

The American Revolution



Essential Question

How was the American Revolution revolutionary?








About the Image: This colored engraving by John C. McRae depicts the Sons of Liberty pulling down a statue of King George III on the Bowling Green in the city of New York on the night of July 9, 1776.

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VIDEOS, including...

- The Declaration of Independence
- Sons of Liberty
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-  Image with Hotspots: The Battle of Bunker Hill
-  Carousel: Patriots and Loyalists

In this module you will learn what led the American colonists to declare independence from Great Britain and why they were victorious in their fight for freedom.

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The Big Idea Tensions increased throughout the colonies until the Continental Congress declared independence on July 4, 1776.

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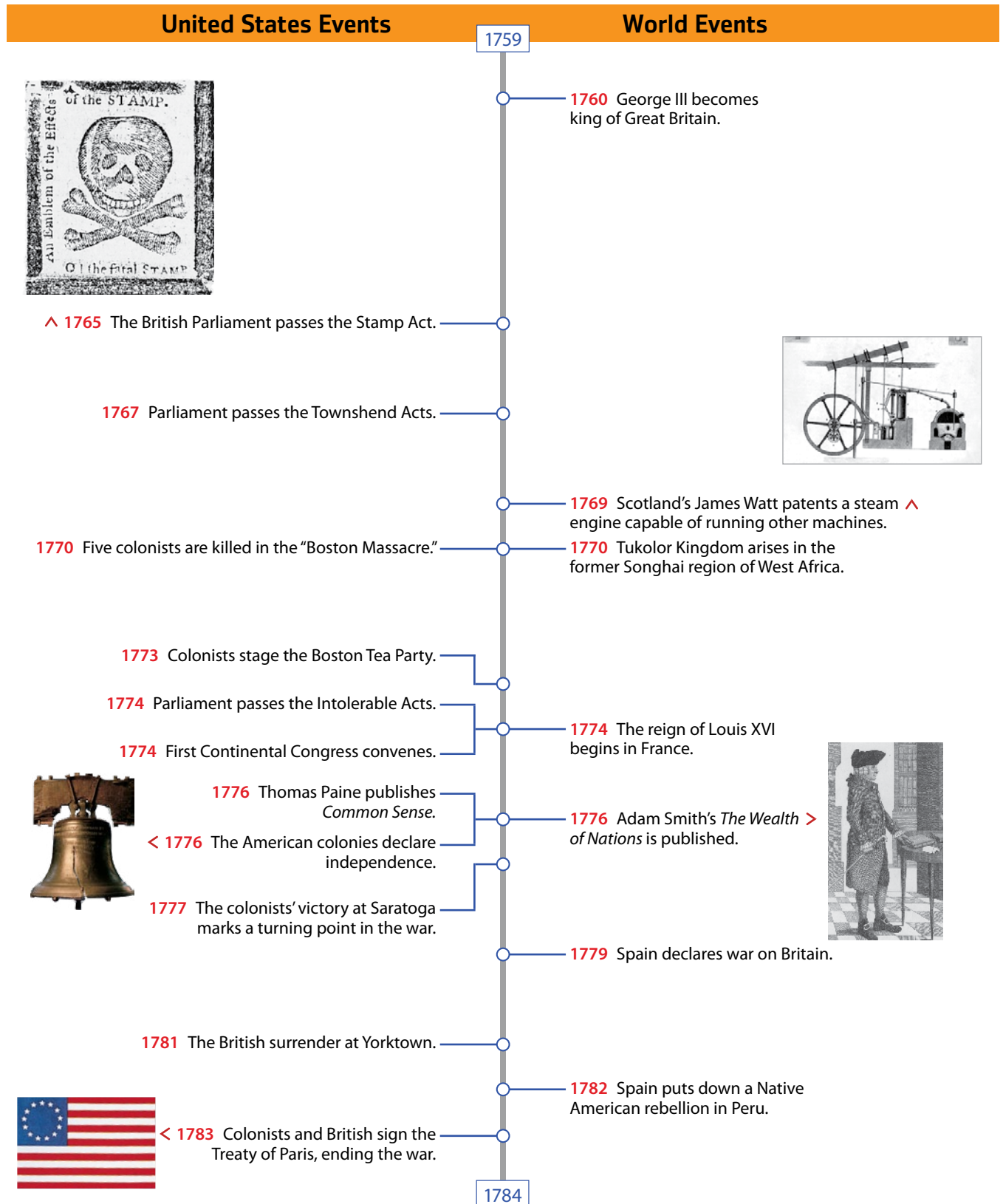
The Big Idea After a series of setbacks, American forces won at Saratoga and survived.

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The Big Idea Strategic victories in the South and at Yorktown enabled the Americans to defeat the British.

Timeline of Events 1759–1784

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The Stirrings of Rebellion

The Big Idea

Conflict between Great Britain and the American colonies grew over issues of taxation, representation, and liberty.

Why It Matters Now

The events that shaped the American Revolution are a turning point in humanity's fight for freedom.

Key Terms and People

Stamp Act
Samuel Adams
Townshend Acts
Boston Massacre
committees of correspondence
Boston Tea Party
King George III
Intolerable Acts
martial law
minutemen

One American's Story

On the cold, clear night of March 5, 1770, a mob gathered outside the Customs House in Boston. They heckled the British sentry on guard, calling him a "lobster-back" to mock his red uniform. More soldiers arrived, and the mob began hurling stones and snowballs at them. At that moment, Crispus Attucks, a sailor of African and Native American ancestry, arrived with a group of angry laborers.

"This Attucks . . . appears to have undertaken to be the hero of the night; and to lead this army with banners . . . up to King street with their clubs. . . . [T]his man with his party cried, 'Do not be afraid of them. . . .' He had hardiness enough to fall in upon them, and with one hand took hold of a bayonet, and with the other knocked the man down."

—John Adams, quoted in *The Black Presence in the Era of the American Revolution*



Crispus Attucks

Attucks's action ignited the troops. Ignoring orders not to shoot, one soldier and then others fired on the crowd. Five people were killed; several were wounded. Crispus Attucks was, according to a newspaper account, the first to die.

Background

A New York branch of the Sons of Liberty was also founded at around the same time as the Boston chapter.

Vocabulary

boycott a collective refusal to use, buy, or deal with, especially as an act of protest



Samuel Adams, holding the instructions of a Boston town meeting and pointing to the Massachusetts charter

The Colonies Organize to Resist Britain

The uprising at the Customs House illustrated the rising tensions between Britain and its American colonies. In order to finance debts from the French and Indian War, as well as from European wars, Parliament had turned hungry eyes on the colonies' resources.

THE STAMP ACT The seeds of increased tension were sown in March 1765 when Parliament, persuaded by Prime Minister George Grenville, passed the **Stamp Act**. The Stamp Act required colonists to purchase special stamped paper for every legal document, license, newspaper, pamphlet, and almanac. It also imposed special "stamp duties" on packages of playing cards and dice. The tax reached into every colonial pocket. Colonists who disobeyed the law were to be tried in the vice-admiralty courts, where convictions were probable.

STAMP ACT PROTESTS When word of the Stamp Act reached the colonies in May 1765, the colonists united in their defiance. Boston shopkeepers, artisans, and laborers organized a secret resistance group called the Sons of Liberty. Soon many prominent citizens such as merchants and lawyers joined. One of the founders of the Sons of Liberty was Harvard-educated **Samuel Adams**. Although unsuccessful in business and deeply in debt, Adams proved himself to be a powerful and influential political activist.

By the end of the summer, the Sons of Liberty were harassing customs workers, stamp agents, and sometimes royal governors. Facing mob threats and demonstrations, stamp agents all over the colonies resigned. The Stamp Act was to become effective on November 1, 1765, but colonial protest prevented any stamps from being sold.

During 1765 and early 1766, the individual colonial assemblies confronted the Stamp Act measure. Virginia's lower house adopted several resolutions put forth by a 29-year-old lawyer named Patrick Henry. These resolutions stated that Virginians could be taxed only by the Virginia assembly—that is, only by their own representatives. Other assemblies passed similar resolutions.

The colonial assemblies also made a strong collective protest. In October 1765, delegates from nine colonies met in New York City. This Stamp Act Congress issued a Declaration of Rights and Grievances. It stated that Parliament lacked the power to impose taxes on the colonies because the colonists were not represented in Parliament. More than ten years earlier, the colonies had rejected Benjamin Franklin's Albany Plan of Union. It called for a joint colonial council to address defense issues. Now, for the first time, the separate colonies began to act as one.

Many merchants in the cities of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia agreed to boycott, or refuse to buy, goods manufactured in Britain until the Stamp Act was repealed. Many women joined the boycott, calling themselves the Daughters of Liberty. The boycotters stopped buying British goods and wore clothes of homespun cloth. They also put pressure on merchants who did not join the boycott. They expected

that British merchants would force Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act. The widespread boycott worked. In March 1766 Parliament repealed the Stamp Act. However, on the same day, to make its power clear, Parliament issued the Declaratory Act. This act asserted Parliament's full right to make laws "to bind the colonies and people of America . . . in all cases whatsoever."

