The American Revolution

DESCRIPTION

The lessons in this unit are designed to supplement and enhance your presentation of this seminal topic in our nation’s history. Using the interactive materials at the Bostonian Society’s website, <http://www.bostonhistory.org/sub/mappingrevolutionaryboston/>

they will explore daily life for the famous, infamous and ordinary people of the era. They will learn about their interactions and image their reactions to the events of the day.

EQ

How did individuals and the collective come together to create a nation?

CCSS STANDARDS

MA CONTENT STANDARDS

Lesson #1: Navigate Pre-revolutionary Boston

Lesson #2: British Taxation: Actions and Reactions

Lesson #3: Meeting of Colonial Minds

Lesson #4: Daily Life in Revolutionary America

**Navigate Pre-Revolutionary Boston Lesson #1**

**Location**: Boston **Time Period**: Colonial Era **Grade**s: 8-12

**Essential Question**:

How did the specific geographic features and relatively small space of Boston provide the context for both the events and ideals that propelled the colonies towards separation from Great Britain?

**Objectives**:

1. Students will take the perspective of a contemporary figure and navigate pre-Revolutionary Boston.
2. Students will note the nature of interaction among different members of the colonial city and see the impact of the daily contact of its diverse population.
3. Students will trace a specific historic event to understand how the physical space of the city contributed to a developing sense of common interest among the city’s residents despite their many differences.

**Skill Emphasis**: Geography Skills and Map Interpretation

**Massachusetts Social Studies Curriculum Standards**

History and Geography:

Show connections between particular historical events and ideas and larger social, economic and

political trends and developments

Interpret the past within its own historical context

Effects of geography on the history of Civilization and Nations

Read and interpret historical Maps

General Economic Skills

Explain choice and resulting opportunity costs of each choice

US History I, 1763-1877

The Political and Intellectual Origins of the American Nation: the Revolution and Constitution, 1763-1789

Political and Economic Factors that led to the American Revolution

**Navigate Pre-Revolutionary Boston Teacher Sheet**

**Overview**

While not the only determinant, the geography of an area affects both residents and visitors. The physical landscape of a place shapes opportunities, benefits, and limitations. Colonial Boston was very much a result of its small physical space and close proximity to the water. How did individuals experience the pre-Revolutionary city? At this time, Boston was two miles wide at its greatest point with no spot more than a half of mile from the waterfront. The result was a daily intimacy among its diverse population. This ongoing interplay influenced those events that would eventually make the city and its residents leaders in the call for independence from Britain.

Assuming the persona of different historic figures, students will gain insight into the literal and figurative navigation of this complex port city, often noted as the “birthplace of liberty.”

**Procedure**

1. Discuss with students the influence of geography on various aspects of life. To prompt discussion, have students consider how individuals earn a living, what clothing they wear, which housing would best serve their needs, and with whom they have contact on a regular basis.
2. Provide students with the 1769 Price Map and the 1774 Hinton Map to introduce them to the geography of Colonial Boston. On the Price Map, point out the following places: the Common, Long Wharf, Boston’s Neck (Marlborough/Orange Street), the Town House (now the Old State House at the intersection of King and Marlborough Streets), and Faneuil Hall and Market (adjacent to the Town Dock). Using the Hinton Map, show them how Boston’s location on the Shawmut Peninsula fit into the larger geographic area.
3. Using the two maps, have them complete Section I of the Student Sheet, and then discuss their results. Have them consider how Boston might have felt both large and small to its residents.
4. Divide the class into four groups and provide each group with one of the sections of the Price Map. Have them complete Section II of the Student Sheet and discuss their results. Have them see what it was like to live and work in different sections of the city.
5. Introduce the events of the evening of August 14, 1765 as the colonists showed their displeasure with the impending Stamp Act. Have them trace the events on their maps, using Section III of the Student Sheet. Ask them to consider the mood of the crowd. How might it have changed over the course of the day?
6. Direct students toward The Mapping Revolutionary Boston web exhibit and assign the different historic figures to the students. They can work individually or in small groups. You may assign them one of the following individuals or have them select among them:

Lydia Gregory Cumings Sisters Thomas Hutchinson Isaiah Thomas

George Robert Twelves Hewes Phyllis Wheatley John Jeffries

Mather Byles Benjamin Edes Joseph Warren Josiah Quincy Jr.

