



HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

STUDENT BOOK

▶ **8th Grade** | Unit 3

HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY 803

The American Revolution (1763–1789)

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The American Revolution (1763–1789)

Introduction

The struggle for independence by the United States has often baffled historians. Raw courage and determination in many cases were the only resources the colonists had to depend upon. The American government during the war was ineffective and disorganized. The army lacked basic supplies and regular soldiers. Yet, these raw colonials defeated the greatest military power of their era, Great Britain.

Historians have also long debated the reasons for the war. At the end of the French and Indian War, the American colonies were joyfully, deeply British. No one dreamed in 1763 that there would be a war between the colonies and Britain just twelve years later. Those years were a litany of miscalculations on the part of Britain that drove the colonists further and further from the loyalty of 1763.

This LIFE PAC® will discuss the events that caused the Revolution. It will also present a history of the Revolution itself, the major battles, ideas, and events. Finally, this LIFE PAC will show how the colonists finally managed to create a stable government under the United States Constitution.

Objectives

Read these objectives. The objectives tell you what you will be able to do when you have successfully completed this LIFE PAC. When you have finished this LIFE PAC, you should be able to:

1. Identify the men who contributed to the Revolution.
2. Identify and describe the incidents and thinking which led to the Revolution.
3. Identify and describe the governing bodies that acted for the colonies/states.
4. Name the major battles of the war and tell their significances.
5. Outline the terms of the peace agreements that the United States signed with Great Britain.
6. Explain the Articles of Confederation and why they were replaced.
7. Describe the Constitutional Convention.
8. Describe the main features of the Constitution and the process by which it was approved.

1. GROWING CONFLICT

The American colonists were delighted with the outcome of the French and Indian War. The hated French had finally been driven out of their land. They were free to expand into the rich lands of the eastern Mississippi Basin. They were proud to be British, part of the mighty British Empire.

But, even in the midst of the joy, the first signs of the difference between the colonists and the government in Britain appeared, the Proclamation of 1763. The king tried to block the colonists behind the Appalachian Mountains, but the colonists chose to ignore the order. Worse was to come.

In the years that followed, the British tried to tax and control the colonies for the first time in colonial history. The Sugar Act, the Stamp Act, the Townshend Acts, and the Intolerable Acts beat a steady path to rebellion in the colonies. The colonists saw a conspiracy to deprive them of their liberty and reacted with resistance. The British saw no valid reason for the increasing resistance to their “lawful” decrees and reacted with more force. Finally, the colonists gave up hope of a peaceful settlement and chose to fight rather than submit.

SECTION OBJECTIVES

Review these objectives. When you have completed this section, you should be able to:

1. Identify the men who contributed to the Revolution.
2. Identify and describe the incidents and thinking which led to the Revolution.
3. Identify and describe the governing bodies that acted for the colonies/states.

VOCABULARY

Study these words to enhance your learning success in this section.

arbitrary (är' bi trer' ē). Not going by any rule or law.

conservative (kon sēr' va tiv). A person who is opposed to change.

militia (mu lish' a). Army of citizens who are not regular soldiers.

moderate (mod' er it). A person whose political views are not extreme in any way.

Prime Minister (prīm' min' i stir). The chief official in certain types of government.

propaganda (prop' a gan' da). Systematic efforts to spread opinions or beliefs.

protocol (prō' tu kol). Rules (written or unwritten) for a procedure.

providential (prov' u den' shul). Good fortune happening by God's intervention. (The Christian version of “good luck.”- author)

radical (rad' i kal). A person who favors extreme changes or reform.

Note: All vocabulary words in this LIFEPAAC appear in **boldface** print the first time they are used. If you are not sure of the meaning when you are reading, study the definitions given.

Pronunciation Key: hat, āge, cāre, fār; let, ēqual, tērm; it, īce; hot, ōpen, ōrder; oil; out; cup, pūt, rüle; child; long; thin; /ʒh/ for then; /zh/ for measure; /u/ represents /a/ in about, /e/ in taken, /i/ in pencil, /o/ in lemon, and /u/ in circus.

Britain Flexes its Muscles

British attitudes. Britain was the greatest power on earth after the Seven Years (French and Indian) War. It had soundly defeated its great rival, France, and taken her North American empire. The British were proud and arrogant about their victory. They were confident of their own glory and were not in a mood to compromise with anyone, especially their backwoods colonies.

Moreover, the war had left Britain deeply in debt. The national debt had doubled and the new territory in America would be expensive to administer. Pontiac's War by the Indians in 1763, clearly showed the need to maintain troops in the colonies for their protection. That was expensive. The government felt it was high time the colonists bore some of the cost of their own defense.