THE TOWNSHEND ACTS Within a year after Parliament repealed the Stamp Act, Charles Townshend, the leading government minister at the time, impetuously decided on a new method of gaining revenue from the American colonies. His proposed revenue laws, passed by Parliament in 1767, became known as the **Townshend Acts**. Unlike the Stamp Act, which was a direct tax, these were indirect taxes. The act levied duties on imported materials—glass, lead, paint, and paper—as they came into the colonies from Britain. The acts also imposed a three-penny tax on tea, the most popular drink in the colonies.

The colonists reacted with rage and well-organized resistance. Educated Americans spoke out against the Townshend Acts. They protested "taxation without representation." Boston's Samuel Adams called for another boycott of British goods. American women of every rank in society became involved in the protest. Writer Mercy Otis Warren of Massachusetts urged women to lay their British "female ornaments aside," foregoing "feathers, furs, rich sattins and . . . capes." Wealthy women stopped buying British luxuries and joined other women in spinning bees. These were public displays of spinning and weaving of colonial-made cloth designed to show colonists' determination to boycott British-made cloth. Housewives also boycotted British tea and exchanged recipes for tea made from birch bark and sage.

Conflict intensified in June 1768. British agents in Boston seized the *Liberty*, a ship belonging to local merchant John Hancock. The customs inspector claimed that Hancock had smuggled in a shipment of wine from Madeira and had failed to pay the customs taxes. The seizure triggered riots against customs agents. In response, the British stationed 2,000 "redcoats," or British soldiers—so named for the red jackets they wore—in Boston.

Tension Mounts in the Colonies

The presence of British soldiers in Boston's streets charged the air with hostility. The city soon erupted in clashes between British soldiers and colonists and later in a daring tea protest. All of this pushed the colonists and Britain closer to war.

THE BOSTON MASSACRE One sore point was the competition for jobs between colonists and poorly paid soldiers who looked for extra work in local shipyards during off-duty hours. On the cold afternoon of March 5, 1770, a fistfight broke out over jobs. That evening a mob gathered in front of the Customs House and taunted the guards. When Crispus Attucks and several dockhands appeared on the scene, an armed clash erupted. Three men were killed, including Attucks, and two more were fatally wounded. Instantly, Samuel Adams and other colonial agitators labeled this confrontation the **Boston Massacre**, presenting it as a British attack on defenseless citizens.

Reading Check

Compare How would you compare reactions to the Townshend Acts with reactions to the Stamp Act?

The Boston Massacre

Paul Revere was not only a Patriot, he was a silversmith and an engraver as well. One of the best-known of his engravings, depicting the Boston Massacre, is a masterful piece of anti-British propaganda. Widely circulated, Revere's engraving played a key role in rallying revolutionary fervor.

- The sign above the redcoats reads "Butcher's Hall."
- British commander Captain Prescott (standing at the far right of the engraving) appears to be inciting the troops to fire, whereas in fact, he tried to calm the situation.
- At the center foreground is a small dog, a detail that gave credence to the rumor that, following the shootings, dogs licked the blood of the victims from the street.



Analyze Historical Sources

1. According to the details of the engraving, what advantages do the redcoats have that the colonists do not? What point does the artist make through this contrast?
2. How could this engraving have contributed to the growing support for the Patriots' cause?

Despite strong feelings on both sides, the political atmosphere relaxed somewhat during the next two years until 1772. At that time, a group of Rhode Island colonists attacked a British customs schooner that patrolled the coast for smugglers. After the ship accidentally ran aground near Providence, the colonists boarded the vessel and burned it to the waterline. In response, King George named a special commission to seek out the suspects and bring them to England for trial.

The plan to haul Americans to England for trial ignited widespread alarm. The assemblies of Massachusetts and Virginia set up **committees of correspondence** to communicate with other colonies about this and other threats to American liberties. By 1774 such committees formed a buzzing communication network linking leaders in nearly all the colonies.

THE BOSTON TEA PARTY Early in 1773 Lord Frederick North, the British prime minister, faced a new problem. The British East India Company, which held an official monopoly on tea imports, had been hit hard by the colonial boycotts. With its warehouses bulging with 17 million pounds of tea, the company was nearing bankruptcy. To save it, North devised the Tea Act, which granted the company the right to sell tea to the colonies free of the

taxes that colonial tea sellers had to pay. This action would cut colonial merchants out of the tea trade. The East India Company could sell its tea directly to consumers for less. North hoped the American colonists would simply buy the cheaper tea; instead, they protested violently.

On the moonlit evening of December 16, 1773, a large group of Boston rebels disguised themselves as Native Americans. They proceeded to take action against three British tea ships anchored in the harbor. John Andrews, an onlooker, wrote a letter on December 18, 1773, describing what happened.

“They muster’d . . . to the number of about two hundred, and proceeded . . . to Griffin’s wharf, where [the three ships] lay, each with 114 chests of the ill fated article . . . and before nine o’clock in the evening, every chest from on board the three vessels was knock’d to pieces and flung over the sides.

They say the actors were Indians from Narragansett. Whether they were or not, . . . they appear’d as such, being cloath’d in Blankets with the heads muffled, and copper color’d countenances, being each arm’d with a hatchet or axe. . . .”

—John Andrews, quoted in 1776: *Journals of American Independence*

In this incident, later known as the **Boston Tea Party**, the “Indians” dumped 18,000 pounds of East India Company tea into the waters of Boston Harbor.

THE INTOLERABLE ACTS **King George III** was infuriated by this organized destruction of British property. He pressed Parliament to act. In 1774 Parliament passed a series of laws, the Coercive Acts, to punish the rebellious colonists. In the colonies, these laws were called the **Intolerable Acts**. One law shut down Boston Harbor because the colonists had refused to pay for the damaged tea. Another, the Quartering Act, authorized British commanders to house soldiers in vacant private homes and other buildings. Also, General Thomas Gage, Commander in Chief of British forces in North America, was appointed the new governor of Massachusetts. To keep the peace, he placed Boston under **martial law**, or rule imposed by military forces.

The committees of correspondence quickly moved into action and assembled the First Continental Congress. In September 1774, 56 delegates met in Philadelphia and drew up a declaration of colonial rights. They defended the colonies’ right to run their own affairs. They supported the protests in Massachusetts and stated that if the British used force against the colonies, the colonies should fight back. They also agreed to reconvene in May 1775 if their demands weren’t met.

THE QUEBEC ACT An additional cause for American colonists’ discontent was a British law known as the Quebec Act. This became a geographical issue. Britain had won French territory in Canada after the French and Indian War. Incorporating that territory into British North America proved difficult, however. Settlers in Canada were used to French law. In addition, the scattered French settlements were difficult to protect from Native Americans.

Reading Check

Analyze Motives

What did King George set out to achieve when he disciplined Massachusetts?

Parliament attempted to solve these problems with the Quebec Act. This act expanded the province of Quebec southward to the Ohio River and west to the Mississippi, including the scattered French settlements there. American colonists were alarmed. They assumed that the Quebec Act would limit their chances to settle on the western frontier. They also felt the act threatened their security against the French.

Fighting Erupts at Lexington and Concord

After the First Continental Congress, colonists in many eastern New England towns stepped up military preparations. **Minutemen**, or civilian soldiers, began to quietly stockpile firearms and gunpowder. General Gage soon learned about these activities and prepared to strike back.

TO CONCORD, BY THE LEXINGTON ROAD The spring of 1775 was a cold one in New England. Because of the long winter frosts, food was scarce. General Gage had been forced to put his army on strict rations, and British morale was low. Around the same time, Gage became concerned about reports brought to him concerning large amounts of arms and munitions hidden outside of Boston.

In March Gage sent agents toward Concord, a town outside of Boston reported to be the site of one of the stockpiles. The agents returned with maps detailing where arms were rumored to be stored in barns, empty buildings, and private homes. The agents were also told that John Hancock and Samuel Adams, perhaps the two most prominent leaders of resistance to British authority, were staying in Lexington, a smaller community about five miles east of Concord. As the snows melted and the roads cleared, Gage drew up orders for his men to march along the Lexington Road to Concord. There they would seize and destroy all munitions that they could find.



The Battle of Lexington, as depicted in a mid-19th-century painting

“THE REGULARS ARE COMING!” As General Gage began to ready his troops quartered in Boston, minutemen were watching. There were rumors that a strike by British troops against resistance activities would come soon. However, no one knew exactly when, nor did they know which towns would be targeted.

With Hancock and Adams in hiding, much of the leadership of resistance activity in Boston fell to a prominent young physician named Joseph Warren. Sometime during the afternoon of April 18, Dr. Warren consulted a confidential source close to the British high command. The source informed him that Gage intended to march on Concord by way of Lexington. He planned to seize Adams and Hancock and destroy all hidden munitions. Warren immediately sent for Paul Revere, a member of the Sons of Liberty. He told him to warn Adams and Hancock as well as the townspeople along the way. Revere began to organize a network of riders who would spread the alarm.

On the night of April 18, Paul Revere, William Dawes, and Samuel Prescott rode out to spread word that 700 British Regulars, or army soldiers, were headed for Concord. Before long, the darkened countryside rang with church bells and gunshots—prearranged signals to warn the population that the Regulars were coming.