John Singleton Copley

[list to be expanded as new ‘pins’ are added to the exhibit]

1. Have them complete Section IV of the Student Sheet. Discuss the different experiences of the city they had. How did they travel through the city? Could they go anywhere they wanted? How did who they were affect where they could go and what happened to them?

**Time Allocation**

Introduction and Section I of the Student Sheet: 20 minutes

Section II of the Student Sheet: 10 minutes

Section III of the Student Sheet: 15 minutes

Section IV of the Student Sheet: Homework Assignment plus 20 minutes for follow up discussion.

**Navigate Pre-Revolutionary Boston Teacher Sheet, p. 2**

**Materials Needed**

Price Map, use the interactive feature at http://www.bostonhistory.org/sub/mappingrevolutionaryboston/

Hinton Map: http://maps.bpl.org/id/18765

Price Map, Sections 1-4

Section 1, The Neck to Milk Street/South Battery on the East, Common/Treamont Street to the

North

Section 2, The Common and Beacon Hill to Mill Pond, Sudbury Street to the Southeast

Section 3, Central Boston, bounded by Milk Street/South Battery on the West, Common/Treamont

Street to the North, Princess Street/ Clark’s Wharf to the East

Section 4, North End

Access to Website Exhibit, Mapping Revolutionary Boston, http://www.bostonhistory.org/sub/mappingrevolutionaryboston/

Timeline of Events, 1763-1776

**Enrichment Activities**

Have students imagine their various historic figures meeting at one of the following locations:

The Liberty Tree, The Town House (Old State House), Brattle Street Church

Have the students trace other historic events:

Funeral of victims of Boston Massacre, Christopher Seider incident, Impressment Riots,

Small Pox Epidemic

**Assessment Criteria**

1. Did the students take the perspective of a contemporary figure and navigate pre-Revolutionary Boston?
2. Did the students note the nature of interaction among different members of the colonial city and see the daily interaction of its diverse population?
3. Did the students trace a specific historic event to understand how the physical space of the city contributed to a developing sense of common interest among the city’s residents despite their many differences?

**Navigation Pre-Revolutionary Boston Student Sheet**

**Overview**

The Colonial port city of Boston was quite small—approximately two miles wide and a half mile deep. Surrounded on all sides by water, this crowded seaport was the center of New England commerce and served as the entry point for foreign goods and people. It was also the connection from the inland areas to ports in North America, the West Indies, Africa and Europe. People lived close to one another and individuals of very different backgrounds met daily on the streets, shops, inns and churches of the city. In this activity, you will learn about the key spots of the city and imagine the daily activities of some of its residents.

**Section I**

Use the 1769 Price Map and answer the following questions:

1. The harbor was key to the city. How does its presence dominate the map?
2. What other items on the map highlight the importance of maritime (sea related) industries?
3. What are the various uses of the Common? How do they show what was important to the people of Boston?
4. How far was it from the Commons to the Long Wharf?
5. Which areas of the city were the most densely populated? Why do you think they were so crowded?

Use the 1774 Hinton Map and answer the following question:

1. Identify at lease two routes an individual could take from Charlestown to Roxbury. What are the advantages of each route? The disadvantages?

**Section II**

Look closely at your section of the Price Map and answer the following questions:

1. What are the important sites in your section of the map?
2. Identify any public buildings, such as schools, churches, shops or government offices.
3. How do you think the people who lived in this section earned their living?
4. How much contact did they have with the other residents of this section?
5. Why might people from other parts of Boston come to this area?

**Section III**

The Seven Years War was fought between the British and the French in North America from 1756 to 1763. The conflict cost the British and the colonists dearly, both in terms of resources and human life. To cover the financial costs of war, the British placed many new taxes on the colonies. One that was particularly troubling was the Stamp Act of 1765which increased the cost of almost every item that the colonists had to purchase. Anger was directed towards representatives of the King’s government. On the evening of August 14th, a crowd gathered to protest this law. Using the maps your teacher has given you, trace their steps.

