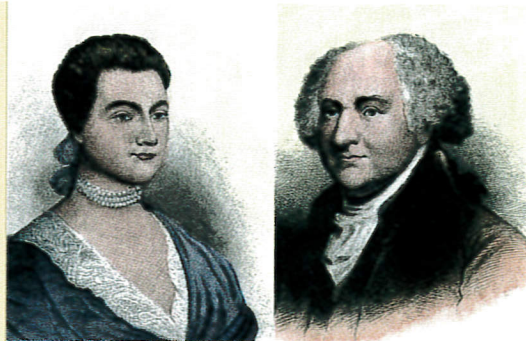


John and Abigail Adams, Letters

Husband and wife John and Abigail Adams were key figures in the American Revolution and did much to further the Patriot cause. Below are excerpts from two of their letters to each other about the Declaration of Independence.

- ▶ Abigail Adams was an educated woman for her time. Her letters say much about her ideas about independence.



“Time has been given for the whole People, maturely to consider the great Question of Independence, and to ripen their judgment, ① dissipate their Fears, and allure their Hopes, by discussing it in Newspapers and Pamphlets, by debating it in Assemblies, Conventions, Committees of Safety and Inspection, in Town and County Meetings, as well as in private Conversations, ② so that the whole People, in every Colony of the thirteen, have now adopted it as their own Act. This will cement the Union”

—John Adams, Philadelphia, 3 July 1776

“I long to hear that you have declared an independency—and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and ③ 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 and attention is not paid to the [Ladies] we are determined to foment a [Rebellion], and ④ will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.”

—Abigail Adams, Braintree, 31 March, 1776

Reading and Vocabulary Support

① *Dissipate* means “to make disappear.”

② Who is John Adams including in his opinion that independence should be considered and accepted?

③ Some spellings in Abigail’s letter are British spellings, and others may be spellings used at the time.

④ What phrase in Abigail’s letter compares women’s views on laws to the colonists’ view on British laws?

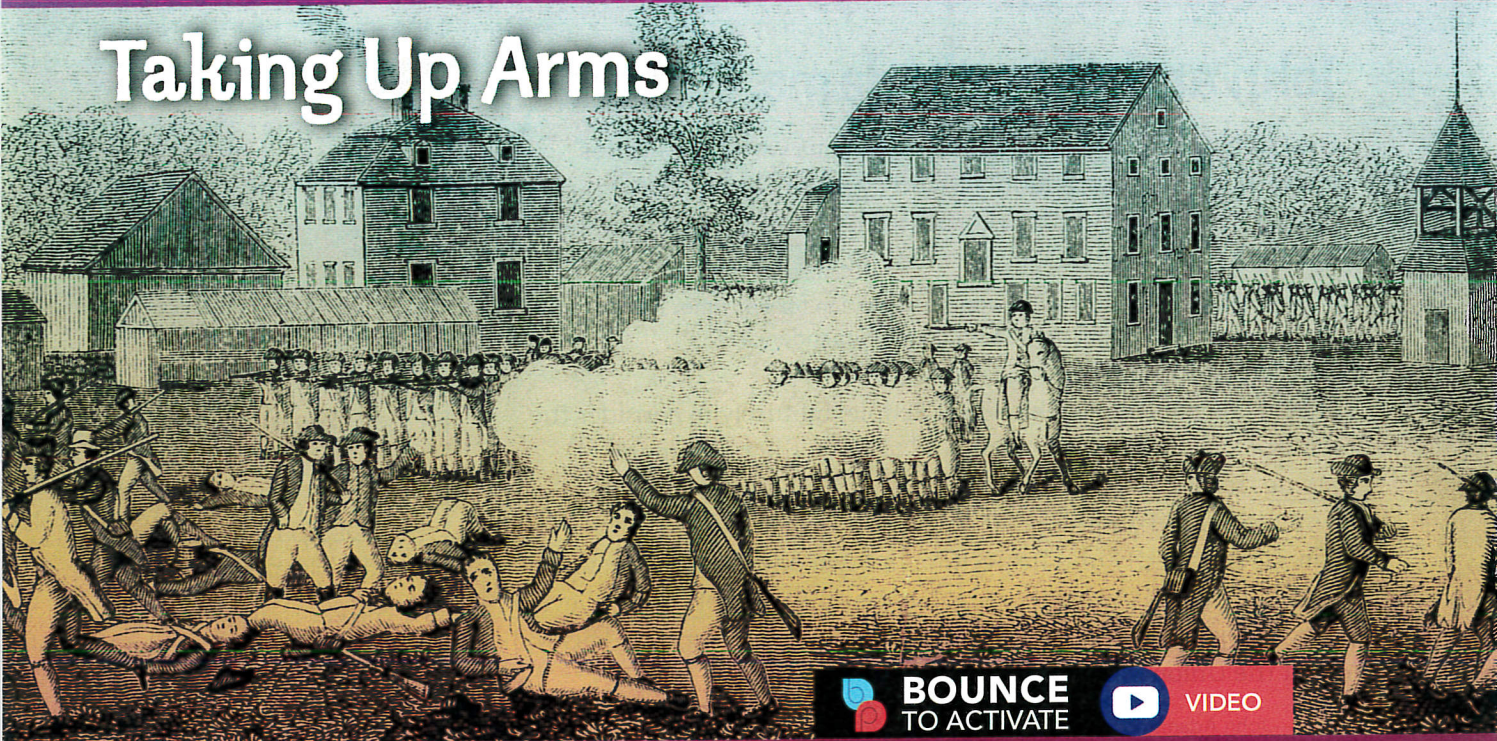
Analyzing Primary Sources

Cite specific evidence from the letters to support your answers.