British Actions and Colonial Reactions, 1765–1775

| | British Action | Colonial Reaction |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1765 Stamp Act | Britain passes a tax law requiring colonists to purchase special stamps to prove payment of tax. | Colonists harass stamp distributors, boycott British goods, and prepare a Declaration of Rights and Grievances. |
| 1767 Townshend Acts | Britain taxes certain colonial imports and stations troops at major colonial ports to protect customs officers. | Colonists protest “taxation without representation” and organize a new boycott of imported goods. |
| 1770 Boston Massacre | British troops stationed in Boston are taunted by an angry mob. The troops fire into the crowd, killing five colonists. | Colonial agitators label the conflict a “massacre” and publish a dramatic engraving depicting the violence. |
| 1773 Tea Act | Britain gives the East India Company special concessions in the colonial tea business and shuts out colonial tea merchants. | Colonists in Boston rebel, dumping 18,000 pounds of East India Company tea into Boston Harbor. |
| 1774 Intolerable Acts | King George III tightens control over Massachusetts by closing Boston Harbor and quartering troops. | Colonial leaders form the First Continental Congress and draw up a declaration of colonial rights. |
| 1775 Lexington and Concord | General Gage orders troops to march to Concord, Massachusetts, and seize colonial weapons. | Minutemen intercept the British and engage in battle—first at Lexington and then at Concord. |

Interpret Tables

In what ways did colonial reaction to British rule intensify between 1765 and 1775?



Paul Revere rode to warn colonists of the British army's approach.

Revere burst into the house where Adams and Hancock were staying and warned them to flee to the backwoods. He continued his ride until he, like Dawes, was detained by British troops. As Revere was being questioned, shots rang out and the British officer realized that the element of surprise had been lost. When more shots rang out, the officer ordered the prisoners released so that he could travel with greater speed to warn the other British troops marching toward Lexington that resistance awaited them there.

"A GLORIOUS DAY FOR AMERICA" By the morning of April 19, 1775, the king's troops reached Lexington. As they neared the town, they saw 70 minutemen drawn up in lines on the village green. The British commander ordered the minutemen to leave. The colonists began to move out without laying down their muskets. Then someone fired, and the British soldiers sent a volley of shots into the departing militia. Eight minutemen were killed and ten more were wounded, but only one British soldier was injured. The Battle of Lexington lasted only 15 minutes.

The British marched on to Concord, where they found an empty arsenal. After a brief skirmish with minutemen, the British soldiers lined up to march back to Boston, but the march quickly became a slaughter. Between 3,000 and 4,000 minutemen had assembled by now, and they fired on the marching troops from behind stone walls and trees. British soldiers fell by the dozen. Bloodied and humiliated, the remaining British soldiers made their way back to Boston.

While the battles were going on, Adams and Hancock were fleeing deeper into the New England countryside. At one point, they heard the sound of musket fire in the distance. Adams remarked that it was a fine day. Hancock, assuming that his companion was speaking of the weather said, "Very pleasant." "I mean," Adams corrected Hancock, "this is a glorious day for America."

Reading Check

Summarize What did Warren order Paul Revere to do?

Lesson 1 Assessment

- Organize Information** Create a cluster diagram and fill it in with events that demonstrate the conflict between Great Britain and the American colonies.



Choose one event to further explain in a paragraph.

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Develop Historical Perspective** What opinion might a British soldier have had about the Boston Massacre? Explain and support your response.

Think About:

- the start of the conflict on March 5, 1770
- the behavior of Crispus Attucks and other colonists
- the use of the event as propaganda

- Form Generalizations** Explain whether you think the British government acted wisely in its dealings with the colonies between 1765 and 1775. Support your explanation with examples from the text.
- Form Opinions** Do you think that the colonists' reaction to the seizing of the *Liberty* was justified?

Ideas Help Start a Revolution

The Big Idea

Tensions increased throughout the colonies until the Continental Congress declared independence on July 4, 1776.

Why It Matters Now

The Declaration of Independence continues to inspire and challenge people everywhere.

Key Terms and People

Second Continental Congress

Olive Branch Petition

Common Sense

Thomas Jefferson

Declaration of Independence

Patriots

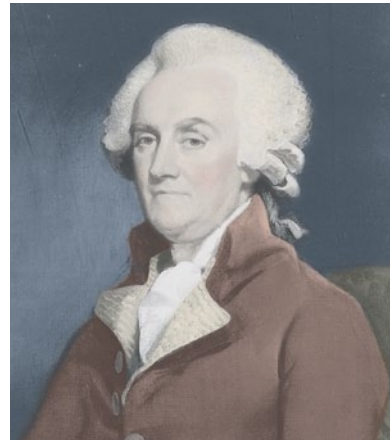
Loyalists

One American's Story

William Franklin, son of the famous American writer, scientist, statesman, and diplomat Benjamin Franklin, was royal governor of New Jersey. Despite his father's patriotic sympathies, William remained stubbornly loyal to King George. In a letter written on August 2, 1775, to Lord Dartmouth, he stated his position and that of others who resisted revolutionary views.

"There is indeed a dread in the minds of many here that some of the leaders of the people are aiming to establish a republic. Rather than submit . . . we have thousands who will risk the loss of their lives in defense of the old Constitution. [They] are ready to declare themselves whenever they see a chance of its being of any avail."

—William Franklin, quoted in *A Little Revenge: Benjamin Franklin and His Son*



William Franklin

Because of William's stand on colonial issues, communication between him and his father virtually ceased. The break between William Franklin and his father exemplified the chasm that now divided American from American.

The Colonies Hover Between Peace and War

In May 1775, colonial leaders convened a second Continental Congress in Philadelphia to debate their next move. Beyond their meeting hall, however, events continued moving quickly. Minutemen and British soldiers clashed in a bloody battle outside Boston, and an increasingly furious King George readied his country for war.

THE SECOND CONTINENTAL CONGRESS The loyalties that divided colonists sparked endless debates at the **Second Continental Congress**. John Adams of Massachusetts suggested a sweeping, radical plan. He proposed that each colony set up its own government and that the Congress declare the colonies independent.

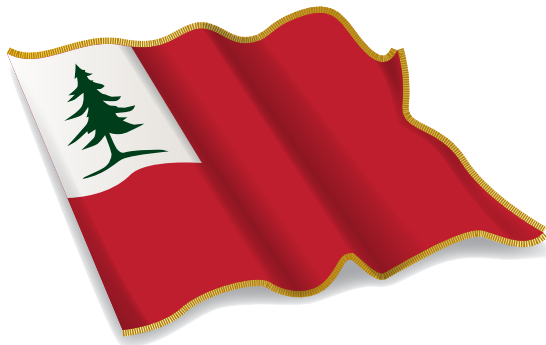
Furthermore, he argued, the Congress should consider the militiamen besieging Boston to be the Continental army and name a general to lead them. Moderate John Dickinson of Pennsylvania strongly disagreed with Adams's call for revolt. In private, he confronted Adams.

"What is the reason, Mr. Adams, that you New England men oppose our measures of reconciliation? . . . If you don't concur with us in our pacific system, I and a number of us will break off from you in New England, and we will carry on the opposition by ourselves in our own way."

—John Dickinson, quoted in *Patriots: The Men Who Started the American Revolution*

The debates raged on into June, but one stubborn fact remained: colonial militiamen were still encamped around Boston. The Congress agreed to recognize them as the Continental army. They appointed as its commander a 43-year-old veteran of the French and Indian War, George Washington. The Congress, acting like an independent government, also authorized the printing of paper money to pay the troops and organized a committee to deal with foreign nations. These actions came just in time.

Patriot militiamen created flags to represent their colonies. This flag was carried to the Battle of Bunker Hill by Massachusetts militiamen. The Liberty Tree symbolized freedom.



THE BATTLE OF BUNKER HILL Cooped up in Boston, British general Thomas Gage decided to strike at militiamen who had dug in on Breed's Hill, north of the city and near Bunker Hill. On the steamy summer morning of June 17, 1775, Gage sent out nearly 2,400 British troops. The British, sweating in wool uniforms and heavy packs, began marching up Breed's Hill in their customary broad lines. The colonists held their fire until the last minute, then began to shoot down the advancing redcoats. The surviving British troops made a second attack, and then

a third. The third assault succeeded, but only because the militiamen ran low on ammunition.

By the time the smoke cleared, the colonists had lost 450 men, while the British had suffered over 1,000 casualties. The misnamed Battle of Bunker Hill would prove to be the deadliest battle of the war.

Reading Check

Draw Conclusions

Do you think that the Olive Branch Petition was too little too late?

THE OLIVE BRANCH PETITION By July the Second Continental Congress was readying the colonies for war while still hoping for peace. Most of the delegates, like most colonists, felt deep loyalty to George III. They blamed the bloodshed on the king's ministers. On July 8, 1775, the Congress sent the king the so-called **Olive Branch Petition**. They urged a return to "the former harmony" between Britain and the colonies.

King George flatly rejected the petition. Furthermore, he issued a proclamation stating that the colonies were in rebellion. He urged Parliament to order a naval blockade of the American coast.