1. On the morning of August 14th, residents of Boston saw effigies (physical likenesses) of the local stamp officer, Andrew Oliver and King’s former tutor, Lord Bute, hanging from the Liberty Tree (crossing of Essex and Newbury Streets).
2. Farmers bringing produce in from the interior on the Boston ‘Neck’ (Orange/Marlborough St) had ‘mock’ stamps placed on their cargo.
3. Crowds gathered at the Liberty Tree. The effigies were cut down and then a mock funeral processed through the city, passing the Town House.
4. Then the crowd destroyed the Stamp Office on Kilby Street at Oliver’s Dock.
5. Afterwards, the crowd set a bonfire at Fort Hill.
6. British officials stored the remaining stamps on Castle William.

Imagine you were part of the crowd. How might your mood have changed during the day and evening?

**Navigation Pre-Revolutionary Boston Student Sheet, p. 2**

**Section IV**

You have probably heard of some of the famous residents of colonial Boston: John Hancock, Paul Revere and Sam Adams. But there were 15,000 people living in the city on the eve of the Revolution. Your teacher will direct you to a website to learn about some of these individuals and assign you to learn about their lives. For your historic figure:

Imagine a day in his or her life.

1)Identify where he or she would have gone, what places on the map he or she would have visited.

2) What daily errands might he or she have run?

3) With whom would they have had contact?

Then answer the following questions:

1. Did the small space of the city make his or her life live easy?
2. With how many different people would he or she have interacted?
3. What sort of daily freedoms did he or she experience?
4. If she or he were giving a tour of the colonial city, which spots would he or she highlight?

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions**

**Location**: Colonial North America **Time Period**: Revolutionary War Era **Grade**s: 8-12

**Essential Question**:

How did the nature of the colonial economy in North America contribute to the desire for political independence from Great Britain?

**Objectives**:

1. Students will learn about taxes and tariffs and the impact they have on the cost of a good or service.

2. Students will identify the taxes imposed by the British after 1763 and the impact they had on the precarious nature of the colonial economy which worsened during this time.

3. Students will appreciate that Great Britain’s tax policies held varied meanings and consequences for different sectors of the colonial economy.

**Skill Emphasis**: Understanding Economic Basics

**Massachusetts Social Studies Curriculum Standards**

General Themes

The Influence of economic ideas as human societies move beyond geographic boundaries

The growth and spread of free markets

History and Geography Concepts and Skills

Distinguish between long-term and short-term causes and effect relationships

Distinguish intended and unintended consequences

General Economic Skills

Explain choice and resulting opportunity costs of each choice

Explain the role of competition and the role of buyers and sellers in determining price

US History I, 1763-1877

The Political and Intellectual Origins of the American Nation: the Revolution and Constitution, 1763-1789

Explain the political and economic factors that contributed to the American Revolution,

including the impact of the French and Indian War on British imperial policy, 1763-1775

Analyze how Americans resisted British policies before 1775

Explain the role of Massachusetts in the Revolution, including important events and people

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions Teacher Sheet**

**Overview**

The British rule of Colonial North America was marked by several complex and often contradictory policies. For many decades, laws were loosely enforced as long as the Crown benefited financially from the relationship with its colonies. This ‘salutary neglect’ resulted in a great spirit of autonomy among colonials as well as the creation of many fortunes. Traders and merchants had profited from bribing customs agents and smuggling. The colonists were used to a financial independence and had long participated in a market economy despite the ‘official’ British adherence to mercantile policy.

The Seven Years War from 1756 to 1763 saw the British gain control of much of North America yet it had cost the Crown and its colonies dearly in terms of people and resources. Britain expected the colonies to pay for their protection and imposed a series of taxes. These taxes were a source of great concern, particularly as the war had already unsettled the precarious colonial economy. Yet some members of colonial America supported them.

Protests to these taxes assumed many forms, from boycotts and calls for non-importation of British goods, to acts of vigilante retaliation in street riots, tarring and feathering customs officials and destruction of property. The colonists waged an economic war for a decade before the official battle would begin.

