

American Revolutionary War Study Guide

Terms

A **revolution** is when a group of people work together to overthrow, or get rid of, a government.

Boycott – organized refusal to buy goods

Liberty- freedom of people to make their own laws

Parliament - Britain's law making assembly

Causes and Major Events

What was the French and Indian War? Britain and France both claimed the Ohio River Valley. The French worked with the Native Americans to fight against the British. A young soldier named George Washington fought for the colonists. The war ended with the **Treaty of Paris of 1763**. The agreement signed by Great Britain and France that brought an end to the French and Indian War.

What was the impact on the colonists from the French and Indian War? The British won the French and Indian War. However, to win they had to spend a great deal of money. King George III and the British Parliament decided to impose taxes on the colonists in order to cover the expense of the war.

How did the colonists respond to the taxes imposed by the British? They were very angry. They began to boycott many of the items that were taxed.

Taxation without Representation: The colonists were angry about these taxes, mainly because the colonists had no voice in the British government. They had no representation in Parliament. The phrase “no taxation without representation” became the colonists’ battle cry – they weren’t going to pay taxes if they didn’t have a voice in the government.

Sugar Act: This was a 3 cent tax on sugar and molasses.

Stamp Act: Parliament (the British government) put a tax on paper products, such as newspaper and playing cards. This was called “**The Stamp Act**” because a special stamp had to be on each piece of paper to show that the tax had been paid.

Quartering Act: A law that forced colonists to buy supplies and food for British soldiers. It even required colonists to allow soldiers to stay in their homes.

Townshend Acts: Parliament passed the Townshend Acts, which placed a tax on the tea, glass, lead, paints, and paper that the colonies imported.

Boston Massacre: A fight began when a crowd of people in Boston argued with a British soldier. The crowd began throwing snowballs. More soldiers began to fire and 5 colonists were killed.

Tea Act: Parliament passed the Tea Act. Only the East India Tea Company was then allowed to sell tea to the colonies. Colonies boycotted this and left the crates of tea on the ships.

The Boston Tea Party: On December 16, 1773, several dozen Sons of Liberty boarded the ships that held the boycotted tea and threw the crates into Boston Harbor. This became known as the Boston Tea Party.

The Intolerable Acts (also known as the Coercive Acts): In response to the Boston Tea Party, the Parliament passed the Coercive Acts (known by the colonists as the Intolerable Acts), which stopped trade between Boston and Britain, ended most town meetings, and gave Britain more control over the colony's government. British soldiers returned to Boston. Bostonians had to quarter the soldiers. This was the **Quartering Act** which meant colonists had to shelter and provide food to the British soldiers. Also, as part of the colonist's punishment for dumping the tea into the harbor was the **Boston Port Act**. The Boston Port was closed, No ships were allowed in or allowed to leave.

What is the Declaration of Independence? Why is it important? Who wrote it, how it was written, why it was necessary, and how it was a response to tyranny and the abuse of power? Thomas Jefferson and 4 others wrote the Declaration of Independence. This was a document that declared why the colonies had to become independent of Britain. It stated that people had certain rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The government should protect these natural rights. If the government doesn't, then the people have a right to start a new government. The Second Continental Congress accepted this document on July 4, 1776.

Battles of the American Revolution:

The Battles of Lexington and Concord: The Shot Heard Around the World

As tension grew, the colonists prepared to fight. A British General heard that the colonists had weapons stored in Concord and that John Hancock and Samuel Adams were meeting in Lexington. The British wanted the march to Lexington to be a secret. Paul Revere, another member of the Sons of Liberty, found out about the plan. He rode to Lexington warning the colonists that the British army was coming. (The Regulars are coming) When the British arrived, the Minutemen were waiting. No one knows who started it, but shots were fired. The British then marched to Concord, but the weapons had already been moved. **"The shot heard round the world"** refers to the fighting at Lexington. This was the event that marked the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

Battle of Bunker Hill: The battle of Bunker Hill was a fight to gain control of two important pieces of land, Breed's Hill and Bunker Hill. The British won the battle.

