

The American Revolution



Essential Questions

- Why did England increase colonial taxation in the years leading up to the Revolution?
- Why did England move away from a policy of “salutary neglect”?
- Which colonial leaders stood out as the most vocal and most radical?
- What British policies and laws caused the strongest colonial reaction?
- Why did the British government continue to tax the colonies without allowing them representation in Parliament?
- Why did the American Revolution become a battle of ideas, rather than simply a military conflict?
- How did the Revolution affect women, blacks, and Indians?
- How did the Revolution create a new “American character”?

England and the Colonies (1763)

- Victorious in French and Indian War
- British territory in North America doubled
- British military and economy stretched thin
- England expected colonies to help pay for war
- Colonists' view of these expectations



The green area indicates British holdings as a result of the Treaty of Paris.

Pontiac's Rebellion and the Proclamation of 1763



- Ottawa chief Pontiac
- Led Indian confederacy against British forts and outposts
- Rebellion crushed
- British government created Proclamation Line
- Colonists angered

Map showing the Proclamation Line of 1763

“Salutary Neglect”

- Unofficial British trade policy
- Restrictive trade laws affecting colonies not strictly enforced
- Belief that non-enforcement would help colonies’ economic growth
- Britain began to enforce laws more strictly after French and Indian War

Discussion Questions

1. What differences in views did the British and the colonists have about each other in 1763? Why?
2. How did Pontiac's Rebellion affect the relationship between the colonies and England? Why?
3. Why did the British follow a policy of "salutary neglect" in regard to colonial trade? What led them to abandon this policy?

The Sugar Act (1764)



Colonists meeting about the Sugar Act

- Passed under Grenville to replace Molasses Act
- Taxed sugar, coffee, indigo, wine
- Violators tried by military courts
- Colonists upset about “taxation without representation”

The Stamp Act

- Passed by Parliament in 1765
- Required an official stamp on all printed materials
- Stamps proved tax had been paid
- Direct tax
- Greatly angered colonists



A tax stamp

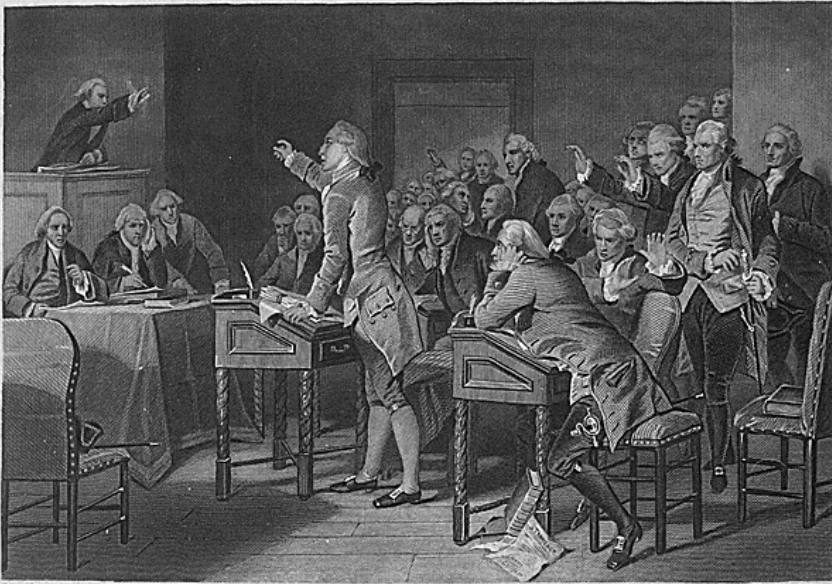
The Stamp Act: Opposition Grows

- “The Loyal Nine”
- Tax collectors burned in effigy, tarred and feathered
- Massachusetts Governor Hutchinson’s home was burned down



A colonial cartoon criticizing the Stamp Act

The Stamp Act Congress



Members of the Stamp Act Congress debating the issues before it

- New York, October 1765
- Nine colonies sent delegates
- Admitted that England had the right to make laws regarding the colonies
- Protested taxation without representation
- Resolutions called for boycotts of British goods