The Patriots Declare Independence

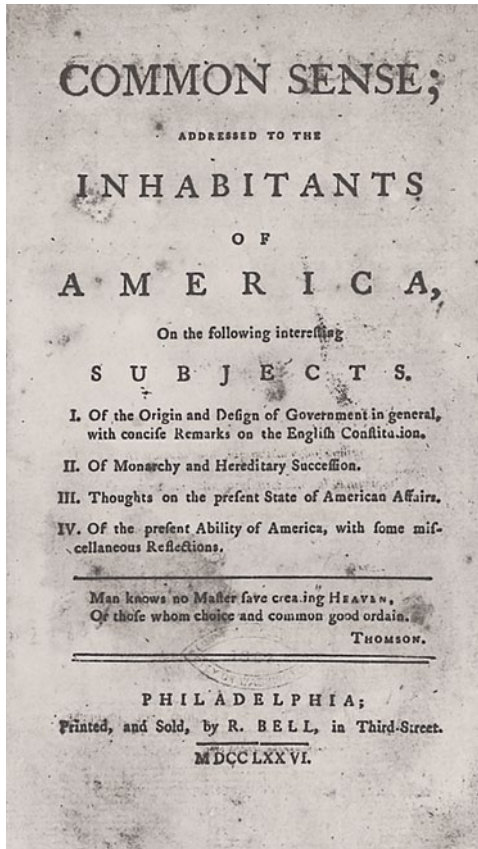
In the months after the Olive Branch Petition, a thin document containing the powerful words of an angry citizen began to circulate. This pamphlet began to change public opinion.

COMMON SENSE In *Common Sense*, a 50-page pamphlet, the colonist Thomas Paine attacked King George III. Paine explained that his own revolt against the king had begun with the fighting at Lexington and Concord. He called it "slaughter" at the hands of the king.

Paine declared that the time had come for colonists to proclaim an independent republic and to form their own government. He argued that a new government established by the governed would be a great improvement over a king's rule.

"The present time, likewise, is that peculiar time which never happens to a nation but once, . . . the time of forming itself into a government. Most nations have let slip the opportunity, and by that means have been compelled to receive laws from their conquerors, instead of making laws for themselves. First, they had a king, and then a form of government; whereas the articles or charter of government should be formed first, and men delegated to execute them afterwards: but from the errors of other nations let us learn wisdom, and lay hold of the present opportunity—to begin government at the right end."

—Thomas Paine, from *Common Sense*



Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* helped to overcome many colonists' doubts about separating from Britain.

Paine argued that independence, which was the American "destiny," would allow America to trade freely with other nations for guns and ammunition and win foreign aid from British enemies. Finally, Paine stated, independence would give Americans the chance to create a better society—one free from tyranny, with equal social and economic opportunities for all. *Common Sense* sold nearly 500,000 copies and was widely applauded. It helped to overcome many colonists' doubts about separating from Britain.

In April 1776 George Washington wrote, “I find *Common Sense* is working a powerful change in the minds of many men.”

DECLARING INDEPENDENCE By early summer 1776, events pushed the wavering Continental Congress toward a decision. North Carolina had declared itself independent. A majority of Virginians told their delegates that they favored independence. At last the Congress urged each colony to form its own government. On June 7 Virginia delegate Richard Henry Lee moved that “these United Colonies are, and of a right ought to be, free and independent States.”

While talks on this fateful motion were under way, the Congress appointed a committee to prepare a formal declaration that would explain the reasons for the colonies’ actions. Virginia lawyer **Thomas Jefferson**, known for his broad knowledge and skillfully crafted prose, was chosen to express the committee’s points.

Jefferson’s masterful **Declaration of Independence** drew on the concepts of the English philosopher John Locke. Locke maintained that people enjoy “natural rights” to life, liberty, and property. Jefferson described these rights as “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

In keeping with Locke’s ideas, Jefferson then declared that governments derive “their just powers from the consent of the governed”—that is, from

the people. This right of consent gave the people the right “to alter or to abolish” any government that threatened their unalienable rights and to install a government that would uphold these principles. On the basis of this reasoning, the American colonies declared their independence from Britain. The Declaration listed the numerous ways in which the British king had violated the “unalienable rights” of the Americans.

The Declaration states flatly that “all men are created equal.” When this phrase was written, it expressed the common belief that free citizens were political equals. It did not claim that all people had the same abilities or ought to have equal wealth. It was not meant to embrace women, Native Americans, and African American slaves—a large number of Americans. However, Jefferson’s words presented ideals that would later help these groups challenge traditional attitudes.

In his first draft, Jefferson, a slave owner himself, included an eloquent attack on the cruelty and injustice of the slave trade. However, South Carolina and Georgia, the two colonies most dependent on slavery, objected. To gain the votes of those two states, Jefferson dropped the passage on the slave trade.

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

Abigail Adams



The Declaration of Independence dealt with issues of equality, justice, and independence. However, it did not address conditions of inequality within the colonies themselves.

Husbands dominated their wives, for example, and slaves lived under complete control of their owners. Speaking on behalf of women, Abigail Adams had this to say to her husband John, who served in the Continental Congress:

“Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favourable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care . . . is not paid to the Ladies, we are determined to foment a Rebellion.”

Reading Check
Analyze Issues Why
do you think that
Common Sense was
so effective?

On July 2, 1776, the delegates voted unanimously that the American colonies were free. On July 4, 1776, they adopted the Declaration of Independence. While the delegates were creating a formal copy of the Declaration, the document was read aloud to a crowd in front of the Pennsylvania State House—now called Independence Hall. A rush of pride and anxiety ran through the **Patriots**—the supporters of independence—when they heard the closing vow: “We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our Sacred Honor.”

Americans Choose Sides

Americans now faced a difficult, bitter choice: revolution or loyalty to the Crown. This issue divided communities, friends, and even families throughout the colonies.

LOYALISTS AND PATRIOTS The exact number of **Loyalists**—those who opposed independence and remained loyal to the Crown—is unknown. Many with Loyalist sympathies changed sides as the war progressed.

Some Loyalists felt a special tie to the king because they had served as judges, councilors, or governors. Most Loyalists, however, were ordinary people of modest means. They included some people who lived far from the cities and knew little of the events that turned other colonists into revolutionaries. Other people remained loyal because they thought that the British were going to win the war and they wanted to avoid being punished as rebels. Still others were Loyalists because they thought that the Crown would protect their rights more effectively than the new colonial governments would.

Patriots drew their numbers from people who envisioned economic opportunity in an independent America. The Patriot cause embraced farmers, artisans, merchants, landowners, and elected officials. German colonists in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia also joined the fight for independence. While Patriots made up nearly half the population, many Americans remained neutral.

DIFFICULT DECISIONS

Reconciliation or Independence?

Many American colonists in 1775 were not convinced that independence from Britain was a good idea. They felt deep loyalty to the king. They were accustomed to British rule and the order that it had created.

Many others believed in Thomas Paine’s ideas. They wanted to be rid of tyranny as well as free to pursue their own economic gain and political ideals.

1. Consider the points of view of different groups of colonists, including slaves, in 1775. What factors do you think would have most strongly influenced each group’s preference for independence or reconciliation? Explain your answer.
2. Imagine that the delegates at the Second Continental Congress had voted for reconciliation. What events do you think would have followed—both in the short run and in the long run? Give reasons to support your answer.

Colonists Choose Sides

Loyalists and Patriots had much to gain and much to lose in the American colonies' struggle for independence. Fortunes, family ties, and religious obligations as well as personal convictions were at stake. For many, the most important issue was that of national identity. Both sides believed that they were fighting for their country as well as being loyal to what was best for America.



PATRIOTS



NATHANAEL GREENE

A pacifist Quaker, Nathanael Greene nonetheless chose to fight against the British.

"I am determined to defend my rights and maintain my freedom or sell my life in the attempt."



JAMES ARMISTEAD

The state of Virginia paid the following tribute to devoted revolutionary James Armistead, who as a slave had been permitted to enlist:

"At the peril of his life [Armistead] found means to frequent the British camp, and thereby faithfully executed important commissions entrusted to him by the marquis."



MERCY OTIS WARREN

Patriot Mercy Otis Warren wrote:

"I see the inhabitants of our plundered cities quitting the elegancies of life, possessing nothing but their freedom, I behold faction & discord tearing up an Island we once held dear and a mighty Empire long the dread of distant nations, tott'ring to the very foundation."



LOYALISTS



CHARLES INGLIS

A clergyman of the Church of England, Charles Inglis was loyal to the king and argued against independence.

"By a reconciliation with Britain, [an end] would be put to the present calamitous war, by which many lives have been lost, and so many more must be lost, if it continues."



JOSEPH BRANT

Mohawk chief Joseph Brant fought for the British during the French and Indian War and remained loyal to the Crown during the Revolutionary War.

"If we . . . [do] nothing for the British . . . there will be no peace for us. Our throats will be cut by the Red Coat man or by America. . . . We should go and join the father [Britain] . . . this is the only way for us."



ISAAC WILKINS

Isaac Wilkins had to leave America after he opposed sending delegates to the Second Continental Congress.

"I leave America and every endearing connection because I will not raise my hand against my Sovereign, nor will I draw my sword against my country. When I can conscientiously draw it in her favor, my life shall be cheerfully devoted to her service."

Document-Based Investigation Historical Source

Mob Rule

This British cartoon portrays the events of the Boston Tea Party from the Loyalist perspective. While Patriots are dumping tea, a British tax collector, having been tarred and feathered, is having tea poured down his throat. The “Liberty Tree,” where a copy of the Stamp Act has been nailed upside down, has been converted into a gallows, a device used for hanging people.