**Procedure**

1. Review the concept of tariff, or import tax, with your students. If necessary, complete Section I of the Student Sheet with the class to have students review production costs, profits, and implications of tax policy.
2. Now turn to the historic period prior to the American Revolution. Identify the economic relationship between Great Britain and its North American colonies. Be sure to include the period of salutary neglect as well as economic variation among and within the colonies. Have them use their textbook or read an overview from the Mapping the American Revolution exhibit, and complete Section II of the Student Sheet.
3. Discuss their results. Be sure to explore the general impact of taxes. Define a regressive tax. How would this hurt those who were already struggling in the volatile post war economy? In your discussion, also identify who benefited from these taxes as well as their impact on domestic manufacturing.
4. Look at Section III of the Student Sheet with the class. Have them use their Timeline of Events, 1763-1776, to see how the fluctuation in tea prices reflected both British taxes and colonial resistance to these policies. Who benefited from these struggles? Did either side win?
5. To make the experience of the colonial economy vivid for the students, have them consider the decisions actual individuals had to make. Divide the class into three groups and assign each group one of the following three individuals:

Cabinet Maker Toby Lemeul lived in Dartmouth, MA and earned 115 pound sterling in 1774

Harvard President Holyoke lived in Cambridge, MA and earned 250 pounds sterling in 1774

The widow of Colonel Andrew Lewis was paid an annual pension of 20 pounds sterling by the

Virginia General Assembly in 1774

Have them complete Section IV of the Student Sheet. Have each group present its budget. Discuss the

impact the British policies had on each individual. Were they able to provide for their families?

Would they have participated in protests against British taxes?

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions Teacher Sheet, p. 2**

1. To acquaint the students further with the real life experience of those who lived in Colonial America, direct them to the Mapping Revolutionary Boston website and have them complete Section V of the Student Sheet. Assign each student one of the following historic figures:

Lydia Gregory Cumings Sisters Thomas Hutchinson Isaiah Thomas

George Robert Twelves Hewes Phyllis Wheatley John Jeffries

Mather Byles Benjamin Edes Joseph Warren Josiah Quincy Jr.

John Hancock Andrew Oliver John Rowe James Otis

John Singleton Copley

[list to be expanded as new ‘pins’ are added to the exhibit]

1. Discuss their results. Who was upset with the taxes? Who thought they were justified? Among those who disagreed with British policies, what solutions did they propose?

**Time Allocation**

Review general economic principles and Section I of Student Sheet (if necessary): 15 minutes

Section II: Homework Assignment; 30 minutes to discuss results and consider general impact of taxation policy and different colonial responses.

Section III: 15 minutes

Section IV: 15 minutes of group work; 15 minutes to discuss results

Section V: Homework Assignment, 30 minutes to discuss results

**Materials Needed**

1. Overview of information regarding British taxes imposed. This may be found in their text, at the Coming of the American Revolution website, or Mapping Revolutionary Boston website.
2. Timeline of Events, 1763-1776
3. Access to Mapping Revolutionary Boston website, http://www.bostonhistory.org/sub/mappingrevolutionaryboston/
4. Commodity Price List, 1774

**Enrichment Activities**

1. Have them read the “Making a Living” essay at Mapping Revolutionary Boston website or chapter “Boston’s Waterfront” in Benjamin Carp’s *Rebel’s Rising*. Divide the class into four groups and assign each group to represent one of the following components of the colonial economy: maritime (fishing, shipbuilding, shipping)

laborer (carter, carpenter, caulker, cooper, tanner, blacksmith)

farmer

shopkeeper of imported luxury items (carriages, glove maker, fine china).

Have each group consider the impact of the taxes on their trade and actions they might pursue to

protest or support British tax policy.

1. Using the Price Map, select one neighborhood of the city and imagine how one of the taxes might have affected its residents.

**Assessment Criteria**

1. Did the students learn about taxes and tariffs and the impact they have on the cost of a good or service?

2. Did the students identify the taxes imposed by the British after 1763 and the impact they had on the precarious nature of the colonial economy which worsened during this time?

3. Did the students appreciate that Great Britain’s tax policies held varied meanings and consequences for different sectors of the colonial economy?

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions Student Sheet**

**Overview**

A tax is a charge added to the cost of an item or an activity. Taxes are a good way for governments to raise money but they increase what it costs to buy or do something. The British government imposed (put) a lot of taxes on its American colonies to pay for their defense after the Seven Years War ended in 1763. How did these taxes affect the colonists? How did those who were upset show their displeasure? Why did some people in the colonies like the taxes?

**Section I: Tax and Tariff Review**

1. Please define these key terms:

Producer Consumer Raw Material Labor Capital

2. Production Costs

How are production costs determined?

How does a producer set prices?

How does a producer earn a profit?

3. Example: A Man’s Suit

What is a Producer?