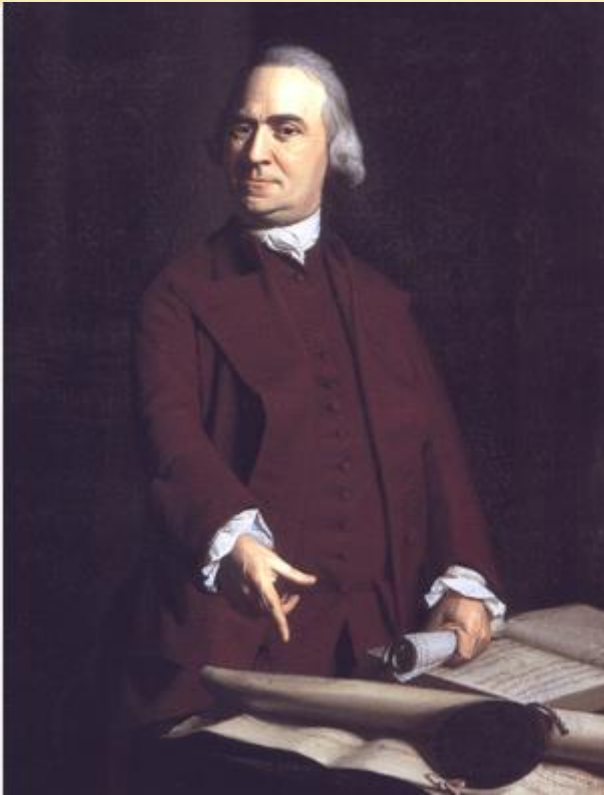
The Sons of Liberty

- Colonial group formed to protest the Stamp Act
- Members included Revere, Warren, Henry, Hancock, J. Adams
- Later organized Boston Tea Party



Members of the Sons of Liberty tarring and feathering a stampmaster; note also the noose in the background of the picture.

Committees of Correspondence



Samuel Adams

- Created as an information network for those opposed to British policies
- Idea first suggested by Samuel Adams
- First committee created, 1764
- Later used to coordinate First Continental Congress

The Declaratory Act

- Accompanied Stamp Act repeal
- Parliament agreed to repeal Stamp Act if Declaratory Act was passed
- Declared that Britain had the right to make laws affecting the colonies even without colonial representation in Parliament
- Some colonial leaders saw Declaratory Act as proof that further taxation laws would be enacted

The Townshend Acts

- Introduced by Chancellor Townshend
- Indirect taxation of many everyday transactions
- Colonists still resistant
- British sent troops to Boston



Chancellor of the Exchequer
Charles Townshend

Discussion Questions

1. How did the Navigation Acts and Molasses Act turn many colonists into smugglers?
2. What items did the Stamp Act tax? Why did colonists strongly resist this tax? Why did the British repeal the tax?
3. What made the Townshend Acts different than the Stamp Act? What items did they tax? Why did the colonists oppose these acts?

The Boston Massacre

- March 1770
- British soldiers killed five protestors
- Crispus Attucks among the dead
- John Adams represented soldiers at trial
- Most found not guilty



Paul Revere's famous engraving of the massacre

“The Intolerable Acts”



A cartoon protesting the Intolerable Acts

- Called the “Coercive Acts” in Britain
- Punishment for the Boston Tea Party
- Boston Port Act
- Administration of Justice Act
- Massachusetts Government Act

First Continental Congress

- Philadelphia, Sept. 1774
- Included Washington, Adams, Henry
- Galloway Plan of Union
- Suffolk Resolves
- Continental Association
- Declaration of Rights and Grievances
- Planned to reconvene in 1775



A mural in the U.S. Capitol showing Patrick Henry speaking to the Continental Congress

Lexington and Concord



Paul Revere

- April 1775
- General Gage ordered weapons and supplies at Concord seized
- Revere and others warned minutemen about the coming attack
- Eight minutemen killed at Lexington; heavy British losses at Concord

Discussion Questions

1. What events led to the Boston Massacre? What happened to the British soldiers involved in the shooting?
2. Why did the Sons of Liberty carry out the Boston Tea Party? How did the British respond?
3. What was the purpose of the First Continental Congress? Who were some of the delegates?
4. Why did the British march on Lexington and Concord? What happened at these two sites?