Saratoga: The battles of Saratoga were a series of battles that led to the surrender of General Burgoyne. This victory by the Americans was a turning point of the Revolutionary War. The American victory convinced the French to help them win the war.

Trenton: George Washington and his army participated in a surprise attack as the Americans crossed the icy Delaware River to the town of Trenton. The Hessian soldiers were not prepared for such an attack and soon surrendered.

Valley Forge: A valley in eastern Pennsylvania that served as quarters for the American army in one winter (1777–1778) of the Revolutionary War. George Washington, who was commanding the army, had been forced to leave Philadelphia, and his troops suffered from the cold and from lack of supplies.

What happened at the Battle of Yorktown? Why was Cornwallis forced to surrender? The British Army was set up near a port, so they could get supplies easily. The French Navy blocked the ports. The American and French forces completely surrounded the British forces, so the British could not get any supplies. After being surrounded for weeks, attacked on all sides, British General Charles Cornwallis finally surrendered. **It was this American victory that ended the Revolutionary War.**

Treaty of Paris of 1783 It was the official peace agreement between the United States and Britain that ended the American Revolutionary War.

Important People

A **loyalist** is a person who wanted to stay loyal to the king. This person did NOT want to break away from Britain's rule because he/she believed the King protected and provided for the colonies.

A **patriot** is a person who wanted to break away from Britain's rule. This person did not want to be controlled by the King. He/she wanted to create a new government that allowed the colonists to have a say in how the colonies were run.

Who were the Sons of Liberty and what were their actions? The Sons and Daughters of Liberty were groups who spoke against the British Imperial Policy. The Sons of Liberty would tar and feather tax collectors and chase them out of towns! The Daughters of Liberty would weave their own cloth instead of buying British cloth.

Who were the Minutemen? The Minutemen were a group of colonists who formed their own army. They were called "the Minutemen" because they were said to be ready to fight in a minute's notice.

The **Second Continental Congress** chose a committee to write a **declaration**, or official statement about independence to be sent to King George III. The delegate chosen to write the first draft of the declaration was **Thomas Jefferson**. As the main author, it took Thomas Jefferson 17 days to write **The Declaration of Independence**.

Paul Revere: Paul Revere and William Dawes had the “Midnight Ride”. These men rode on horseback to warn the Patriots in Lexington and Concord that “The British Are Coming”.

King George III: King George III was the British King during the American Revolution. After the French and Indian War, he decided that the colonists needed to pay taxes to help pay for the war and began levying various taxes on them, such as: The Stamp Act, the Tea Act, the Townshend Acts, and the Intolerable Acts.

George Washington: Washington fought in the French and Indian War. He later became the Commander of the Patriot army. Washington was elected as the United States' first president.

Benjamin Franklin: He co-wrote the Declaration of Independence and helped negotiate the Treaty of Paris of 1783.

Thomas Jefferson: He was chosen to draft the Declaration of Independence. He also wrote the Constitution. He was a Vice President and third President of the United States.

Benedict Arnold: Arnold was a Patriot officer who fought against the British in the Battle of Saratoga. Arnold secretly changed sides and became a British general. He is known as a traitor.

Patrick Henry: Henry was angry that the British passed the Stamp Act. He gave his famous speech, “Give me liberty, or give me Death” shortly afterwards.

John Adams: Adams defended the British soldiers who killed 5 colonists in the Boston Massacre.

Samuel Adams: Started the Sons of Liberty.

Black Regiments: Units of the Continental Army that allowed the recruitment of African Americans. Some African Americans were free blacks who chose to fight. Others were enslaved but were promised freedom for fighting. And many fought as slaves with no promise of freedom. Regardless, these Black regiments risked their lives for independence, just as many white patriots did.