Who is the Consumer?

What Raw Materials are required? What Labor? What Capital? How do these contribute to the Cost of Production?

How is the Sale Price set? What will be the Producer’s Profit?

4. Taxes

A tax is a charge the government adds to a good or service or income earned. The government collects the taxes and uses the money. They are a way for a government to earn money.

Can you think of examples of taxes?

What does a tax do to the price of an object?

If everyone pays the same tax for an item, does it affect all individuals equally? Why or why not?

Consider the example above. Suppose a 10% tax was added on the fabric. What would it do to the cost of the suit? How would it affect the producer’s profit? What might the producer do to the price of the item? How might this affect the consumer’s behavior?

5. Tariffs

A tariff is a tax put on a good or service that is imported into or exported out of a country. Tariffs are also a way for a government to collect money.

What is the impact of a tariff on someone who makes or manufactures a product locally?

What is the difference if the tariff is high (15%) or low (2%)?

What is the impact of a tariff on the consumer of a product?

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions Student Sheet, p. 2**

**Section II: Taxes and the American Revolution**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Type of Tax | What was Taxed? | What was the purpose of the Tax? |
| Sugar Act |  |  |
| Intolerable Acts (Coercive Acts) |  |  |
| Townsend Acts |  |  |
| Stamp Act |  |  |
| Tea Tax |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Please explain: | Committees of Correspondence | Non-importation | Tarring and Feathering |
| What was the strategy? |  |  |  |
| Who participated? |  |  |  |
| What were the short term effects? |  |  |  |
| What were the long term effects? |  |  |  |
| How was it both an economic and a political tactic? |  |  |  |

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions Student Sheet, p. 3**

**Section III: Impact of Taxation and Non-Importation: The Case of Tea**

Here is the price (in pounds Sterling) of tea per pound during these turbulent times.

1763: .84 1769: .46

1764: .90 1770: 1.00

1765: .93 1771: .77

1766: .83 1772: .53

1767: .72 1773: .53

1768: .58 1774: .73

How do these prices reflect both the British tax policy and the colonists’ willingness to adhere to a non-importation policy?

Which years did the British impose new taxes? When did the colonists respond??

**Section IV: Cost of Living**

Consider the annual income of the person assigned to your group. Using the Commodity Price List, construct a realistic budget for this individual and his or her family. How did the taxation policy of the British affect this person and his or her family?

COMMODITY PRICE (in Pounds Sterling) LIST, 1774

Beef/barrel 6.67 Rum/Gallon .29

Bread/Hundred Weight 4.27 Salt/Bushel .27

Corn/Bushel .36 Sugar/Hundred Weight 7.33

Cotton/Lb .18 Tea/Lb .73

Flour/Hundred Weight 2.47 Tobacco /Hundred Weight 4.33

Molasses/Gallon .24 Wheat/Bushel 1.03

Pork/Barrel 10.00 Wine/Pipe 166.67

**British Taxation: Actions and Reactions Student Sheet, p. 4**

**Section V: Different Views on Taxes**

Taxes affected different members of the community differently. Learn about some of the people who actually had to live with these taxes. Your teacher will assign you a resident of colonial Boston. Learn about him or her on the Mapping Revolutionary Boston website. Answer the following questions:

* 1. What would be their attitude towards British tax policy?
  2. If they were opposed to it, did they participate in any protests? Which ones?
  3. If they supported the British, explain why.
  4. Using the Commodity Price List, construct a budget for their household.

**Meeting of Revolutionary Minds**

**Location**: Colonial North America **Time Period**: Revolutionary War Era **Grades**: 8-12

**Essential Question**: Were the steps that led to separation from Great Britain inevitable?

**Objective**s:

1. Have students become aware of the political choices available at each stage in the path to declaring independence.
2. Have students see the legacy of the Enlightenment on the range of arguments made by those who debated these political choices.
3. Have students appreciate the paradoxical nature of the freedom the Revolutionary leaders pursued.
4. Have students learn about the ways in which the political events and language of the 1760s and 1770s contributed to a developing sense of an American identity which allowed for common interests despite disparate experiences

**Skill Emphasis**: Debate

**Massachusetts Social Studies Curriculum Standards**

General Themes

The evolution of the concepts of personal freedom, individual responsibility and respect for

human dignity

The influence of political ideas as human societies move beyond boundaries

History and Geography Skills

Explain how a cause and effect relationship is different from a sequence of events

