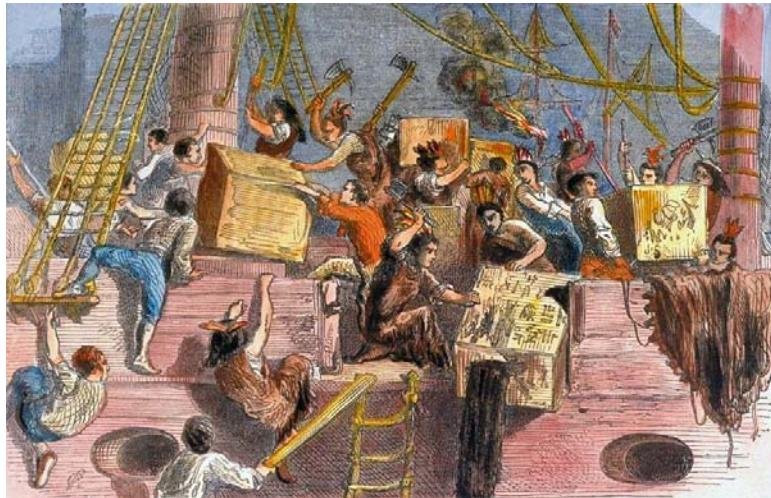
More on the Boston Massacre



The picture above is a famous painting of the incident by Paul Revere, a man who wanted as many people as possible to see the event as a "massacre," although normally it would be called a riot. In addition to warning about the British Army's march to Lexington and Concord, Paul Revere was a well-known silversmith and a clever propagandist for the colonial cause. His picture was shown throughout the colonies to anger Americans and push them toward open rebellion. There are many versions of what exactly took place before the British soldiers fired into the crowd of colonists in front of the Boston Custom House on December 5, 1770. What is known, however, is that the crowd had been in another fight with soldiers earlier in the evening and that a soldier guarding the Custom House struck a colonist with the butt of his musket. Some accounts say the attacked person was a child. Others say he was a young man. Many accounts mention that the crowd threw snowballs at the soldiers who arrived as reinforcements, and that church bells began ringing. Why did the bells rang out if there was no fire? (At that time, church bells were rung when there was a fire.) Some historians have suggested that some radical leaders, including Samuel Adams, planned to have an incident and they wanted a lot of people around as witnesses. The church bells would bring a large number of people into the streets to see the occurrence. Another theory is that the Americans in the mob dared the soldiers to fire on them, thinking that the British would merely fire warning shots above their heads. As it turned out, however, the Boston Massacre became a key event on the road to revolution. On the back of this paper, draw a picture of any aspect of the massacre -- before, during or after. Then, in a sentence or two, tell what is happening in your picture.

Name _____

More on the Boston Tea Party



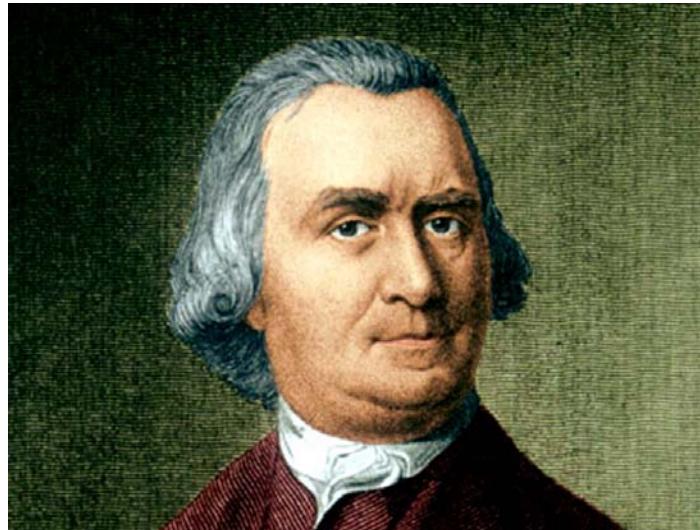
The Boston Tea Party was the final event in a long series of arguments about taxing tea in the American colonies. The dispute was mainly between a group of colonists -- many were members of "The Sons of Liberty" -- and Parliament. The main point of the argument was whether Parliament could tax colonists without the colonies having representation in Parliament. According to the Americans, the British constitution stated that British subjects could not be taxed without the consent of their elected representatives. But the colonists had no one sitting in Parliament to voice and protect their interests.