Mercantilism. The popular economic theory of the 1700s was mercantilism. This theory held that only gold or silver was real wealth, and countries must work to obtain more of



| An Early U.S. Flag

it. Colonies were used to doing this through trade. Colonies were to supply the mother country with raw materials such as wood, iron, and indigo. Then, the colonies would be a market for goods manufactured by the mother country, like cloth, hats, and tools. The colony was not to compete with the mother country by building its own manufacturing and industry. This theory held that the colony only existed to



| The American British Empire in 1763

serve the mother country and should never be allowed to develop. It should be kept dependent on the mother country at all times.

British policy towards America was based on mercantilism. The Navigation Acts, which were passed mainly in the late 1600s, were intended to force the colonies to act in accord with this theory. One of the laws required that all trade with the colonies had to be on English or colonial ships. Another required all colonial trade to go through England to be taxed. That meant that goods going from the colonies to the French West Indies, just south of Florida, had to go to England, be unloaded, stored, and taxed before they could go to their destination. The same was true in reverse for goods coming from the West Indies or Europe to the colonies. This gave English merchants a virtual monopoly on colonial trade, because the cost of going through England made foreign trade too expensive. Other laws stated that certain important goods like tobacco and naval supplies could only be sold to Britain, even if Britain could not possibly buy all that the colonies could produce. These laws would have crippled colonial trade, but until 1763 they were rarely enforced, and the colonists traded with many nations by smuggling.

There were other laws on the books by 1763 that were intended to keep the colonies economically backward and dependent on Britain. The colonies were forbidden to export wool cloth, hats or tools. They were also forbidden to build iron mills to make tools. The Molasses Act of 1733 put a high tax on molasses, sugar, and rum imported from non-British sources, primarily the French West Indies. The problem was that the British West Indies could not supply half of the molasses needed by the distilleries in New England. (The molasses was made into rum for sale at home and abroad). So, the law was routinely and easily avoided by smuggling.

One of the more damaging laws forbade the colonies to mint coins. British merchants could



| George III, King of England

not pay for colonial products in hard money (coins). That meant the colonies were always short of coins they needed to pay for British goods. It also made it difficult for colonists to collect enough money to start any large businesses. The colonists had to barter for most of their goods and try to get coins by trade with French and Spanish lands. These restrictions were very unpopular in the colonies, but, obviously, very popular in London.

Changes in Policy. After the Seven Years War, Britain began to change her policy toward the colonies. The British government had been content for over a hundred and fifty years to let the colonies govern themselves. Now, flush with pride in their victory, they felt it was time for Parliament to establish better control over the empire. There was also a strong feeling that since the British had spent both blood and treasure to protect the colonies, the colonies owed them something in return. What the British expected to get was loyalty and some income to help defray the huge costs of stationing troops in America.

George Grenville became **Prime Minister** of Great Britain in 1763. He moved quickly to

meet the new mood of the king, George III, and Parliament. He began in 1763 by ordering that the Navigation Acts be strictly enforced. He obtained the Sugar Act of 1764 from the Parliament that decreased the high tax on French molasses but kept high taxes on sugar and rum. He arranged for this act to actually be enforced by customs offices and an Admiralty Court. That court did not use a jury and the

defendant was assumed to be guilty, not innocent as in regular courts. The colonists saw this as a threat to their English liberties. The next law was a Quartering Act in 1765 that required colonists to provide food and lodging for British troops. These acts angered the Americans, but it was the next one that set fire to the dynamite, the Stamp Act.



Answer these questions.

1.1 What was the popular economic theory of the 1700s?

1.2 According to that theory what should a colony do for a mother country?

1.3 What were the goals of the British government toward the colonies in 1763?

a. _____

b. _____

1.4 What were the major parts of the Navigation Acts?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

1.5 What was the Molasses Act of 1733? Why would it have hurt the New England colonies and why didn't it? _____

1.6 Why were the colonies short of hard money? _____

1.7 What did George Grenville do to anger the colonies in:

1763? _____

1764? _____

1765? _____

The Stamp Act. Grenville proposed to raise a substantial amount of money in the colonies by the Stamp Act, passed in 1765. The law required all legal documents and public papers, such as wills, playing cards, newspapers, and bills of sale, to be marked with a stamp purchased from the government. Grenville thought this was a reasonable way to raise money. The amount charged for the stamps would be less than a similar stamp in Britain and the money would be used to pay British troops in the colonies. Even Benjamin Franklin, the colonial representative in London, who disapproved of the law expected the colonists to accept it after a few protests.