1. **Determine Author’s Point of View** How does John Adams think that the colonists can form a unified opinion on the question of declaring independence from Britain?
2. **Determine Author’s Purpose** What was Abigail’s purpose in writing to her husband while he was a member of the Continental Congress?
3. **Draw Conclusions** What happened in 1776 that may have sparked Abigail’s interest in women’s rights?

LESSON 3

Taking Up Arms



 **BOUNCE**
TO ACTIVATE

 **VIDEO**

GET READY TO READ

START UP


Examine the illustration. Write a sentence contrasting the colonists with the British troops at Lexington.

GUIDING QUESTIONS


- What was the Boston Tea Party, and how did later British actions heighten tensions among the colonists?
- What actions were taken at the First and Second Continental Congresses?
- What advantages and disadvantages did each side have as the Revolutionary War began?

TAKE NOTES

Literacy Skills: Summarize

Use the graphic organizer in your  Active Journal to take notes as you read the lesson.

PRACTICE VOCABULARY

Use the graphic organizer in your  Active Journal to practice the vocabulary words.

Vocabulary

civil disobedience Patriot
militia Loyalist
minutemen

Academic Vocabulary

consequently
approach

The calm between the colonies and England did not last long. Economic and political disputes continued, this time over a simple drink. Tea was tremendously popular in the colonies. By 1770, at least one million Americans brewed tea twice a day. People “would rather go without their dinners than without a dish of tea,” a visitor to the colonies noted.

The Boston Tea Party

Since the 1720s, Parliament had given the British East India Company exclusive rights to sell tea to the American colonies. Parliament protected this by mandating that tea sold to the colonies had to be shipped to England first so taxes could be paid. Then the tea was shipped to colonial tea merchants for sale in the American colonies.

Mercantilist System This system met resistance due to the taxation of tea in the American colonies. Remember, to maintain its authority over the colonies, Parliament had kept a tax on tea when repealing the Townshend Acts. The tax was a small one, but colonists resented it.

Did you know?

The tea that the East India Company ships delivered to Boston Harbor came from China. There were five varieties and 340 chests of tea on board the ships *Beaver* and *Dartmouth*.

As a result, many colonists refused to buy British tea. Also, the colonists were able to get cheaper tea directly from Dutch and French traders who smuggled it to American merchants.

Mercantilist Policies Lead to the Tea Act In the 1770s, the British East India Company found itself in deep financial trouble, due in part to dwindling tea sales in the American colonies. As a result, more than 15 million pounds of tea sat unsold in British warehouses.

Parliament tried to help the British East India Company by passing the Tea Act of 1773. The act let the company bypass colonial tea merchants and sell directly to colonists.

The Tea Act also gave the British East India Company a rebate on tea taxes. Although colonists would still have to pay the tea tax, they would not have to pay the higher price charged by colonial tea merchants. As a result, the tea itself would cost less than ever before. Parliament hoped this would encourage Americans to buy more British tea.

To the surprise of Parliament, colonists protested the Tea Act. Many colonists were opposed to British mercantilist policies that were supposed to generate wealth for England by taxing the colonies. However, American tea merchants were especially angry because they had been cut out of the tea trade. They believed that allowing the government-sponsored British East India Company to sell tea to Americans violated their right to conduct free enterprise.

Even tea drinkers, who would have benefited from the law, scorned the Tea Act. They believed that it was a British trick to make them accept Parliament's right to tax the colonies.

A Boycott Against Tea Once again, colonists responded to the new law with a boycott. A Philadelphia poet, Hannah Griffitts, urged American women to:

Primary Source

"Stand firmly resolved and bid Grenville to see That rather than freedom we part with our tea, And well as we love the dear drink when a-dry, As American patriots our taste we deny."

—Hannah Griffitts in Milcah Martha Moore's *Commonplace Book*, 1773

Daughters of Liberty and women like Griffitts led the boycott. They served coffee or made "liberty tea" from raspberry leaves. At some ports, Sons of Liberty enforced the boycott by keeping the British East India Company from unloading cargoes of tea.

An Act of Civil Disobedience Three ships loaded with tea reached Boston Harbor in late November 1773. The colonial governor of Massachusetts, Thomas Hutchinson, insisted that they unload their cargo as usual.

Analyze Images The colonists loved tea but were prepared to give it up rather than pay British taxes on it. **Use Visual Information** What details about this tea cup from the 1700s lead you to believe that tea was important to the colonists?





Analyze Images On December 16, 1773, a group of colonists emptied hundreds of tea chests into Boston Harbor to protest British taxation. **Infer** Why might this act of civil disobedience mark a turning point?

Sam Adams and the Sons of Liberty had other plans. On the night of December 16, they met in Old South Meeting House. They sent a message to the governor, demanding that the ships leave the harbor. When the governor rejected the demand, Adams stood up and declared, “This meeting can do nothing further to save the country.”