Analyze Historical Sources

1. How does the cartoonist make the mob look sinister?
2. What kind of comment does the cartoonist make by suspending a hangman's noose from the “Liberty Tree”? Explain.

Reading Check

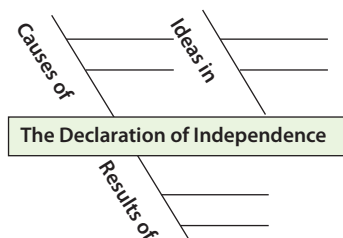
Contrast How did the thinking of the Loyalists differ from that of the Patriots?

TAKING SIDES The conflict presented dilemmas for other groups as well. The Quakers generally supported the Patriots but did not fight because they did not believe in war. Many African Americans fought on the side of the Patriots. Others joined the Loyalists since the British promised freedom to slaves who would fight for the Crown. Most Native Americans supported the British because they viewed colonial settlers as a bigger threat to their lands.

Now the colonies were plunged into two wars—a war for independence and a civil war in which Americans found themselves on opposing sides. The price of choosing sides could be high. In declaring their independence, the Patriots had invited war with the mightiest empire on earth.

Lesson 1 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Create a cluster diagram. Fill it in with details presenting causes, ideas, and results related to the Declaration of Independence.



2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
3. **Predict** Imagine that King George had accepted the Olive Branch Petition and sought a diplomatic resolution with the Congress. Do you think colonists would still have pressed for independence?
Think About:
 - the attitudes of the king and Parliament toward the colonies
 - the impact of fighting at Lexington, Concord, and Breed's Hill
 - the writings of Thomas Paine
4. **Analyze Primary Sources** Thomas Paine wrote in the introduction to *Common Sense*:
"The cause of America is in a great measure the cause of all mankind."
Evaluate the significance of Paine's statement, considering Locke's ideas about natural rights and Jefferson's ideas about "unalienable rights."

The Declaration of Independence

Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence is one of the most important and influential legal documents of modern times. Although the text frequently refers to 18th-century events, its Enlightenment philosophy and politics have continuing relevance today.

For more than 200 years, the Declaration of Independence has inspired leaders of other independence movements and has remained a crucial document in the struggle for democratic ideals of civil rights and human rights. For example, the Declaration of Independence quickly became very influential in France. Soon after the American Revolution ended, the French Revolution began based on the ideals set forth in the Declaration of Independence.

In Congress, July 4, 1776.


A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled.

Jefferson begins the Declaration by attempting to legally and philosophically justify the revolution that was already underway. Here Jefferson is saying that, now that the colonists have begun to separate themselves from British rule, it is time to explain why the colonists have taken this course of action.

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

These passages reveal the influence of the English philosopher John Locke. In *Two Treatises of Government* (1690), Locke argued that if a government does not allow its citizens to enjoy certain rights and freedoms, the people have a right to replace that government. This argument is part of the Enlightenment idea of a natural social contract in which people must give their consent to being ruled by a government.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness; that, to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.



Here begins the section in which Jefferson condemns the behavior of King George, listing the king's many tyrannical actions that have forced his American subjects to rebel.

Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and, when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasions from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

This is a reference to the 10,000 troops that the British government stationed in North America after the French and Indian War. Although the British government saw the troops as protection for the colonists, the colonists themselves viewed the troops as a standing army that threatened their freedom.

Here Jefferson condemns both the king and Parliament for passing the Intolerable Acts. Most of these laws were intended to punish the people of Massachusetts for the Boston Tea Party. For example, the Quartering Act of 1774 forced colonists to provide lodging for British troops. Another act allowed British soldiers accused of murder to be sent back to England for trial. The Boston Port Bill closed the port of Boston, "cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world."

Here Jefferson refers to the Quebec Act, which extended the boundaries of the province. He then refers to another act that changed the charter of Massachusetts and restricted town meetings.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us;

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States;

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world;

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent;

For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury;

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offenses;

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies;


For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments;

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.



He has constrained our fellow Citizens, taken Captive on the high Seas, to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms; Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Here Jefferson turns his attention away from the king and toward the British people. Calling the British the “common kindred” of the colonists, Jefferson reminds them how often the Americans have appealed to their sense of justice. Reluctantly, the colonists are now forced to break their political connections with their British kin.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

In this final paragraph, the delegates declare independence.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the Authority of the good People of these Colonies solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.

The Declaration ends with the delegates' pledge, or pact. The delegates at the Second Continental Congress knew that, in declaring their independence from Great Britain, they were committing treason—a crime punishable by death. "We must all hang together," Benjamin Franklin reportedly said, as the delegates prepared to sign the Declaration, "or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."



And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

[SIGNED BY]

John Hancock [President of the Continental Congress]

[GEORGIA]

Button Gwinnett
Lyman Hall
George Walton

[RHODE ISLAND]

Stephen Hopkins
William Ellery

[CONNECTICUT]

Roger Sherman
Samuel Huntington
William Williams
Oliver Wolcott

[NORTH CAROLINA]

William Hooper
Joseph Hewes
John Penn

[SOUTH CAROLINA]

Edward Rutledge
Thomas Heyward, Jr.
Thomas Lynch, Jr.
Arthur Middleton

[MARYLAND]

Samuel Chase
William Paca
Thomas Stone
Charles Carroll

[VIRGINIA]

George Wythe
Richard Henry Lee
Thomas Jefferson
Benjamin Harrison
Thomas Nelson, Jr.
Francis Lightfoot Lee
Carter Braxton

[PENNSYLVANIA]

Robert Morris
Benjamin Rush
Benjamin Franklin
John Morton
George Clymer
James Smith
George Taylor
James Wilson
George Ross

[DELAWARE]

Caesar Rodney
George Read
Thomas McKean

[NEW YORK]

William Floyd
Philip Livingston
Francis Lewis
Lewis Morris

[NEW JERSEY]

Richard Stockton
John Witherspoon
Francis Hopkinson
John Hart
Abraham Clark

[NEW HAMPSHIRE]

Josiah Bartlett
William Whipple
Matthew Thornton

[MASSACHUSETTS]

Samuel Adams
John Adams
Robert Treat Paine
Elbridge Gerry

Struggling Toward Saratoga

The Big Idea

After a series of setbacks, American forces won at Saratoga and survived.

Why It Matters Now

Determination, resilience, and unity have become part of the American character.

Key Terms and People

Valley Forge

Trenton

Saratoga

inflation

profiteering

One American's Story

After the colonists had declared independence, few people thought the rebellion would last. A divided colonial population of about two and a half million people faced a nation of 10 million that was backed by a worldwide empire.

Albigense Waldo worked as a surgeon at **Valley Forge** outside Philadelphia. Valley Forge served as the site of the Continental army's camp during the winter of 1777–1778. British troops occupied Philadelphia and found quarters inside warm homes. The underclothed and underfed Patriots huddled in makeshift huts in the freezing, snow-covered Pennsylvania woods. Waldo, who wrote of his stay at Valley Forge, reported on what was a common sight at the camp.

“Here comes a bowl of beef soup full of dead leaves and dirt. There comes a soldier. His bare feet are seen through his worn-out shoes—his legs nearly naked from the tattered remains of an only pair of stockings—his Breeches [trousers] are not sufficient to cover his nakedness—his Shirt hanging in Strings—his hair disheveled—his face meager.”

—Albigense Waldo, quoted in *Valley Forge, the Making of an Army*



General Washington's troops march to Valley Forge.

The ordeal at Valley Forge marked a low point for General Washington's troops, but even as it occurred, the Americans' hopes of winning began to improve.

The War Moves to the Middle States

The British had previously retreated from Boston in March 1776, moving the theater of war to the middle states. As part of a grand plan to stop the rebellion by isolating New England, the British decided to seize New York City.

DEFEAT IN NEW YORK Two brothers, General William Howe and Admiral Richard Howe, joined forces on Staten Island. They sailed into New York harbor in the summer of 1776 with the largest British expeditionary force ever assembled—32,000 soldiers. Their force included thousands of German mercenaries, or soldiers who fight solely for money. The Americans called these troops Hessians, because many of them came from the German region of Hesse.

As an early supporter of American independence, George Washington had begun to recruit and train a militia when tensions first arose with the British. Washington rallied 23,000 men to New York's defense, but he was vastly outnumbered. Most of his troops were untrained recruits with poor equipment. The battle for New York ended in late August with an American retreat following heavy losses. Michael Graham, a Continental army volunteer, described the chaotic withdrawal on August 27, 1776.

"It is impossible for me to describe the confusion and horror of the scene that ensued: the artillery flying . . . over the horses' backs, our men running in almost every direction, . . . [a]nd the enemy huzzahing when they took prisoners. . . . At the time, I could not account for how it was that our troops were so completely surrounded but have since understood there was another road across the ridge several miles above Flatbush that was left unoccupied by our troops. Here the British passed and got betwixt them and Brooklyn unobserved. This accounts for the disaster of that day."

—Michael Graham, quoted in *The Revolution Remembered: Eyewitness Accounts of the War for Independence*

By late fall, the British had pushed Washington's army across the Delaware River into Pennsylvania. The vast majority of Washington's men had either deserted or had been killed or captured. Fewer than 8,000 men remained under Washington's command, and the terms of their enlistment were due to end on December 31. Washington desperately needed some kind of victory for his men to keep them from going home.