Second Continental Congress

- Philadelphia, May 1775
- More radical than First Continental Congress
- Delegates faced with dilemma of negotiating with British while raising an army
- Washington appointed commander of the new Continental Army

Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill)

- Hill provided locations for colonists to attack British troops
- Colonists fortified Breed's Hill
- British managed to take hill on third charge
- Over 1000 British and about 400 Continental soldiers killed



British troops attempt to take the colonial position at Bunker Hill (Breed's Hill) outside Boston

Discussion Questions

1. What made the Second Continental Congress different than the first? What dilemma did it face? What military issue did it address?
2. What happened at the Battle of Bunker Hill? What did George III do when he heard about the battle?
3. What was the Olive Branch Petition? How did George III respond to it?

Common Sense

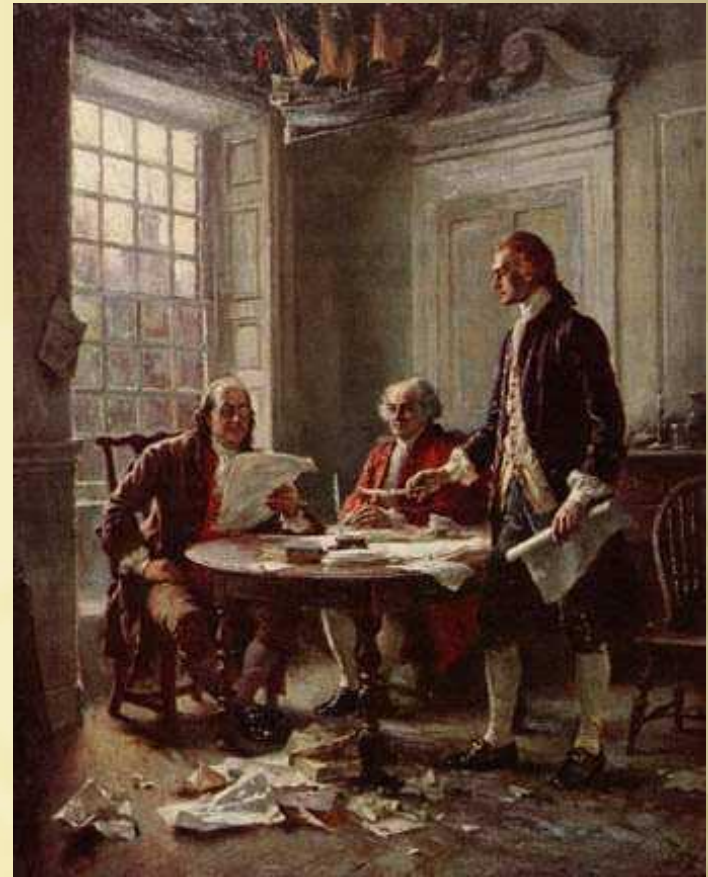
- Written by Thomas Paine, early 1776
- Gave easily understandable arguments for a split with Britain
- Convinced many more to support independence
- Sold over 150,000 copies



Thomas Paine

Moving Toward Independence

- *Common Sense* led many to think differently about the conflict with England
- Lee's independence resolution
- Committee of Five formed; Jefferson selected to write the document



Franklin, Adams, and Jefferson (from left) editing the Declaration of Independence