Adams’s words seemed to be a signal. As if on cue, a group of men in American Indian disguises burst into the meetinghouse. From the gallery above, voices cried, “Boston harbor a teapot tonight! The Mohawks are come!”

The disguised colonists left the meetinghouse and headed for the harbor. Others joined them along the way. Under a nearly full moon, the men boarded the ships, split open the tea chests, and dumped the tea into the harbor.

By 10 P.M., the Boston Tea Party, as it was later called, was over. The contents of 342 chests of tea floated in Boston Harbor. The next day, John Adams wrote about the event in his diary.

Primary Source

“This destruction of the tea is so bold, so daring, so firm . . . it must have such important and lasting results that I can’t help considering it a turning point in history.”

—Diary of John Adams, December 17, 1773

The Boston Tea Party was an important act of **civil disobedience**. Civil disobedience is the nonviolent refusal to obey laws that one considers unjust. The colonists had many reasons for this act of civil disobedience. They wanted to voice their discontent to the British without hurting anyone. They also wanted to stop the tea from entering Boston. The impact of their civil disobedience was perhaps greater than they had expected. Harsh punishment would come from Britain.

READING CHECK **Identify Supporting Details** Why were many colonists dissatisfied with the Tea Act?

How Did King George III Strike Back at Boston?

Colonists had mixed reactions to the Boston Tea Party. Some cheered it as a firm protest against unfair British laws. Others worried that it would encourage lawlessness in the colonies. Even those who condemned the Boston Tea Party, though, were shocked at Britain’s harsh response to it. The unrest in Boston and the British reaction to the Tea Party would be yet another cause of the Revolution.

The Intolerable Acts Anger Massachusetts The British were outraged by what they saw as Boston's lawless behavior. In 1774, Parliament, encouraged by King George III, acted to punish Massachusetts.

Colonists called the four laws they passed the Intolerable Acts because they were so harsh. These Acts pushed the colonists closer to revolution.

First, Parliament shut down the port of Boston. No ship could enter or leave the harbor—not even a small boat. The harbor would remain closed until the colonists paid for the tea they had destroyed in the Boston Tea Party and repaid British officials, such as Thomas Hutchinson, for damage to personal property. Boston's harbor was central to the life of the city. With the closing of the port, merchants could not sell their goods, and **consequently**, the colony's economy suffered.

Second, Parliament forbade Massachusetts colonists to hold town meetings more than once a year without the governor's permission. In the past, colonists had called town meetings whenever they wished. Public officials would now be selected by the king's governor rather than be elected by citizens.

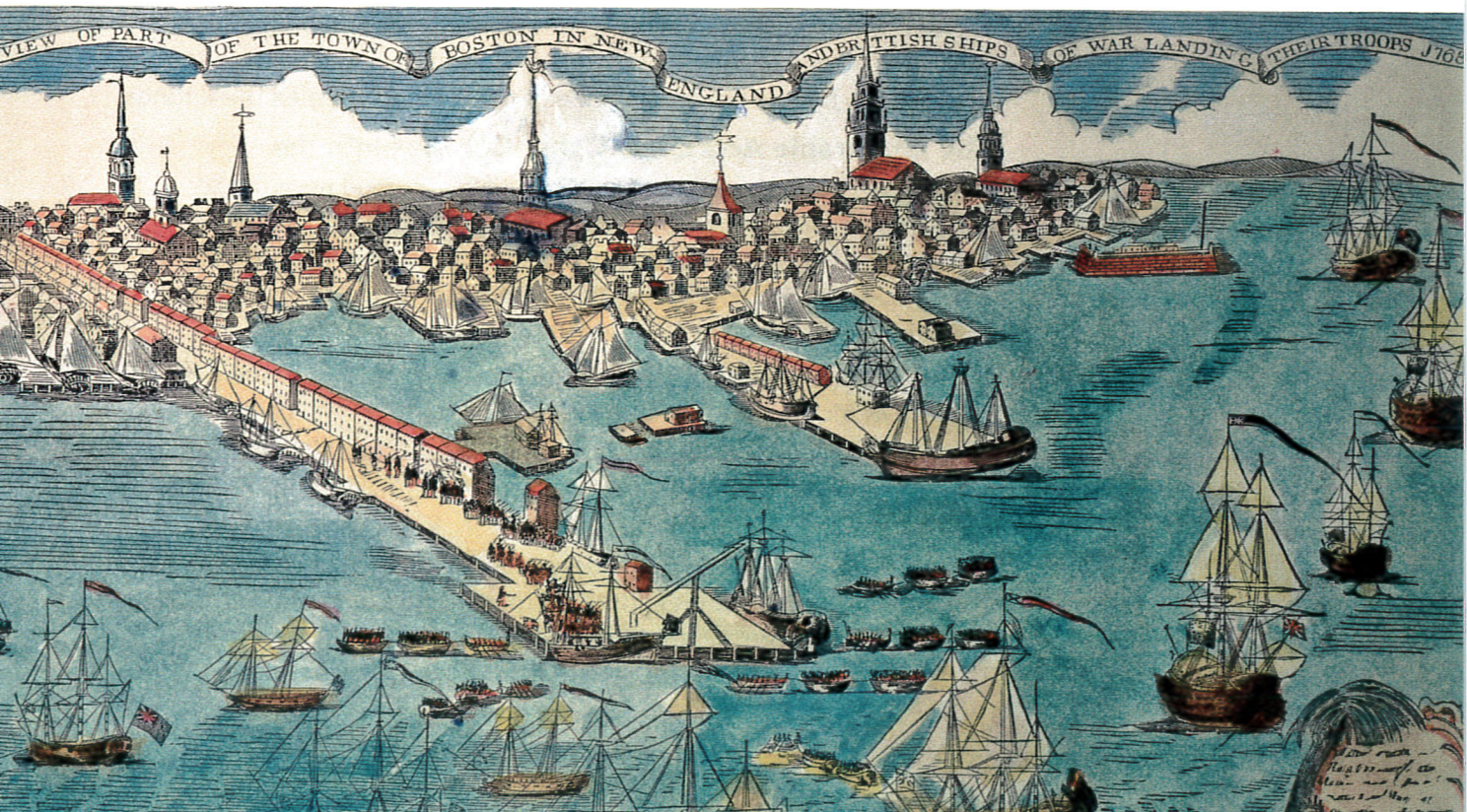
Third, Parliament allowed customs officers and other officials who might be charged with major crimes to be tried in Britain or Canada instead of in Massachusetts. Colonists protested. They argued that a dishonest official could break the law in the colonies and avoid punishment by being tried before a sympathetic jury.