Interpret the past within its own historical context

US History I, 1763-1877

The Political and Intellectual Origins of the American Nation: the Revolution and Constitution, 1763-1789

Explain the political factors that contributed to the American Revolution

The impact on the colonies of the French and Indian War, including an overhaul of

British Imperial policy from 1763-1775

How freedom from European feudalism and aristocracy and widespread ownership of

property fostered individualism and contributed to the Revolution

Analyze how Americans resisted British policies before 1775

Explain the role of Massachusetts in the revolution, including important events and people

**Meeting of Revolutionary Minds Teacher Sheet**

**Overview**

The residents of the British colonies of North America were a diverse group—differentiated by class, work, ethnicity, gender and race. For the small percentage that resided in cities, the nature of urban life and economic expediency had them live and work in close proximity to one another. When troubles hit, no one escaped some connection to them.

The Seven Years War from 1756 to 1763 saw the British gain control of much of North America yet it had cost the Crown and its colonies dearly in terms of people and resources. Britain expected the colonies to pay for their protection and imposed a series of taxes to generate revenue. These measures were also designed to impose tighter control over the colonies after decades of lax rule. The British taxes generated a wide variety of responses. The people of the colonies were Englishmen and as such, had certain sensibilities about the rights they possessed, sentiments fueled by contemporary exploration of the ideals of the Enlightenment

Issues arose continually during these years and there were no shortage of opinions yet they reflected a wide spectrum of thought. Practical considerations influenced theoretical approaches to problems. A wealthy merchant could well endure, perhaps benefit from a non-importation agreement, but what of the small shopkeeper? A war widow was less concerned with Enlightenment inspired debates and more interested in how she could feed her children. And the failure of one led to hardship for many, so connected was the network of credit, consumption, and trade. The famous, infamous and non-famous all participated in these debates.

The residents of Boston were active participants in these debates about what constituted a proper response to the actions of King George III and his ministers. The ravages of war had hurt the city, both in terms of economics and loss of human life. In addition, the region’s strong traditions of the town meeting, church, and public ritual contributed to a sense of outrage and a willingness to act on these feelings. To most Bostonians, it seemed unjust to increase taxes on an already beleaguered people.

**Procedure**

1. Discuss with students the general climate the of late colonial era and the problems faced by British colonists in North America. For an overview, have them read relevant portions of their text book, or the Political Crisis essay in Mapping Revolutionary Boston exhibit.
2. Be sure they understand the complexity of both tactic and opinion, noting that it is not possible to reduce the issues before the colonists into simple, linear cause and effect.
3. Inform students they will be assuming the guise of one of the following inhabitants of colonial Boston:

Mather Byles Thomas Hutchinson, John Hancock Sam Adams

John Adams Benjamin Edes Isaiah Thomas Lydia Gregory

Cumings Sisters George Robert Twelves Hewes Phyllis Wheatley

John Jeffries Mather Byles Benjamin Edes Joseph Warren

Josiah Quincy Jr. Andrew Oliver John Rowe James Otis

They will need to learn about their person and be prepared to discuss his or her position on key topics of the day.

Have them complete the Student Sheet. Select specific topics for debate from the lists below, and

inform the students so they can prepare fully. Encourage them to find other members of the class who

share their opinions and have them work together.

**Meeting of Revolutionary Minds Teacher Sheet, p. 2**

Possible Topics for Debate\*

Slavery should be abolished

Runway Apprentices and Slaves should be returned

Boycotting British Goods is an effective path to combat unjust tax policies

Customs Officials should be Tarred and Feathered

The Crown has the right to impose taxes on its subjects

The Colonists enjoy certain rights as Englishmen, among them the right to participate in

legislation that will affect their lives.