Declaring Independence: Advantages

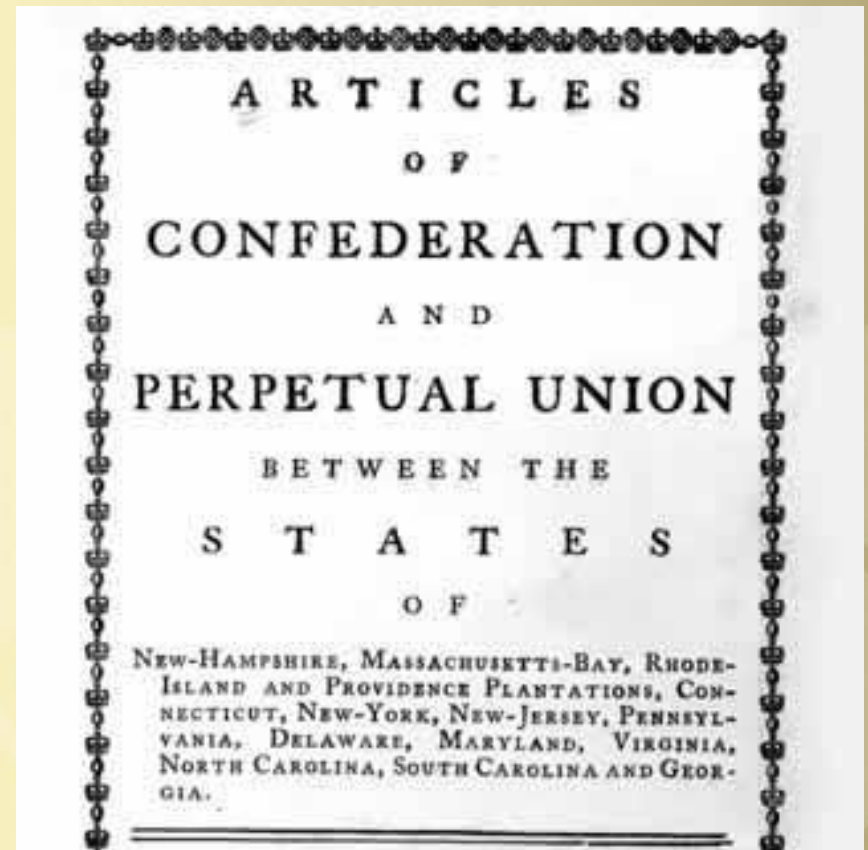
- France might provide military and financial aid
- Colonies could act as an independent nation
- Captured soldiers would receive better treatment
- Would make a statement about rights
- Freedom from British “tyranny”

Declaring Independence: Disadvantages

- Colonists might lose support of British who favored colonial representation
- Leaders could be tried and executed as traitors
- Colonies poorly prepared to fight a war
- Colonies would cut themselves off from England; many had a sentimental attachment to mother country

Creating a National Government

- Declaration was not a system of government
- Articles of Confederation sent to states for approval late 1777; ratified 1781
- Weak central government based on Congress's authority; states kept sovereign
- Articles replaced in 1787



The front page of a copy of the Articles

Warm-UP

1. What aspect of *Common Sense* made it so popular in early 1776? What was the purpose of the pamphlet?
2. What were some of the advantages of the colonies' declaring independence? Disadvantages?

Colonial Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- “Home-field advantage”
- Support of most civilians
- Fighting for a cause
- Better military leaders
- Different tactics
- Support from France and other nations

Weaknesses

- Fighting the strongest military force in world
- Lack of a navy
- Less military training
- Had smaller forces
- Poorly supplied
- Desertions

British Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

- More troops, including Hessians, Indians, slaves
- Better trained
- Better equipped
- Large amount of supplies

Weaknesses

- Long supply lines
- War lost support on home front
- Lack of effective generals

Hessians



A Hessian in uniform

- German soldiers paid to fight alongside the British
- Nearly 30,000 Hessians came to North America
- About 5000 decided to stay

Trenton and Princeton

- December 1776
- Howe retreated to winter quarters
- Washington attacked posts at Trenton and Princeton
- Crossing the Delaware
- Hessians defeated at Trenton and Princeton
- Victories raised morale



Washington Crossing the Delaware, created in 1851
by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze

Discussion Questions

1. What were some colonial strengths and weaknesses at the start of the war?
2. What were some British strengths and weaknesses at the start of the war?
3. What happened at the battles of Trenton and Princeton? What was the significance of these battles?