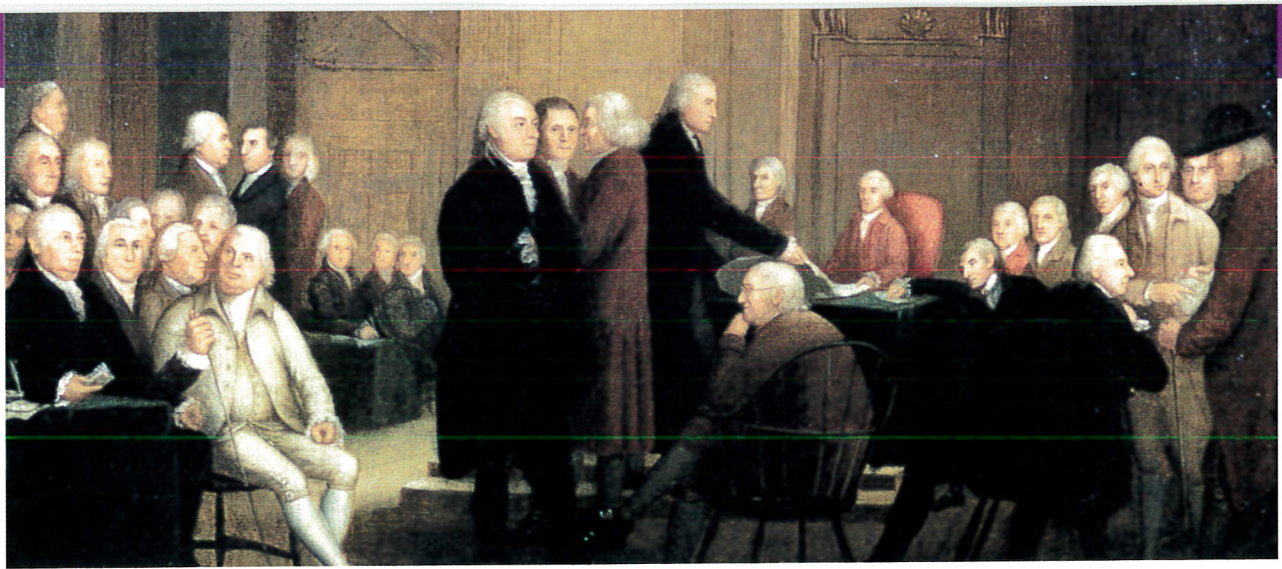
Fourth, Parliament passed a new Quartering Act. No longer would redcoats camp in tents on Boston Common. Instead, colonists would have to house British soldiers in their homes when no other housing was available. Colonists viewed this act as yet another tax, because they had to house and feed the soldiers. Many objected to having the British army stationed in the colonies at all.

Academic Vocabulary

consequently • *adv.*, as a result

▼ Following the Boston Tea Party, British warships closed the port of Boston. Parliament demanded that colonists repay the damages from the loss of tea before they would reopen the port.





▲ The First Continental Congress met in September 1774, at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia. The delegates resolved to suspend trade with Britain and encouraged the colonies to form small armies of citizens called militias.

Benjamin Franklin's sister, Jane Mecum, wrote to her brother complaining of the British troops and their behavior in Boston:

Primary Source

"... But at present we have a m[e]lancholy Prospect for this winter at Least the towns being so full of Profl[i]gate [soldiers] and many such officers there is hardly four and twenty hours Pas[s]es without some fray amongst them and [one] can walk but a lit[t]le way in the street without hearing th[eir] Profane language."

—Letter from Jane Franklin Mecum to Benjamin Franklin, November 21, 1774

The Quebec Act Redraws Borders Parliament also passed the Quebec Act. It set up a government for Canada and gave complete religious freedom to French Catholics. The Quebec Act also extended the borders of Quebec to include the land between the Ohio and Missouri rivers. The act pleased French Canadians. American colonists were angry, however, because some of the colonies claimed these lands.