However, the Stamp Act was seen as a threat in America. It was the first time Britain had tried to directly tax the colonists. Taxes before had been on imports and were intended mostly to control trade. Any other taxes had only come from the colonial assemblies elected by the colonists. The tax fell on everyone from the card playing sailors to wealthy merchants or lawyers whose trade depended on documents. Moreover, the colonists were constantly short of the money needed to buy the stamps. Even worse, people who violated the act were to be tried in Admiralty Courts! The colonists thought Britain was trying to reduce them to virtual slavery with all these new laws.

It was the very visible Stamp Act that drew the wrath of the colonists, who were united in their opposition to it. The Americans said Parliament could not tax them, since there were no American representatives in Parliament. The battle cry that would open the Revolution was: “No taxation without representation.” But, more than shouting slogans, the Americans began to organize, unite, and resist. This was the real legacy of the Stamp Act.

The controversy was a repeat of the conflict between Parliament and the king in England. The Glorious Revolution (1688) had established that political power in England would be in the hands of an elected body, Parliament, not an



| Patrick Henry

autocratic king. The colonists felt that if they indeed had the rights of Englishmen, then the political power in their land should be in the hands of their representatives. The British Parliament could not step in as a new monarch to rob the colonists of their traditional English liberties. Parliament thought of the colonists as subjects who should obey, not as citizens who should participate. This arrogant attitude was intolerable.

The House of Burgesses in Virginia debated and passed the Virginia Resolves, which declared the act illegal, stating that only Virginians could tax Virginians. The debate over the Resolves included a famous speech by **radical** member Patrick Henry. He said, “Caesar had his Brutus—Charles the First, his Cromwell—and George the Third—may profit by their example.” When the **conservative** members of the Burgesses began to whisper, “Treason,” Henry replied, “If this be treason, make the most of it.”

The reaction to the Stamp Act came in three major ways: the Stamp Act Congress, boycotts, and mob action. The Massachusetts assembly invited all the colonies to send delegates to New York to discuss the Stamp Act. Nine of the

colonies sent delegates to what became known as the Stamp Act Congress. The delegates were wealthy, distinguished men from the elite of the colonies. They passed a Declaration of Rights and Grievances stating that only the colonies could tax their own citizens. Britain ignored it. It was, however, a significant step in uniting the colonies, most of which thought of themselves almost as separate nations.

A much more effective message was sent to Parliament when the colonies began to boycott British goods. They were very successful in organizing agreements not to import British products. Colonists found other sources to meet their needs, or self-sufficiently went without them. The boycott began to threaten the prosperity of the English merchants who complained to Parliament. Parliament listened.

The last way that the colonists resisted the Stamp Act was by mob action, this was also

very effective. The “Sons of Liberty,” secret societies opposed to the act, took the law into their own hands. They attacked stamp sellers, royal officials, and people who violated the boycott. On the date the law was to take effect, November 1, 1765, there were no officials to sell the hated stamps. All had resigned in fear of the mobs.

Faced with an outcry in Britain and the colonies, and knowing they were not collecting any revenue, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act four months after it went into effect. At the same time they passed the face-saving Declaratory Act, stating that Parliament had the right to tax the colonies. The colonists rejoiced at their victory and, with a few exceptions, ignored the dark implications of the Declaratory Act. They had acted together, sometimes with violence, and accomplished what they wanted. The lesson would be remembered.



Name the requested item or person.

- 1.8 British Prime Minister who passed the Stamp Act. _____

- 1.9 Colonial representative in London who thought the Act would be obeyed.

- 1.10 Radical in House of Burgesses who said, “If this be treason, make the most of it.”

- 1.11 Burgesses statement against the Stamp Act. _____

- 1.12 Three ways the colonies reacted to the Stamp Act.
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____
- 1.13 Secret societies that led mob action against the Stamp Act.

1.14 The slogan against the tax. _____

1.15 Law stating that Parliament had a right to tax the colonies.

Answer these questions.

1.16 What did the Stamp Act require? _____

1.17 Why did the colonists object so much to it? (four reasons) _____

1.18 What did Patrick Henry mean in his speech about Brutus and Cromwell? (Look up the named people in the encyclopedia, if you need to). _____

Actions and Reactions

Townshend Acts. The failure of the Stamp Act did not help Britain’s financial problems. The debt remained along with the huge expense of protecting North America. The king and the powerful people in Britain were furious. They wanted the rebellious colonies brought in line. Finally, Britain had another change in government (this happened frequently). The new Chancellor of the Exchequer (Treasury), Charles Townshend promised to pluck the colonial goose with a minimum of squawking.