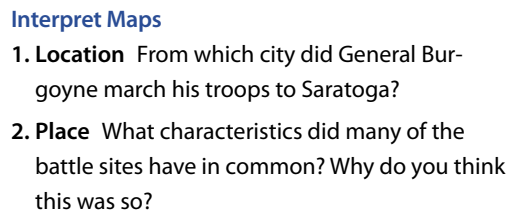
THE BATTLE OF TRENTON Washington resolved to risk everything on one bold stroke set for Christmas night, 1776. In the face of a fierce storm, he led 2,400 men in small rowboats across the ice-choked Delaware River.

By 8 o'clock the next morning, the men had marched nine miles through sleet and snow to the objective—**Trenton**, New Jersey, held by a garrison of Hessians. Lulled into confidence by the storm, most of the Hessians had drunk too much rum the night before and were still sleeping it off. In a



The Americans were rallied by another astonishing victory eight days later against 1,200 British stationed at Princeton. Encouraged by these victories, Washington marched his army into winter camp near Morristown, in northern New Jersey.

VICTORY AT SARATOGA Meanwhile, one of Howe's fellow British generals, John "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne, convinced the London high command to allow him to pursue a complex scheme. Burgoyne's plan was to lead an army down a route of lakes from Canada to Albany. There he would meet Howe's troops as they arrived from New York City. According to Burgoyne's plan, the two generals would then join forces to isolate New England from the rest of the colonies.

Revolutionary War, 1775–1778



Military Strengths and Weaknesses

| United States | Great Britain |
|---|---|
| Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> familiarity of home ground leadership of Washington and other officers inspiring cause of independence  | Strengths <ul style="list-style-type: none"> strong, well-trained army and navy strong central government with available funds support of colonial Loyalists and Native Americans  |
| Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> most soldiers untrained and undisciplined shortage of food and ammunition inferior navy no central government to enforce wartime policies | Weaknesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> large distance separating Britain from battlefields troops unfamiliar with terrain weak military leaders sympathy of certain British politicians for the American cause |

Burgoyne set out with 4,000 redcoats, 3,000 mercenaries, and 1,000 Mohawk under his command. His army had to haul 30 wagons containing 138 pieces of artillery along with extra personal items, such as fine clothes and champagne. South of Lake Champlain, swamps and gullies, as well as thick underbrush, bogged down Burgoyne's army. Food supplies ran low.

The Continental Congress had appointed General Horatio Gates to command the Northern Department of the Continental army. Gates, a popular commander, gathered militiamen and soldiers from all over New York and New England. Burgoyne lost several hundred men every time his forces clashed with the Americans, such as when Ethan Allen and his Green Mountain Boys attacked Burgoyne at Bennington, in what is now Vermont. Even worse, Burgoyne didn't realize that Howe was preoccupied with conquering and occupying Philadelphia and wasn't coming to meet him.

Massed American troops finally surrounded Burgoyne at **Saratoga**, where he surrendered his battered army to General Gates on October 17, 1777. The surrender at Saratoga dramatically changed Britain's war strategy. From that time on, the British generally kept their troops along the coast, close to the big guns and supply bases of the British fleet.

A TURNING POINT France continued to be Great Britain's biggest rival in the struggle to build a world empire. The French were still bitter from their defeat by the British in the French and Indian War, resulting in loss of North American territory. This rivalry caused the French to work with the Americans against the British.

Ordeal at Valley Forge

General Washington's letters to the Congress and his friends were filled with reports of the suffering and endurance of his men.

"To see men without Clothes to cover their nakedness, without Blankets to lay on, without Shoes, by which their Marches might be traced by the blood of their feet, and almost as often without Provision . . . is a mark of patience and obedience which in my opinion can scarcely be paralleled."

—George Washington, quoted in *Ordeal at Valley Forge*

Analyze Historical Sources

What was Washington's opinion of his soldiers? Why?

To begin the American–French alliance, the French had secretly sent weapons to the Patriots since early 1776. The Saratoga victory bolstered French trust in the American army. France now agreed to support the Revolution. The French recognized American independence and signed an alliance, or treaty of cooperation, with the Americans in February 1778. According to the terms, France agreed not to make peace with Britain unless Britain also recognized American independence.

WINTER AT VALLEY FORGE It would take months for French aid to arrive. In the meantime, the British controlled New York and parts of New England. While British troops wintered comfortably in Philadelphia, Washington and his meager Continental army struggled to stay alive amidst bitter cold and primitive conditions at winter camp in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. The soldiers lived in makeshift huts and tents, which provided little protection from the cold. Soldiers suffered from exposure and frostbite. Surgeons like Albigense Waldo worked constantly but often unsuccessfully to save arms and legs from amputation. Of the 10,000 soldiers who braved wind, snow, and hunger at Valley Forge that winter, more than 2,000 died. Yet those who survived remained at their posts.

Colonial Life During the Revolution

The Revolutionary War touched the life of every American, not just the men on the battlefield. Congress struggled to finance the war. Women on the home front worked to maintain farms and businesses while the men were away fighting the war.

FINANCING THE WAR When the Congress ran out of hard currency—silver and gold—it borrowed money by selling bonds to American investors and foreign governments, especially France. It also printed paper money called

Reading Check

Analyze Motives

What was the reason France wanted to ally with the Americans during the Revolutionary War?

George Washington (1732–1799)

During the Revolutionary War, Commander in Chief George Washington became a national hero. An imposing man, Washington stood six feet two inches tall. He was broad-shouldered, calm, and dignified, and he was an expert horseman. But it was Washington's character that won hearts and, ultimately, the war.

Washington roused dispirited men into a fighting force. At Princeton, he galloped on his white horse into the line of fire, shouting and encouraging his men. At Valley Forge, he bore the same cold and privation as every suffering soldier. Time and again, Washington's tactics saved his smaller, weaker force to fight another day. By the end of the war, the entire nation idolized General Washington. Adoring soldiers crowded near him just to touch his boots when he rode by.



Continental currency. As Congress printed more and more money, its value plunged, causing rising prices, or **inflation**.

The Congress also struggled to equip the beleaguered army. With few munitions factories and the British navy blockading the coast, the Americans had to smuggle arms from Europe. Some government officials engaged in **profiteering**, selling scarce goods for a profit. Corrupt merchants either hoarded goods or sold defective merchandise like spoiled meat, cheap shoes, and defective weapons.

In 1781 the Congress appointed a rich Philadelphia merchant named Robert Morris as superintendent of finance. His associate was Haym Salomon, a Jewish political refugee from Poland. Morris and Salomon begged and borrowed on their personal credit to raise money to provide salaries for the Continental army. They raised funds from many sources, including Philadelphia's Quakers and Jews. Due to the efforts of Morris and Salomon, on September 8, 1781, the troops were finally paid in specie, or gold coin.

CIVILIANS AT WAR The demands of war also affected civilians. When men marched off to fight, many wives had to manage farms, shops, and businesses as well as households and families. Some women, such as Benjamin Franklin's daughter, Sarah Franklin Bache of Philadelphia, organized volunteers to mend clothing for the soldiers. Many women made ammunition from their household silver. And hundreds of women followed their husbands to the battlefield, where they washed, mended, and cooked for the troops.

Some women risked their lives in combat. A few, such as 21-year-old Deborah Sampson, disguised themselves as men and became soldiers in



Molly Pitcher was the heroine of the battle of Monmouth, New Jersey, in 1778.

the Continental army. At Fort Washington, New York, Margaret Corbin replaced a gunner who was shot and then was shot herself. Mary Ludwig Hays McCauly took her husband's place at a cannon when he was wounded at the Battle of Monmouth. Known for carrying pitchers of water to the soldiers, McCauly won the nickname "Molly Pitcher." Afterward, General Washington made her a noncommissioned officer for her brave deeds.

Thousands of African American slaves escaped to freedom. Some went to the cities, where they passed as free people. Others went to the frontier, where they sometimes joined Native American tribes. About 5,000 African Americans served in the Continental army, where their courage, loyalty, and talent impressed white Americans. Native Americans remained on the fringes of the Revolution. Some fought for the British, but most Native Americans remained apart from the conflict.

Reading Check

Summarize In what ways did women contribute to the Revolutionary War?

Lesson 3 Assessment

- Organize Information** In a chart, list each early battle of the American Revolution, its outcome, and why it was important.

| Battle | Outcome | Importance |
|--------|---------|------------|
| | | |
| | | |

- Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

- Develop Historical Perspective** If you were a woman civilian during the beginning of the American Revolution, what problem caused by the war do you think would affect you the most?

Think About:

- inflation and the scarcity of goods
- the separation of families
- the demands of the war effort

- Predict** Imagine that Burgoyne and the British had captured Saratoga in 1777. How might the course of the war have changed?
- Evaluate** How did George Washington measure up as a military leader? How did his leadership affect the common soldier in the Continental army?

Winning the War

The Big Idea

Strategic victories in the South and at Yorktown enabled the Americans to defeat the British.

Why It Matters Now

The American defeat of the British established the United States as an independent nation.

Key Terms and People

Yorktown

Marquis de Lafayette

Friedrich von Steuben

Charles Cornwallis

Treaty of Paris

egalitarianism

One American's Story

Colonel William Fontaine of the Virginia militia stood with the American and French armies. They lined a road near **Yorktown**, Virginia, on the afternoon of October 19, 1781, to witness the formal British surrender. The French were dressed in bright blue coats and white trousers. The American troops, standing proudly behind their generals, wore rough hunting shirts and faded Continental army uniforms. Colonel Fontaine later described the scene.