The Intolerable Acts Draw Other Colonies Into the Struggle The committees of correspondence spread news of the Intolerable Acts to other colonies. They warned that the people of Boston faced hunger while their port was closed. People from other colonies responded by sending rice from South Carolina, corn from Virginia, and flour from Pennsylvania.

In the Virginia Assembly, Thomas Jefferson suggested that a day be set aside to mark the shame of the Intolerable Acts. The royal governor of Virginia rejected the idea. However, on June 1, 1774, church bells tolled slowly. Merchants closed their shops. Many colonists prayed and fasted all day.

In September 1774, colonial leaders called a meeting in Philadelphia. Delegates from 12 colonies gathered in what became known as the First Continental Congress. Only Georgia did not send delegates.

After much debate, the delegates passed a resolution backing Massachusetts in its struggle. They agreed to boycott all British goods and to stop exporting goods to Britain until the Intolerable Acts were repealed. The delegates also urged each colony to set up and train its own militia (mih LISH uh). A **militia** is an army of citizens who serve as soldiers during an emergency.

Before leaving Philadelphia, the delegates agreed to meet again in May 1775. Little did they suspect that before then, an incident in Massachusetts would change the fate of the colonies forever.

 **READING CHECK** **Identify Main Ideas** How did other colonies respond to the Intolerable Acts?

The Battles of Lexington and Concord

In Massachusetts, colonists were already preparing to resist. Newspapers called on citizens to prevent what they called “the Massacre of American Liberty.” Volunteers known as **minutemen** trained regularly. Minutemen got their name because they kept their muskets at hand and were prepared to fight at a minute’s notice. In towns near Boston, minutemen collected weapons and gunpowder. Meanwhile, Britain built up its forces. More troops arrived in Boston, bringing the total number of British soldiers in that city to 4,000.

Early in 1775, General Thomas Gage, the British commander, sent scouts to towns near Boston. They reported that minutemen had a large store of arms in Concord, a village about 18 miles from Boston. Gage planned a surprise march to Concord to seize the arms.

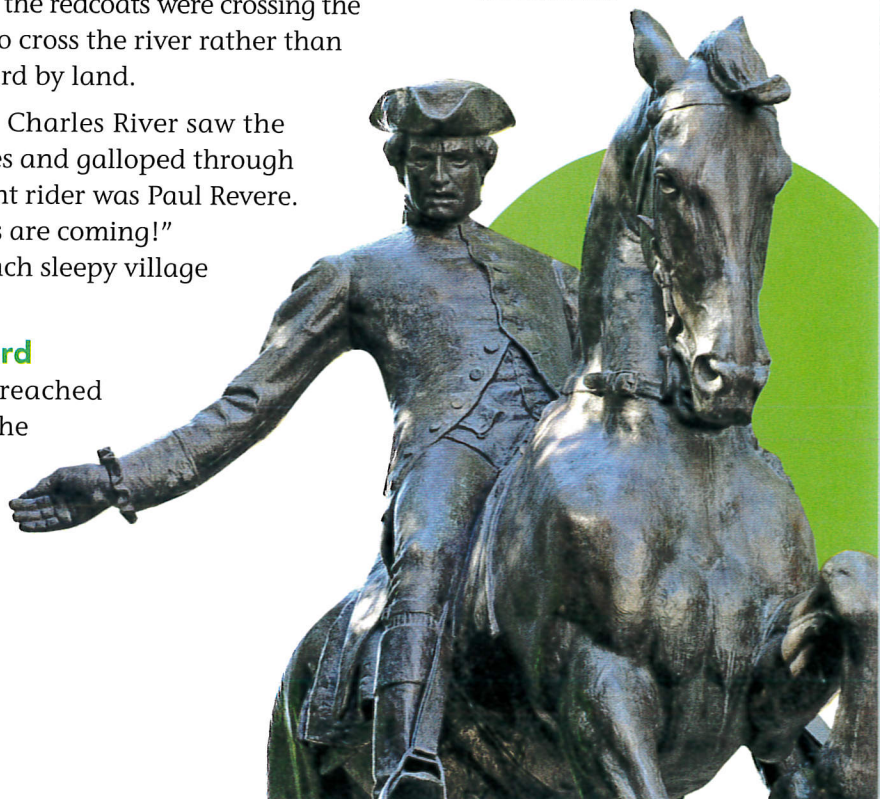
The Redcoats Cross the Charles River On April 18, about 700 British troops quietly left Boston in the darkness. Their goal was to seize the colonial arms. The Sons of Liberty were watching. As soon as the British set out, the Americans hung two lamps from the Old North Church in Boston. This signal meant that the redcoats were crossing the Charles River. The British had decided to cross the river rather than take a much longer route toward Concord by land.

Colonists who were waiting across the Charles River saw the signal. Messengers mounted their horses and galloped through the night toward Concord. One midnight rider was Paul Revere. “The redcoats are coming! The redcoats are coming!” shouted Revere as he passed through each sleepy village along the way.