Newspapers should be free to print whatever they wish

Destruction of property is an acceptable means of protest

The British Soldiers accused in the Boston massacre deserved a zealous defense

Colonists should provide housing to British Soldiers

The British are entitled to defend their territory and use their troops to do so

\*Summaries of these topics will be included in Resource Section in the final exhibit

Variation on this Activity:

Rather than debating the above topics, the students might debate the actions and attitudes of

these groups:

Sons of Liberty

Committees of Correspondence

Stamp Act Congress

First Continental Congress

Second Continental Congress

**Time Allocation**

Introduce Lesson: 20 Minutes

Time out of Class to learn about historic figure/issues and prepare for the debate

In-Class Debate: 3 class periods

**Materials Needed**

Access to overviews of the pre-revolutionary period

Access to Mapping Revolutionary Boston website, http://www.bostonhistory.org/sub/mappingrevolutionaryboston/

Timeline of Events, 1763-1776

**Assessment Criteria**

1. Did the students become aware of the political choices available at each stage in the path to declaring independence?
2. Did the students see the legacy of the Enlightenment on the range of arguments made by those who debated these political choices?
3. Did the students appreciate the paradoxical nature of the freedom the Revolutionary leaders pursued?
4. Did the students learn about the ways in which the political events and language of the 1760s and 1770s contributed to a developing sense of an American identity which allowed for common interests despite disparate experiences?

**Meeting of Revolutionary Minds Student Sheet**

**Overview**

The colonists on North America before the American Revolution were a diverse group, with different attitudes about a wide range of concerns. The issues before them were complex and their responses were influenced by the abstract and the immediate—the big picture and the smallest details.

**Learn About Your Person**

Your teacher will assign you an historic figure. To find information about your person, begin with the Mapping Revolutionary Boston website.

Once you have learned about your person, you will need to be able to enter debates. Be sure you can answer the following questions about your person.

1. What was this person’s occupation and economic status? How did this influence his or her feelings about British rule?

2. What power did he or she have in colonial society? Was he or she able to own land or other property? Could he or she vote? Would independence from Britain make a difference in his or her life?

3. Did this person participate in protests against the British? What actions did he or she take? Why did he or she act in this manner?

4. Did this person see justification for some of the British policies? In a debate, one needs to see the arguments made by opponents. How did your individual understand the position of his or her opponents?

**Debate Preparation**

Your teacher will provide you will a debate topic. To prepare for the debate, consider the following:

1. Did your person agree or disagree?
2. What led him or her to this opinion?
3. How strong were his or her feelings on this topic? Was he or she able to understand why others did not share the same opinion?
4. What are the arguments he or she would make to support his or her position?
5. What evidence might he or she use to support this position?
6. Other members of your class will share a position similar to your person’s. See how you might work together to defend your position.

**Daily Life in Revolutionary America**

**Location**: Colonial North America **Time Period**: Revolutionary War Era **Grades**: 8-12

**Essential Question**: How is the story of the American Revolution comprised of many individual tales?

**Objectives**:

1. Have students recognize the actions and attitudes of individuals from different backgrounds and how they contributed to the American Revolution.
2. Have students understand how much of the story has been lost to history.
3. Help students learn about the ability of different individuals to make choices that affected their own lives and that of others.
4. Have students recognize the diversity of viewpoints people held at this crucial time, noting the range of opinions between the loyalist and patriot camps and within them.

**Skill Emphasis**: Creative Writing/Memoir

**Massachusetts Social Studies Curriculum Standards**

General Themes

The evolution of the concepts of personal freedom, individual responsibility and respect for

human dignity

The influence of economic, political, religious and cultural ideas as human societies move

beyond boundaries

History and Geography Skills

Show connections between particular historical events and ideas and larger economic, social, and

political trends and developments

Interpret the past within its own historical context

US History I, 1763-1877

The Political and Intellectual Origins of the American Nation: the Revolution and Constitution, 1763-1789

How freedom from European feudalism and aristocracy and widespread ownership of

property fostered individualism and contributed to the Revolution

Analyze how Americans resisted British policies before 1775

Explain the role of Massachusetts in the revolution, including important events and people

**Daily Life in Revolutionary America Teacher Sheet**

**Overview**

Our understanding of any historical event is incomplete. We are not able to hear from everyone who all of those who participated in activities long finished yet their involvement was integral to what transpired.

The American Revolution is central to our nation’s history and there are many accounts from a variety of sources. Many of the events well known, but the story is incomplete. What of the thousands who protested, boycotted, and worked in the colonies? How did they contribute to the Revolution? Did they all agree with those who sought to sever ties from England? How would this separation benefit them? What would freedom be for them? How do all of these stories, taken together, really become the story of our nation’s founding?