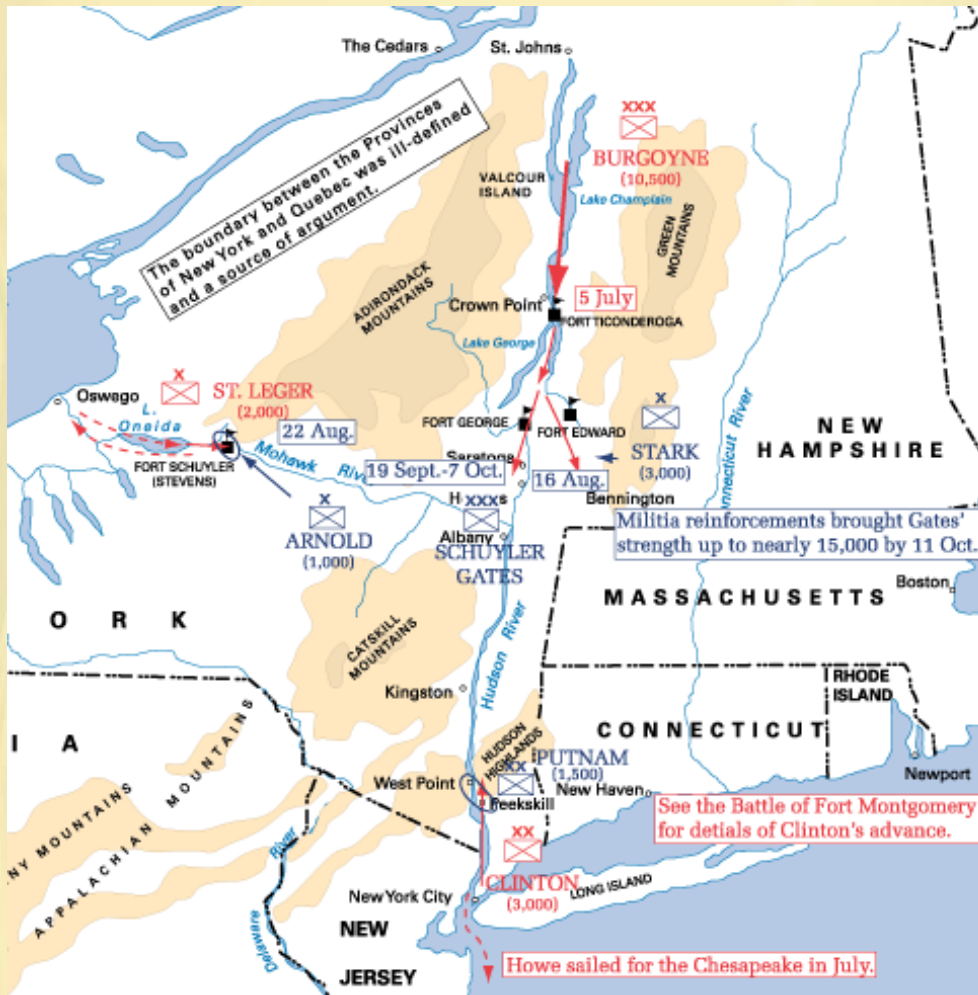
The Fall of Philadelphia

- Howe marched to Philadelphia area instead of Albany
- Defeated Washington at Brandywine
- Howe moved into Philadelphia without resistance
- British took American capital



Washington and his men at the
Battle of Brandywine

British Strategy



- Three-pronged attack
- Burgoyne's, St. Leger's, and Howe's forces to meet at Albany, New York
- None of the commanders reached Albany

Burgoyne's Mistakes

- Overconfident
- Oversupplied
- Did not know terrain
- Continental troops slowed him further by cutting trees in his path
- His army was soon surrounded



Gen. John Burgoyne

Victory at Saratoga



Burgoyne surrenders to American forces

- Americans led by Schuyler, Arnold, and Gates
- Set up defenses around Saratoga
- Pushed Burgoyne's forces back twice
- Laid siege to British lines
- Burgoyne surrendered, October 1777

Alliance With France

- British loss at Saratoga convinced France to aid Americans
- France wanted revenge after loss in French and Indian War
- Treaty of Alliance and Treaty of Amity and Commerce
- Spain also provided aid