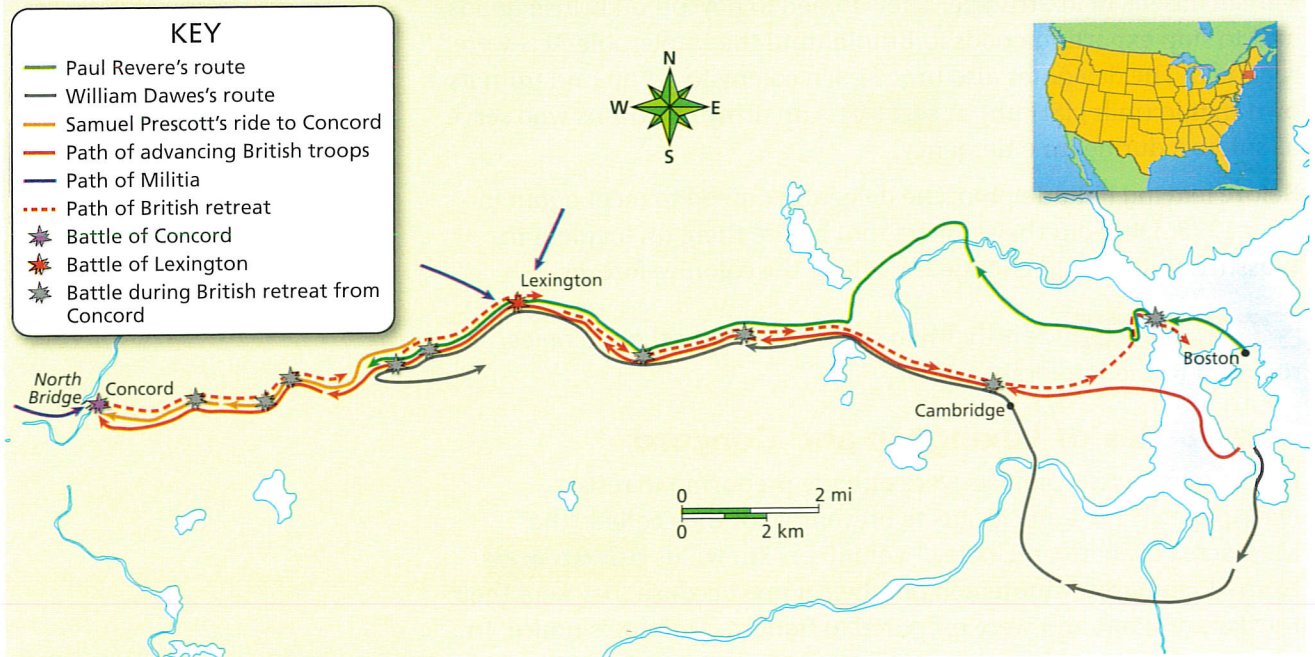
Fighting in Lexington and Concord

At daybreak on April 19, the redcoats reached Lexington, a town near Concord. On the village green, some 70 minutemen were waiting, commanded by Captain John Parker. The British ordered the minutemen to go home. Outnumbered, the colonists began to leave the village green.

▼ This statue honors Paul Revere and his ride to warn the colonists.



First Battles of the Revolution



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

The first battles the colonists fought were in Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts.

1. **Place** What geographic feature did the British encounter on their advance route but not on their retreat?
2. **Summarize** Why were the minutemen so prepared for the arrival of the British troops in Concord?

Suddenly, a shot rang out. No one knows who fired it. In the brief struggle that followed, eight colonists were killed.

The British pushed on to Concord. Finding no arms in the village, they turned back to Boston. On a bridge outside Concord, they met approximately 300 minutemen. Again, fighting broke out. This time, the British were forced to retreat because the minutemen used the geography of the region to their advantage. As the redcoats withdrew, colonial sharpshooters took deadly aim at them from the woods, making it difficult for the British soldiers to fire back. Local women also fired at the British from the windows of their homes. By the time they reached Boston, the redcoats had lost 73 men. Another 200 British soldiers were wounded or missing.

News of the battles of Lexington and Concord spread swiftly. To many colonists, the fighting ended all hope of a peaceful settlement. Only war would decide the future of the 13 colonies.

More than 60 years after the battles of Lexington and Concord, a well-known New England writer, Ralph Waldo Emerson, wrote a poem honoring the minutemen. Emerson's "Concord Hymn" created a vivid picture of the clash at Concord. It begins:

Primary Source

*"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world."*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Concord Hymn," 1837

The “embattled farmers” would have years of difficult fighting in front of them. Lexington and Concord marked the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

The war and disagreements between the American colonists and the British prior to the war represent the era called the American Revolution. This period of struggle led to independence from Britain.

READING CHECK **Identify Cause and Effect** How were the minutemen able to defeat the British at Concord?

The Fighting Continues

Just a few weeks after the battles at Lexington and Concord, on May 10, 1775, colonial delegates met at the Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia. The delegates represented the 13 British colonies from New Hampshire to Georgia. Most of the delegates still hoped to avoid a final break with Britain. However, while the delegates were meeting, the fighting spread.

King George III Rejects Peace After much debate, the delegates sent a petition to King George. In the Olive Branch Petition, they declared their loyalty to the king and asked him to repeal the Intolerable Acts.

George III was furious when he heard about the petition. The colonists, he raged, were trying to begin a war “for the purpose of establishing an independent empire!” The king vowed to bring the rebels to justice. He ordered 20,000 more troops to the colonies to crush the revolt.