In the fall of 1773, seven tea-bearing ships left England. Four headed to Boston and three others headed to either New York, Philadelphia or Charleston. The Sons of Liberty went to tea dealers in the latter three cities and convinced them to refuse their tea shipments. However, Massachusetts Governor Thomas Hutchinson would not hear of it. He insisted that the *Dartmouth*, the tea-bearing vessel in Boston Harbor, unload its tea and pay the import duty before setting its course back to England. The Sons of Liberty, many of whom dressed as Mohawk warriors, boarded the ship and informed the captain that they were going to throw the tea overboard, and would harm neither the captain nor his crew. All 342 chests of tea aboard the *Dartmouth* were chopped open and their contents dumped overboard. In today's money, the tea would be worth roughly one million dollars.

Research Samuel Adams' role in the Boston Tea Party and write a paragraph about it on the back of this paper.

Name _____

Samuel Adams



Samuel Adams was one of the most important leaders in the colonies' resistance to British rule. As a member of the Massachusetts legislature in 1768, he wrote a famous "circular letter" (correspondence to be circulated among the colony legislatures) in which he argued that Parliament's recent tax levies in the Townshend Acts -- on glass, paint, paper, lead, and tea -- were unlawful because Americans had no representatives in Parliament. He further argued that *any* tax law passed by Parliament should not be obeyed in the colonies. According to Adams, only laws made by colonial legislatures had any legal authority in America. England responded by sending troops to occupy Boston and that action led, in time, to the Boston Massacre.

Adams came from a wealthy merchant family and graduated from Harvard University. He tried his hand at business, but had no real interest in being a businessman. He failed at several ventures until his wealthy father gave him a job. In time, he became a tax collector, but he didn't collect taxes from many people, which made him popular among many colonists. Adams was active in the protests against almost all English tax laws in the late 1760s and early 1770s. He was one of the leading colonists who fought the Coercive Acts, also. As such, he was a thorn in the side of the English authorities. In April, 1775, when Adams and another leading patriot, John Hancock, were at Hancock's childhood home in Lexington, General Gage instructed his soldiers to bring back the two men so they could be tried for treason (in addition to telling his men to find the arms hidden in Concord). Adams and Hancock weren't found. After conducting some web research, write on the back of this page a paragraph about Adam's activities to provoke the British in order to strengthen the colonist's cause.

Name _____

Implications of the Four Intolerable Acts



The cartoon above appeared throughout the colonies after Parliament passed the Intolerable Acts. It was entitled "America is Forced to Take a Bitter Pill" and shows the English forcing the acts down the throat of an American as Justice, in the background, bows her head and cries. Look up the word "cannonade" to find out what the words, "Boston cannonaded" mean.

- Closing the port of Boston, at that time one of the main ports in North America, could deal a terrible economic blow to merchants in the area, many of whom depended on the import of goods from Europe. The merchants were terrified their businesses would be lost and hoped that the \$1,000,000 (in today's money) would be paid to cover the cost of the tea destroyed during the Boston Tea Party. The English thought closing the port would separate the unruly Bostonians from the rest of the colonies, but the plan backfired. Other colonies came to the aid of Boston's merchants and supplied them with needed items. **So the act brought together, instead of separated, the colonies.**
- Allowing soldiers to live in colonists' houses (The Quartering Act) without asking permission was very unpopular. It also required colonists to feed the soldiers. People everywhere have always believed in family privacy and this law wiped out that cherished belief. Even though all the colonies except Pennsylvania found ways to prevent the act from being enforced, the **Quartering Act further estranged the colonies from the mother country.**
- Increasing the power of colonial governors angered and frightened the colonists even more than the Quartering Act because it could destroy self government. **The colonists now looked at the British government with deep distrust.**
- The Administration of Justice Act, the fourth Intolerable Act, allowed soldiers and British officials to change courts -- even go to England -- if they felt they would be convicted of a crime in the colonies. George Washington called the law "The Murder Act," because he believed it would allow British officials and soldiers to "get away with murder." The law said witnesses would be paid to travel to the court, but as a practical matter, most colonists could never take the time to travel to England. **The colonists now felt there was little justice under British law.**