Benjamin Franklin (center) at the royal French Court in 1778

Final British Attempt at Peace

- Coercive Acts and Tea Act would be repealed
- Parliament would pledge never to tax the colonies
- Parliament delayed approving deal until March 1778
- British envoys arrived in Philadelphia after colonies signed treaties with France
- Americans rejected peace proposal
- France declared war on England

Valley Forge

- Winter 1777
- Washington's winter headquarters near Philadelphia
- Harsh conditions
- Men underfed and poorly clothed
- Prussian military training



An 1866 engraving shows General Washington at Valley Forge on one knee praying, while soldiers wait nearby

Discussion Questions

1. What was the British three-pronged strategy for defeating the colonies?
2. What mistakes did British General Burgoyne make that led to his surrender at Saratoga?
3. Why did France decide to assist the colonies after the Battle of Saratoga? What steps did they take to aid the colonies?
4. Why did Washington choose to camp at Valley Forge in the winter of 1777? What kinds of conditions did the men there endure?

Major Southern Battles



Francis Marion, the Patriot
“Swamp Fox”

- British changed strategy to focus on southern region
- Major British victory at Charleston
- British actions convinced many southern Loyalists to join Patriot cause
- Spanish captured Pensacola and Mobile
- Gates defeated at Camden; replaced by Greene

Yorktown

- Cornwallis ordered to establish base at Yorktown
- French and American forces surrounded Yorktown
- Cornwallis surrendered, October 19, 1781
- Last major battle of the Revolution

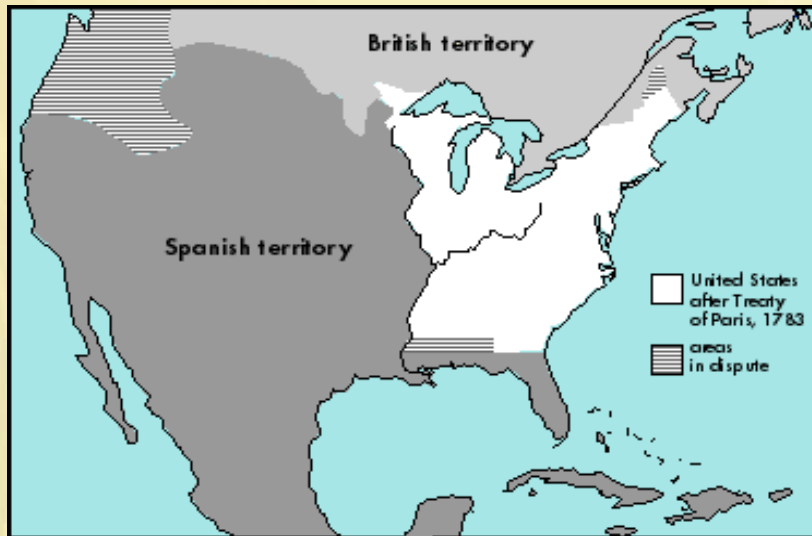


John Trumbull's painting of the surrender of British forces at Yorktown

Discussion Questions

1. What influence did foreign soldiers have on American forces during the Revolutionary War? Who were some of the better-known foreign soldiers?
2. What was the importance of the frontier battles in the Revolutionary War? What major battles took place in the Kentucky territory?
3. How did the American and French forces win at Yorktown? What was the importance of this battle?

The Treaty of Paris: Terms



In this map of North America after the treaty, the U.S. is shown in white

- American independence
- Set U.S. boundaries
- British to evacuate frontier forts
- Return of Loyalist property
- Why the British agreed to the terms

The Role of Women

- Women took over many traditionally male tasks during the war
- Some fought in disguise in Continental Army
- Role of Abigail Adams
- Women received more educational opportunities



Abigail Adams

African Americans in the War



Slave James Armistead spied for
George Washington

- Some Americans saw British “tyranny” as a form of slavery
- Slavery criticized on moral and economic grounds
- British promised freedom to slaves who fought for them
- Blacks also fought for Continental Army

Discussion Questions

1. What did the Americans gain from the Treaty of Paris? Why did the British see an advantage in giving the Americans such generous terms?
2. What roles did women, African Americans, and Native Americans play in the war?
3. How did the Revolution create a new “American character”?