**Procedure**

1. Explore with students how we know about the past. Whose version of events do we have? Are they complete?
2. In your studies of the American Revolution, emphasize that everyone is the colonies was affected but we know very few of the individual stories. What are possible ways we can learn about those besides Adams, Washington and Franklin?
3. Provide Students with excerpts from the diaries Jon Rowe and Anna Green Winslow and have them complete Section I of the Student Sheet. Discuss their responses.
4. Direct students to the Mapping Revolutionary Boston site and assign them one of the following people:

Lydia Gregory Cumings Sisters Thomas Hutchinson Isaiah Thomas

George Robert Twelves Hewes Phyllis Wheatley John Jeffries

Mather Byles Benjamin Edes Joseph Warren Josiah Quincy Jr.

John Hancock Andrew Oliver John Rowe James Otis

John Singleton Copley

[list to be expanded as new ‘pins’ are added to the exhibit]

1. Have them complete Section II of the Student Sheet. They can present their results directly or you may display them in the room. Have a follow up discussion. Be sure to explore what was important to their historic figures. How did they experience the daily occurrences and the big events of this time in history? How were their stories part of America’s story?

**Time Allocation**

Section 1: 20-30 minutes

Section 2: Time out of class to learn about their person and write diary entries. One class period to share diaries.

**Materials Needed**

Excerpts from the diaries of John Rowe, Anna Green Winslow, both available through Google Books

[**http://tinyurl.com/p9rpa6g**](http://tinyurl.com/p9rpa6g) **(Winslow)**

[**http://tinyurl.com/pnqe4h9**](http://tinyurl.com/pnqe4h9) **(Rowe)**

Access to Mapping Revolutionary Boston Website, http://www.bostonhistory.org/sub/mappingrevolutionaryboston/

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**Enrichment Activities**

1. Dialogue pairs—have students work in small groups and image a dialogue between their two historic figures or between one of their figures and a more well known person from the time.
2. Have students imagine other means to learn about someone who did not leave a written account and present that ‘evidence’.
3. Have students learn more about John Rowe and his diary: <http://www.masshist.org/revolution/resources/rowes.php>

Imagine his entries with those ‘pins’ with whom he would not have had contact: Phyllis Wheatley, Lydia Gregory or specific events he did, the Boston Tea Party or the Boston Massacre.

**Assessment Criteria**

1. Did the students recognize the actions and attitudes of individuals from different backgrounds and how they contributed to the American Revolution?
2. Did the students understand how much of the story has been lost to history?
3. Did the students learn about the ability of different individuals to make choices that affected their own lives and that of others?
4. Did the students recognize the diversity of viewpoints people held at this crucial time, noting the range of opinions between the loyalist and patriot camps and within them?

**Daily Life in Revolutionary America Student Sheet**

**Overview**

There are many ways to learn about the past. Some individuals left written records, but most did not. It is still important to learn what they have to tell us, *whether or not they left the actual words*. Perhaps it is the food they ate, the clothes they wore, the books they read, or if they could even read at all. But everyone who has ever lived has a story to tell us and all of them together help us understand the past.

**Section I**

Many individuals kept diaries, often filled with the most basic details of their lives. You will read the diaries of two people who lived in Boston during the pre-Revolutionary era.

John Rowe was born in Britain and moved to Boston as a young man. He was a successful merchant who become enmeshed in the patriot cause when the tea from his ship was thrown into Boston Harbor in 1773. He was opposed to many British policies yet questioned the wisdom of complete independence from England.

Anna Green Winslow was the daughter of the British Commissary General stationed in Nova Scotia. She lived with an aunt and uncle in Boston from 1770 to 1773. Her diary is filled with the daily events of a young woman of privilege: lessons, sewing, dances, reading and writing. She lived in the heart of the Boston, and the events of the time did not escape her notice.

Read the diary excerpts of Jon Rowe and Anna Green Winslow

Answer the following questions:

1. What was most important to them?

2. Is there evidence of famous events or people in their diaries?

3. Were their lives affected by the events of this period?

4. How are their concerns both ordinary and extraordinary?

5. What do we learn about this time period from their diaries?

**Section II**

Learn about your historic person. Write 5 diary entries they would make. Be sure to consider

The dates

The daily events

The other people they might encounter

Any historic events they may have witnessed or in which they participated

What might historians learn from their diaries in the future?