Townshend succeeded in passing a series of laws through Parliament in 1767. Called the Townshend Acts, they were designed to increase revenue and control. The most important put a tax on a large number of goods such as paint, lead, glass, paper, and tea that the colonies imported from Britain. This was an indirect tax which Townshend thought the colonies

would accept. Another act greatly increased the power of customs officials to enforce the tax laws, including the use of writs of assistance which allowed **arbitrary** searches of homes and businesses. Another law threatened to shut down the New York assembly if it did not comply with the Quartering Act (it had refused up until that point). Moreover, the money raised was to be used to pay British officials, including governors, in the colonies. This meant the colonists could no longer hope to control royal officials by limiting their salary!

The colonists were alarmed. They had fought with royal governors often enough to know the loss of the power of the purse would leave them helpless against arbitrary rule. They also saw the strict enforcement procedures as a violation of the basic legal rights of all Englishmen. The threat to suspend the New York legislature

SELF TEST 1

Match the following people. (each answer, 2 points)

- | | | |
|-------|--|----------------------|
| 1.01 | _____ Boston radical, started
Committees of Correspondence | a. George Grenville |
| 1.02 | _____ American commander at Ticonderoga
and the invasion of Canada | b. Benjamin Franklin |
| 1.03 | _____ commander-in-chief of American army | c. Charles Townshend |
| 1.04 | _____ Prime Minister of Britain, Stamp Act | d. John Dickinson |
| 1.05 | _____ author of the Declaration of Independence | e. Lord North |
| 1.06 | _____ <i>Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania</i> , Olive
Branch Petition | f. Samuel Adams |
| 1.07 | _____ Chancellor of the Exchequer, Britain | g. John Hancock |
| 1.08 | _____ Prime Minister who gave East India Co.
a monopoly on American tea sales | h. George Washington |
| 1.09 | _____ president of Second Continental Congress,
large signer of Declaration of Independence | i. Benedict Arnold |
| 1.010 | _____ colonial representative in London before the war | j. Thomas Jefferson |

Describe each of these giving the important points.

1.011 Stamp Act (5 points) _____

1.012 Townshend Acts (5 points) _____

1.013 Boston Massacre (5 points) _____

1.014 Boston Tea Party (4 points) _____

1.015 The Intolerable Acts (5 points) _____

1.016 Quebec Act (5 points) _____

1.017 Battle of Bunker Hill (5 points) _____

1.018 Colonial reaction to the Stamp Act (6 points)

a. _____ b. _____

c. _____

Complete these sentences. (each answer, 3 points)

1.019 British policy toward the Thirteen Colonies was based on the economic theory of _____

_____ .

1.020 The laws that were passed in the late 1600s, but rarely enforced, that restricted America to trade to the benefit of England were called the _____ Acts.

1.021 The _____ Act was passed when the Stamp Act was repealed and stated that Parliament could tax the colonies.

1.022 The _____ were secret societies opposed to British power that led mob action.

1.023 The _____ Act required colonists to house and feed British troops.

- 1.024** The _____ Act kept high taxes on sugar and rum and allowed violators to be tried in Admiralty Court.
- 1.025** The First Continental Congress met in response to the _____ Acts.
- 1.026** The Revolutionary War began at _____ .
- 1.027** The key fort, with its cannon, that was captured on Lake Champlain was Fort _____ .
- 1.028** _____ was an influential pamphlet written by Thomas Paine that urged America to become independent.

Write true or false on the blank. (each answer, 1 point)

- 1.029** _____ Britain was deeply in debt after the Seven Years War.
- 1.030** _____ The colonists carefully obeyed the trade laws before 1763.
- 1.031** _____ The American invasion of Canada encouraged the French colonists to rebel against the British.
- 1.032** _____ Congress voted for independence on July 4, 1776.
- 1.033** _____ The king's decision to use German mercenaries to fight in America turned many Americans against the British.
- 1.034** _____ The Olive Branch Petition was an offer of surrender by the American army after the defeat at Bunker Hill.
- 1.035** _____ The American army was organized from militia units.
- 1.036** _____ In 1773 Boston was the only city that refused to accept for sale the tea shipped in under the new monopoly to the East India Company.
- 1.037** _____ Britain wanted the Americans to bear some of the cost of their own defense.
- 1.038** _____ The colonies were always short of hard money because of British laws.

	SCORE _____	TEACHER _____	initials _____	date _____
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