"I had the happiness to see that British army which so lately spread dismay and desolation through all our country, march forth . . . at 3 o'clock through our whole army, drawn up in two lines about 20 yards distance and return disrobed of all their terrors. . . . You could not have heard a whisper or seen the least motion throughout our whole line, but every countenance was erect and expressed a serene cheerfulness."

—Colonel William Fontaine, quoted in *The Yorktown Campaign and the Surrender of Cornwallis, 1781*



The detail of John Trumbull's painting of the British surrender at Yorktown depicts General Charles O'Hara, who stood in for General Cornwallis at the ceremony.

The American Revolution had finally ended, and the Americans had won—a fact that astonished the world. Several years before, in the depths of the Valley Forge winter of 1777–1778, few would have thought such an event possible.

European Allies Shift the Balance

Help came to the colonists from other European countries. France and Spain had lost a huge amount of valuable American land to the British as a result of the French and Indian War. This motivated both countries to join the Revolutionary War to fight against Great Britain. France and Spain hoped that a British defeat in America would also make Britain weaker in Europe. Holland also chose to fight with the Patriots.

FRENCH ALLIANCE The French government helped the Americans by sending gunpowder, artillery, and muskets. Then in 1776 the Americans sent Benjamin Franklin to France as an influential diplomat. In his fur cap and homespun coat, he became a favorite with both aristocrats and the ordinary people. Franklin was in Paris when the news of Saratoga reached there in December 1777. As a result of Saratoga and Franklin's diplomatic skills, France soon signed two treaties. One formally recognized the United States as a nation. The other promised military help. In 1780 France sent a 6,000-soldier army to help the Americans fight the British.



Washington and Lafayette speak with a soldier at Valley Forge.

Reading Check

Find Main Ideas

Who were some of the European allies that came to the aid of the colonies?

A French military leader, the **Marquis de Lafayette** (mär-kē' də lăf'ē-ēt'), offered great assistance to the American cause. He was a brave, idealistic 20-year-old aristocrat. The young Lafayette joined Washington's staff and bore the misery of Valley Forge. He lobbied for French reinforcements in France in 1779, and led a command in Virginia in the last years of the war.

FRIEDRICH VON STEUBEN As a firm believer in military discipline and training, George Washington was dismayed at the lack of preparation displayed by the militia troops under his command. Later in February 1778, in the midst of the frozen winter at Valley Forge, American troops began an amazing transformation. **Friedrich von Steuben** (vŏn stōō'bən), a Prussian captain and talented drillmaster, volunteered his services to General Washington. He went to work "to make regular soldiers out of country bumpkins." Von Steuben taught the colonial soldiers to stand at attention, execute field maneuvers, fire and reload quickly, and wield bayonets. With the help of such European military leaders, the raw Continental Army was becoming an effective fighting force.

The British Move South

After their devastating defeat at Saratoga, the British changed their military strategy. In the summer of 1778, they began to shift their operations to the South. There, the British hoped to rally Loyalist support, reclaim their former colonies in the region, and then slowly fight their way back north.

EARLY BRITISH SUCCESS IN THE SOUTH At the end of 1778, a British expedition easily took Savannah, Georgia. By the spring of 1779, a royal governor once again commanded Georgia. In 1780 General Henry Clinton, who had replaced Howe in New York, along with the ambitious General **Charles Cornwallis** sailed south with 8,500 men. In their greatest victory of

the war, the British captured Charles Town, South Carolina, in May 1780 and marched 5,500 American soldiers off as prisoners of war. Clinton then left for New York, leaving Cornwallis to command the British forces in the South and to conquer South and North Carolina.

For most of 1780, Cornwallis succeeded. As the redcoats advanced, they were joined by thousands of African Americans who had escaped from Patriot slave owners to join the British and win their freedom. In August, Cornwallis's army smashed American forces at Camden, South Carolina. Within three months, the British had established forts across the state. However, when Cornwallis and his forces advanced into North Carolina, Patriot bands attacked them and cut British communications lines. The continuous harassment forced the redcoats to retreat to South Carolina.

BRITISH LOSSES IN 1781 Washington ordered Nathanael Greene, his ablest general, to march south and harass Cornwallis as he retreated. Greene divided his force into two groups, sending 600 soldiers under the command of General Daniel Morgan to South Carolina. Cornwallis, in turn, sent Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton and his troops to pursue Morgan's soldiers.

Morgan and his men led the British on a grueling chase through rough countryside. When the forces met in January 1781 at Cowpens, South Carolina, the British expected the outnumbered Americans to flee. However, the Continental army fought back and forced the redcoats to surrender. Angered by the defeat at Cowpens, Cornwallis attacked Greene two months later at Guilford Court House, North Carolina. Cornwallis won the battle, but the victory cost him nearly a fourth of his troops. Ninety-three were killed, over 400 were wounded, and 26 were missing. Greene had weakened the British, but he worried about the fight for the South.

After the exhausting battle in the Carolinas, Cornwallis chose to move the fight to Virginia, where he met up with reinforcements. First he tried to capture the divisions led by Lafayette and von Steuben. When that failed, Cornwallis made a fateful mistake. He led his army of 7,500 onto the peninsula between the James and York rivers. He camped at Yorktown, a few miles from the original English settlement of Jamestown. Cornwallis planned to fortify Yorktown, take Virginia, and then move north to join Clinton's forces.

Reading Check
Summarize How did generals Morgan and Greene work together to defeat British forces?



Daniel Morgan's colonial forces defeated a British regiment under Colonel Tarleton at the Battle of Cowpens in 1781. This detail from *The Battle of Cowpens* by William Ranney shows that the Americans included both white and African American soldiers.

Revolutionary War, 1778–1781



The British Surrender at Yorktown

A combination of good luck and well-timed decisions now favored the American cause. In 1780 a French army of 6,000 had landed in Newport, Rhode Island, after the British left the city to focus on the South. The French had stationed one fleet there and were operating another in the West Indies. When news of Cornwallis's plans reached him, the Marquis de Lafayette suggested that the American and French armies join forces with the two French fleets and attack the British forces at Yorktown.

VICTORY AT YORKTOWN Following Lafayette's plan, the Americans and the French closed in on Cornwallis. A French naval force defeated a British fleet. Then it blocked the entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, thereby preventing a British rescue by sea. Meanwhile, about 17,000 French and American troops surrounded the British on the Yorktown peninsula and bombarded them day and night. The siege of Yorktown lasted about three weeks. On October 17, 1781, with his troops outnumbered by more than two to one and exhausted from constant shelling, Cornwallis finally raised the white flag of surrender.

On October 19, a triumphant Washington, the French generals, and their troops assembled to accept the British surrender. After General Charles

O'Hara, representing Cornwallis, handed over his sword, the British troops laid down their arms. In his diary, Captain Johann Ewald, a German officer, tried to explain this astonishing turn of events.

"With what soldiers in the world could one do what was done by these men, who go about nearly naked and in the greatest privation? Deny the best-disciplined soldiers of Europe what is due them and they will run away in droves, and the general will soon be alone. But from this one can perceive what an enthusiasm—which these poor fellows call 'Liberty'—can do!"

—Johann Ewald, from *Diary of the American War*

SEEKING PEACE Peace talks began in Paris in 1782. Representatives of four nations—the United States, Great Britain, France, and Spain—joined the negotiations, with each nation looking out for its own interests. Britain hoped to avoid giving America full independence. France supported American independence but feared America's becoming a major power. Spain was interested in acquiring the land between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River.

Many observers expected the savvy European diplomats to outwit the Americans at the bargaining table. But the Continental Congress chose an able team of negotiators—John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay of New York. Together, the three demanded that Britain recognize American independence before any other negotiations began. Once Britain agreed to full independence, the talks officially opened.

In September 1783 the delegates signed the **Treaty of Paris**, which confirmed U.S. independence and set the boundaries of the new nation. The United States now stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Mississippi River and from Canada to the Florida border.

Some provisions of the treaty promised future trouble. The British made no attempt to protect the land interests of their Native American allies, and the treaty did not specify when the British would evacuate their American forts. On the other side, the Americans agreed that British creditors could collect debts owed them by Americans and promised to allow Loyalists to sue in state courts for recovery of their losses. The state governments, however, later failed to honor this agreement.

Reading Check
Identify Problems
What issues did the
Treaty of Paris leave
unresolved?

The War Becomes a Symbol of Liberty

With the signing of the Treaty of Paris, all European nations recognized the United States of America. Former British subjects now possessed a new identity as free Americans, loyal to a new ideal. The American Revolution would inspire the world as both a war for independence and a democratic revolution, introducing a new form of government for the United States.

Map of the New United States

This “A New and Correct Map of the United States of North America” of 1784 was one of the first maps produced to show the boundaries of the new nation. Unfortunately, it contained much inaccurate information, such as the incorrect placement of rivers.

Analyze Historical Sources

Why do you think Americans wanted to have maps made of the new United States?