On a separate sheet of paper write a story, "My Family Quarters and Feeds Three British Soldiers."

Name _____

Revolution, Part I Evaluation Exercise, p. 1

I. True or false. Put a "T" next to the statement if it is true, or an "F" if it is false.

1. _____ The American colonists were ready to revolt immediately after the French and Indian War.
2. _____ England's taxes on windows didn't raise enough money to pay its war debts.
3. _____ Some members of Parliament felt Americans should pay for their own protection from the Spanish, French and Mexicans.
4. _____ Colonists were upset when Parliament said smugglers would be tried by a judge in Nova Scotia.
5. _____ At the end of the French and Indian War, Sir Thomas Carter was the king's Prime Minister.

II. Circle the letter next to the phrase that best completes the sentence.

1. An important right of every English citizen in the 1760s was
 - a. the right to choose his or her judge.
 - b. the right to choose his or her jury.
 - c. the right to a trial by jury.
 - d. none of the above.
2. Taxation without representation
 - a. angered American colonists.
 - b. was never practiced by Parliament.
 - c. was a popular phrase used by loyalists in England.
 - d. b. and c.
3. The Stamp Act taxed
 - a. stamps.
 - b. tea.
 - c. lead.
 - d. paper.

Name _____

Revolution, Part I Evaluation Exercise, p. 2

4. One of the major actions of the Stamp Act Congress was
 - a. a boycott of British goods.
 - b. a boycott of stamps.
 - c. a recognition that Parliament controlled the colonies.
 - d. none of the above.
5. The Declaratory Act
 - a. was Parliament's reaction to the Stamp Act Congress.
 - b. stated that Parliament had all legal control over the colonies.
 - c. both a. and b.
 - d. none of the above.
6. During the Boston Massacre
 - a. two British soldiers were killed.
 - b. five colonists were killed.
 - c. no one was killed, but five colonists were injured.
 - d. three British soldiers and six colonists were killed.
7. The Boston Tea Party
 - a. was a response to England's tax policies on tea.
 - b. saw colonists dressed up like Indians.
 - c. saw tea dumped into Boston Harbor.
 - d. all of the above.
8. An important flavored drink in the 1770s was
 - a. coffee.
 - b. almond milk.
 - c. tea.
 - d. Dr. Pepper.
9. Parliament's response to the Boston Tea Party was
 - a. giving up and leaving the colonists alone.
 - b. sending troops into Boston.
 - c. allowing the port of Boston to open if everyone signed a loyalty oath to the king.
 - d. passing the Intolerable Acts.

Name _____

Revolution, Part I Evaluation Exercise, p. 3

10. Another name for The Intolerable Acts was
- The Cataclysmic Acts.
 - The Horrible Acts.
 - The Legislative Acts.
 - The Coercive Acts.

III. Place the letter next to phrase that best matches the name.

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| _____ 1. Lord George Grenville | a. a colonial loyalist |
| _____ 2. Thomas Gage | b. a prime minister |
| _____ 3. Malcolm | c. king of England |
| _____ 4. George III | d. a member of Parliament |
| _____ 5. Thomas Carter | e. a British general |

IV. Answer the question in one or two sentences.

- What was Great Britain's place in the nations of the world at the end of the French and Indian War?
- Why did Parliament levy taxes on the American colonists at the end of the French and Indian War?
- What was Parliament's reasoning for taxing the colonists at that time?
- What did the Declaratory Act do to retaliate against the boycott of British goods?
- Why was the first Continental Congress held?