Congress did not learn of the king’s response until months later. But even before the petition was sent, leaders like John and Sam Adams were convinced that war could not be avoided.

Vermont Rebels Gain a Route to Canada Ethan Allen, a Vermont blacksmith, did not wait for Congress to act. Allen decided to lead a band of Vermonters, known as the Green Mountain Boys, in a surprise attack on Fort Ticonderoga, located at the southern tip of Lake Champlain. Allen knew that the fort held cannons that the colonists could use, and its strategic location would help colonists control the region.

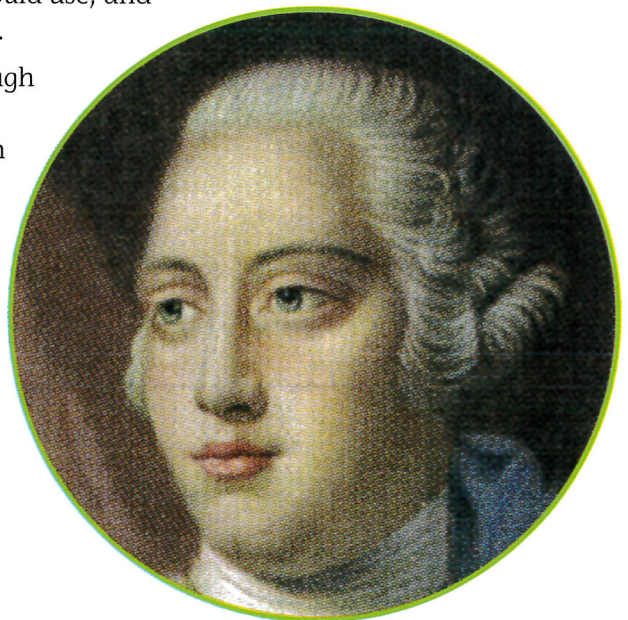
In early May, the Green Mountain Boys crept quietly through the morning mists to Fort Ticonderoga. They quickly overpowered the guard on duty and entered the fort. Allen rushed to the room where the British commander slept. “Come out, you old rat!” he shouted. The commander demanded to know by whose authority Allen acted. “In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress!” Allen replied.

The British commander surrendered Ticonderoga. By capturing the fort, the Green Mountain Boys won a valuable supply of cannons and gunpowder. Allen’s success also gave Americans control of a key route into Canada.

Quest CONNECTIONS

An olive branch is a symbol of peace. How might the colonists react to George III’s response to their petition? Record your findings in your  Active Journal.

Analyze Images When King George III, seen here, read the Olive Branch Petition from the colonists, he was so angered by the colonists’ actions that he sent even more troops to North America. **Infer** How do you think the colonists will react to more troops coming to their cities and towns?



INTERACTIVE

Advantages & Disadvantages of the British and Colonists

George Washington Takes Command In the meantime, the Second Continental Congress had to decide what to do about the makeshift army gathering around Boston. In June, delegates took the bold step of setting up the Continental Army. They appointed George Washington of Virginia as commander.

READING CHECK **Identify Supporting Details** Why was Fort Ticonderoga important to the colonists?

Opposing Sides at War

The colonists who favored war against Britain called themselves **Patriots**. They thought British rule was harsh and unjust. About one third of the colonists were Patriots, one third sided with the British, and one third did not take sides.

Washington Leads the Patriots The Patriots entered the war with many disadvantages. Colonial forces were poorly organized and untrained. They had few cannons, little gunpowder, and no navy. Also, few colonists wanted to enlist in the Continental Army for long terms of service. They preferred to fight near home with a local militia.

Yet, the Patriots also had advantages. Many Patriots owned rifles and were good shots. Their leader, George Washington, had experience and developed into an able commander. Furthermore, Patriots were determined to fight to defend their homes and property. Reuben Stebbins of Massachusetts was typical of many patriotic farmers. When the British **approached**, he rode off to battle. "We'll see who's going t'own this farm!" he cried.

Academic Vocabulary
approach • v., to come near

Analyze Charts The Revolutionary War was largely a fight between the colonists and the British.

Draw Conclusions Why was it also a fight between the colonists themselves?

★ **AMERICANS IN CONFLICT** ★

The **Revolutionary War** was also a conflict between groups living in the colonies. During the Revolution, families fought each other. Communities were split apart.



1775-1783
 80,000 to 100,000 **Loyalists** left the colonies during the war.

1760
Everyone is a Tory and supports the King.

1775
 The War begins . . . relatives, friends, and neighbors take sides.

1776
 Population of the United States is 2.5 million.

Source: United States Census Bureau

- ★★★★★ **PATRIOTS** ★★★★★
- Called **Rebels** by the Loyalists
 - Felt oppressed by British rule and taxation
 - Led by well-educated and wealthy individuals
 - Supported Declaration of Independence and freedom from British rule

- ★★★★★ **LOYALISTS** ★★★★★
- Called **Tories** by the Patriots
 - Mostly government officials, merchants, bankers, and tradesmen who had financial interests in maintaining British rule
 - Felt it was morally wrong to oppose the King
 - Started their own fighting regiments that were not part of the British Army