THE IMPACT ON AMERICAN SOCIETY Revolutionary ideals set a new course for American society. During the war, class distinctions between rich and poor had begun to blur as the wealthy wore homespun clothing and military leaders showed respect for all of their men. These changes stimulated a rise of **egalitarianism**—a belief in the equality of all people. That belief fostered a new attitude: the idea that ability, effort, and virtue, not wealth or family, defined one’s worth. The average workingman benefited from the new attitude. Farmers and skilled urban workers had more respect, more political power, and more economic opportunities.

The egalitarianism of the 1780s, however, applied only to white males. From earliest western civilization, traditional women’s roles and rights were very limited. The American Revolution did not bring any new political rights to women. A few states made it possible for women to divorce, but common law still dictated that a married woman’s property belonged to her husband.

The American Revolution did bring a shift in ideas about women’s roles. Before the war, American women had become politically active for the first time, organizing boycotts and later supporting the war effort. During the war, women ably managed farms and businesses. Some women fought in battle or forcefully defended their homes. The concept of republican motherhood developed from these roots. It was recognized that women had the first opportunity to educate children in civic responsibilities. Republican motherhood encouraged mothers to raise their children to be intelligent, patriotic, and competent citizens, so sons could become leaders and daughters could run households and raise well-educated children. While women’s roles continued to be traditional and very limited, republican motherhood added respect and importance to the perception of those roles.

The new egalitarianism did not apply to African Americans either. Most African Americans were still enslaved, and even those who were free usually

faced discrimination and poverty. However, by 1804 many northern states had taken steps to outlaw slavery.

The Southern states, where slavery was more entrenched, did not outlaw the practice, but most made it easier for slave owners to free their slaves. Planters in the upper South debated the morality of slavery. Some, like George Washington, freed their slaves. In Maryland and Virginia, the number of free blacks increased from about 4,000 to over 20,000 following the war. The slavery debate generally did not reach the Deep South, although some southern slaveholders did have grave misgivings.

For Native Americans, the Revolution brought uncertainty. During both the French and Indian War and the Revolution, many Native American communities had either been destroyed or displaced. The Native American population east of the Mississippi had declined by about 50 percent. Postwar developments further threatened Native American interests. Settlers from the United States moved west and began taking tribal lands left unprotected by the Treaty of Paris.

THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING A GOVERNMENT In adopting the Declaration of Independence and fighting the Revolutionary War, Americans had rejected the British system of government, in which kings and nobles held power. In its place, they set out to establish a stable republic, a government of the people. This new American government would not allow taxation without representation.

The Continental Congress had chosen a motto for the reverse side of the Great Seal of the United States: “a new order of the ages.” Creating this new order forced Americans to address complex questions: Who should participate in government? How should the government answer to the people? How could a government be set up so that opposing groups of citizens would all have a voice?

Reading Check

Analyze Issues

What were the exceptions to the spirit of egalitarianism that arose after the Revolutionary War?

Lesson 4 Assessment

1. **Organize Information** Choose five significant events described in this lesson. For each, write a newspaper headline that summarizes its significance.

| Event | Headline |
|-------|----------|
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

Choose one of the headlines and write the first paragraph of the article.

2. **Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.

3. **Analyze Causes** Do you think the colonists could have won independence without aid from foreigners? Explain.

Think About:

- the military needs of the Americans and strengths of the French and Spanish
- the Americans' belief in their fight for independence
- von Steuben and Lafayette

4. **Analyze Effects** What were the political, economic, social, and geographic effects of the Revolutionary War on the American colonists?

5. **Evaluate** In your opinion, what was the single biggest challenge facing the new country?

Module 3 Assessment

Key Terms and People

For each term or person below, write a sentence explaining its connection to the American Revolution.

1. Stamp Act
2. Boston Massacre
3. committees of correspondence
4. Olive Branch Petition
5. Common Sense
6. Thomas Jefferson
7. Saratoga
8. Valley Forge
9. Marquis de Lafayette
10. Yorktown

Main Ideas

Use your notes and the information in the module to answer the following questions.

The Stirrings of Rebellion

1. What methods did colonists use to protest actions by Parliament between 1765 and 1775?
2. Why were the committees of correspondence established?
3. Describe the causes and the results of the Boston Tea Party.
4. What were the results of fighting at Lexington and Concord?

Ideas Help Start a Revolution

5. What did Jefferson mean, and not mean, by the phrase “all men are created equal”?
6. What reasons did Thomas Jefferson give to justify revolt by the colonies?
7. Why did many colonists not support independence?

Struggling Toward Saratoga

8. Why was the Battle of Trenton significant?
9. What British military plan did the colonial victory at Saratoga ruin?

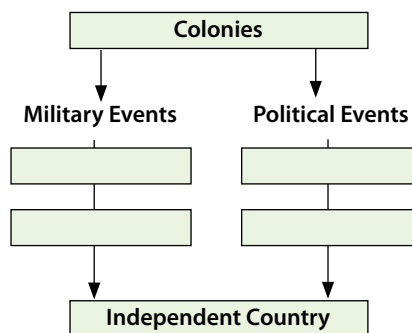
10. Explain how civilians supported the war effort in the colonies.
11. What roles did African Americans and Native Americans play in the Revolutionary War?

Winning the War

12. How did the inexperienced colonists become professional, effective soldiers?
13. How did France help the colonies during the American Revolution?
14. How did the Revolutionary War impact the colonial practice of taxation without representation?
15. Describe three significant challenges facing the United States when the American Revolution ended.

Critical Thinking

1. **Summarize** Create a dual-path chart showing how the colonies became independent. On one path, list four or more military events, such as battles and changes in command. On the other, list four or more political events, including protests, publication of documents, and legal actions.



2. **Develop Historical Perspective** What are some fundamental American values and principles expressed in Thomas Paine’s Common Sense?

Module 3 Assessment, continued

3. **Draw Conclusions** Thomas Jefferson included the following in the text of the Declaration of Independence:
- legal and philosophical justifications for the American Revolution
 - a list of King George III's tyrannical actions
 - an aside to the British people in England
 - a statement declaring independence from England

Why do you think Jefferson wanted to include all of those portions, rather than just the statement declaring independence from England?

4. **Summarize** In the second and third paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson wrote about philosophical justifications for the American Revolution. In your own words, summarize these justifications.
5. **Analyze Motives** Near the end of the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson wrote a paragraph addressed to the British people in England. What point was he making and what was his motivation in communicating it?
6. **Form Opinions** Review France's role in helping the colonies rebel against Great Britain. Under what conditions, if any, do you think the United States should help other countries?
7. **Analyze Effects** How did ideas about women's roles begin to change as a result of the American Revolution?

Engage with History

Recall the issues that you explored at the beginning of the module. Imagine that it is 1783, and you have been present at a gathering of your friends who recall the many sacrifices made during the war for independence from Great Britain. Write a journal entry in which you try to describe some of those sacrifices. Recall key military events, contributions made by civilians, and key figures who played important roles in the struggle for freedom.

Focus on Writing

Do research on major governmental ideas established in the colonial period using secondary sources. A secondary source interprets or analyzes a primary source, which is an eyewitness or firsthand account of history. Find sources and write a paragraph about each of the following:

- analyses of Thomas Paine's Common Sense
- analyses of the Declaration of Independence

Collaborative Learning

In a small group, read and discuss the "One American's Story" at the beginning of Lesson 2. Then consider the following question: What makes someone a Patriot? Using stories and images from the Internet, books, magazines, and newspapers, make a list of people you consider to be Patriots. List their names as well as the reasons why you chose them on a chart in your classroom.

The background of the page is a historical painting depicting a scene from the American Revolution. It shows a group of soldiers in 18th-century attire, including tricorn hats and long coats. Some soldiers are in the foreground, while others are in the background. A large red flag is prominent on the left, and a Union Jack flag is visible in the center. The scene is set in a field with trees in the background.

THE *American* REVOLUTION

The American Revolution led to the formation of the United States of America in 1776. Beginning in the 1760s, tensions grew between American colonists and their British rulers when Britain started passing a series of new laws and taxes for the colonies. With no representation in the British government, however, colonists had no say in these laws, which led to growing discontent. After fighting broke out in 1775, colonial leaders met to decide what to do. They approved the

Declaration of Independence, announcing that the American colonies were free from British rule. In reality, however, freedom would not come until after years of fighting.

Explore some of the people and events of the American Revolution online. You can find a wealth of information, video clips, primary sources, activities, and more through your online textbook.

"I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

—Patrick Henry



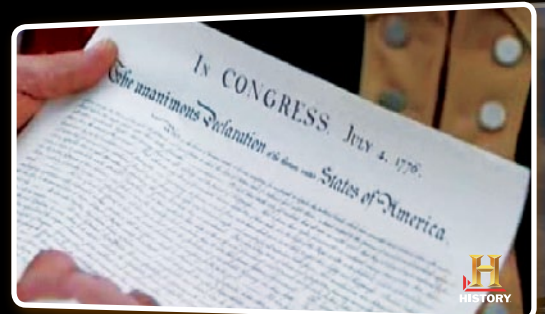
"Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!"

Read an excerpt from Patrick Henry's famous speech, which urged the colonists to fight against the British.



Seeds of Revolution

Watch the video to learn about colonial discontent in the years before the Revolutionary War.



Independence!

Watch the video to learn about the origins of the Declaration of Independence.



Victory!

Watch the video to learn how the American colonists won the Revolutionary War.