British Advantages and

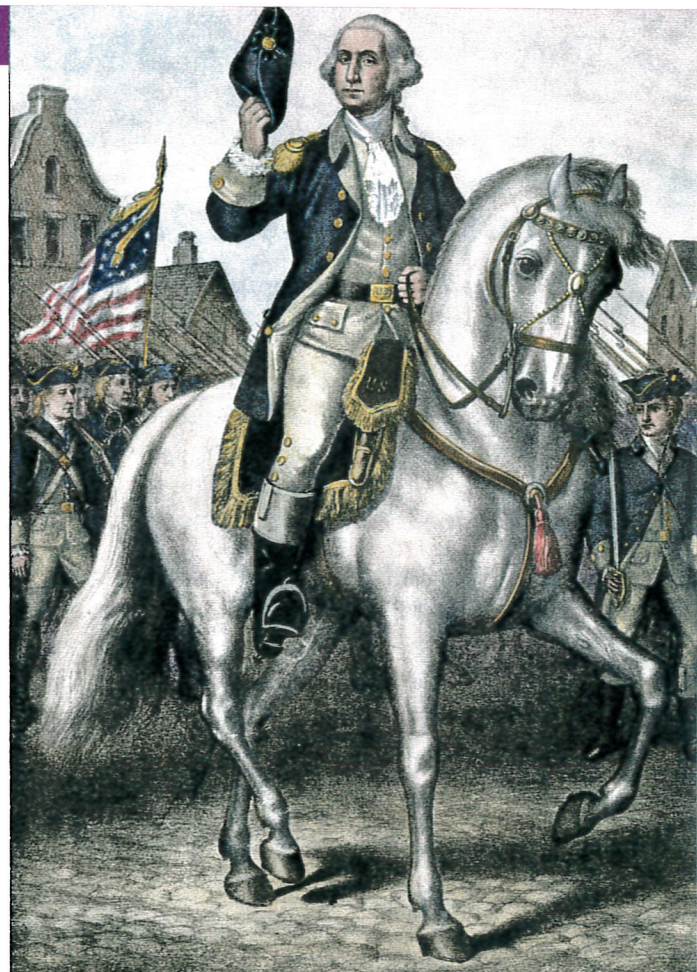
Disadvantages The British were a powerful foe. They had highly trained, experienced troops. Their navy was the best in the world. Also, many colonists supported them.

Still, Britain faced problems. Its armies were 3,000 miles from home. News and supplies took months to travel from Britain to North America. Also, British soldiers risked attacks by colonial militias once they marched out of the cities into the countryside.

Loyalists Favor the King American colonists who remained loyal to Britain were known as **Loyalists**. They included wealthy merchants and former officials of the royal government. However, some farmers and craftsmen were also Loyalists. There were more Loyalists in the Middle Colonies and the South than in New England.

Loyalists faced hard times during the war. Patriots tarred and feathered people known to favor the British. Many Loyalists fled to England or Canada. Others found shelter in cities controlled by the British. Those who fled lost their homes, stores, and farms.

 **READING CHECK** **Identify Main Ideas** What positions did colonists take in regard to the war as it began?




▲ As commander of the Continental Army, Washington knew that he would be fighting against one of the world's toughest armies. He set off at once to take charge of the forces around Boston.

Lesson Check

Practice Vocabulary

1. Contrast the **Patriots** and the **Loyalists**.
2. Explain how **militia** and **minutemen** played a role in the fighting between colonists and the British.

Critical Thinking and Writing

3. **Recognize Multiple Causes** Why did the colonists choose to throw British tea into Boston Harbor?
4. **Infer** Why did Ralph Waldo Emerson call the first shot fired in Lexington “the shot heard round the world”?
5. **Summarize** How did King George react to the Olive Branch Petition?
6. **Writing Workshop: Support Thesis with Details** Think of details—facts, events, ideas—that support the thesis statement you wrote about why there was an American Revolution. Write down as many solid details as you can in your  Active Journal.

Compare Different Points of View

Follow these steps to compare different points of view.



INTERACTIVE

Compare Viewpoints

1 Identify the event and the different points of view. What is the issue that these points of view are addressing? Use what you know about Thomas Paine to assess his motivation for writing *Common Sense*.

2 Identify the facts in each point of view. Facts are statements that can be proved to be true. When both points of view agree about something, it is probably a fact. Does either point of view contain a fact or facts? If so, what are they?

3 Identify the opinions in each point of view. What is Inglis's opinion? Paine's? What words does Paine use to persuade the reader to adopt Paine's point of view?

4 Develop your own opinion about the event. Your opinion should be based on the facts and what you know about the people giving the opinions.

Primary Source

By a declaration for independency, every avenue to an accommodation with Great Britain would be closed. The sword only could then decide the quarrel, and the sword would not be sheathed till one had conquered the other. Besides the unsuitableness of the republican form to the genius of the people, America is too extensive for it. That form may do well enough for a single city, or small territory; but would be utterly improper for such a continent as this. America is too unwieldy for the feeble, dilatory [unhurried] administration of democracy.

—Charles Inglis, *The Deceiver Unmasked*, 1776

Primary Source

I challenge the warmest advocate for reconciliation to show a single advantage that this continent can reap by being connected with Great Britain. I repeat the challenge; not a single advantage is derived. ... Everything that is right or reasonable pleads for separation. The blood of the slain, the weeping voice of nature cries: 'TIS TIME TO PART.

—Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 1776