

West Virginia Studies Resource Development

Title of Lesson: Brainstorming - intro to the American Revolution Cause and Effect (Big Picture Lesson)
Grade level: 8th Grade
Summary: When students reach the 8th grade, they have some general knowledge of the American Revolution and major events that led to this war. To get students thinking, it is good to touch on national events that were happening that pushed the British/Patriots into the Revolution and also those major familiar events that came out of the war to help students see the big picture. This is also great to use if you are only going to briefly have time to touch on the American Revolution.
WV CCR Social Studies Standards: SS.8.21 Demonstrate an understanding of the American Revolution, including western Virginia's part in the development of the nation
Students will know and understand (content) (Essential Questions): How did major events fueled by British rule thrust the country into the American Revolution? What major events were a result in the outcome of the American Revolution?
Students will be able to do (skills): Recognize the difference between cause and effect Predict and categorize events based on prior knowledge in connection to the current content Summarize key events surrounding the American Revolution and draw conclusions based on newly discovered information as to whether each event was a cause or effect
Materials & Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Cause and effect anticipation activity sheet● Summary of events on individual papers (labeled but not dated)● Notes sheet (or just notebook for students to gather info)● Picture sheet● Scissors● Glue sticks● Construction paper Background information: www.duckster.com/history
Learning Plan:

Introduction:

- Stage an event to showcase cause and effect to start your conversation - For example: A student has their chair slightly in the aisle and the teacher trips over the leg of the chair causing them (the teacher) to stub their toe and with their foot hurting they went to their chair to sit as they started the lesson.
- Then lead off with the question what is the difference between cause and effect? Discuss. (Cause is something happened before that made something else happen) (Effect is an outcome due to an event happening).
- Discuss the example of the teacher tripping. What could have been the cause? (The chair leg, the teacher not looking etc.....) What was the effect? (Pain in the foot, needing to sit in the chair to start the lesson. etc....)

Cause and Effect Preview Activity

- Explain that we are going to be looking at the big picture - why did this happen? What events propelled the British/patriots into war? Then what seems like it would be an outcome after this war is over?
- Based on the brief statement have students place (or insert the picture if they are doing it electronically) a star on an event that they believe is a cause and an = sign on one they think is an effect. Have them write one sentence explaining why they chose cause and why they chose effect (optional). Have them turn it in.

Gathering Knowledge

- Pass out notes sheet or have them get out notebook paper to take notes
- Put desks together in groups so that students can rotate to different locations in a station format creating 4 to 5 locations.
 - Place 4-5 information cards at each location and group the students so that they can rotate to the different locations.
 - Pick one card to use as an example -Read the title and read through the information. Together as a class list 3 identifying pieces of information that help draw conclusions as to whether the event was a cause of the Revolution or an effect (outcome). Then next to the title of the event if they determined that it is a cause or effect
 - Have students rotate as groups and you may allow them to discuss and come up with ideas or have them work independently or with a partner
 - Circulate and sit with groups as they are working - help them identify if needed or have a group discussion to encourage support for those struggling
 - Since the summary pieces are short rotations should last about 20 minutes each and may take 2 class periods

Checking for Understanding:

- Give each student a copy of the picture sheet which has a picture of each event with the name of the event on it. Then have them cut out the picture. Give them 2 sheets of construction paper and have them label one sheet cause and one sheet effect.
- Using their notes, have them glue where they now think each event fits

Conclusion

- After they finish (you can have them make a list separately of which ones they identified as cause and which one as effect, so they know for discussion) have them submit and then discuss. Have students take turns sharing how and why they came to that conclusion
- Pass back out their original anticipation and let them check to see which ones they got right originally

Accommodations:

- Highlighted copies of summary sheets of significant points that you want them to focus on
- Offer index cards - one labeled cause (with the definition) and one labeled effect (with the definition) just as a reminder if they get stumped
- Purposefully chose a peer buddy for support when reading the text
- Give the number of cause and number of effect pictures as they are gluing to help guide if needed

Cause Effect Preview Activity

DIRECTIONS

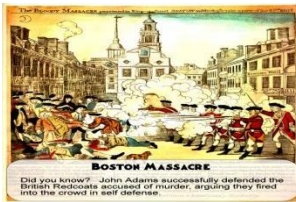
Using the shapes button in the insert tab and insert a star over pictures that you believe

helped cause the American Revolution and insert an = over pictures that show an outcome (either during or after) the American Revolution



Stamp Act

The Stamp Act required colonists to pay a tax (in the form of a stamp) on printed documents, various licenses, and other goods. Colonists rebelled and terrorized British tax collectors.



Boston Massacre

Tension over the presence of British troops in Boston led to the Boston Massacre, the first episode which resulted in the loss of life. Four Bostonians were killed when Redcoats fired into an angry mob.



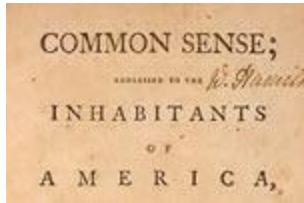
Constitutional Convention

The Constitutional Convention resulted in the elimination of the Articles of Confederation and the formation of a new, more effective government and constitution.



Townshend Acts

The Townshend Act authorized Parliament to issue taxes on in-demand imports such as glass, lead, paint, paper and tea. British soldiers had to be brought into Boston to prevent an uprising.



[Thomas Paine and *Common Sense*](#)

Common Sense, one of the most influential pamphlets in American history galvanized the American public to support the Revolution and condemn the monarchy in England.



[French and Indian War](#)

Also known as the Seven Years War, this war was fought over conflicting territorial claims between the French and British in the Ohio River Valley. The British victory resulted in virtual expulsion of the French in North America, and the rationalization of taxing the Americans to recoup monetary losses.



[The Declaration of Independence](#)

The purpose of this iconic American document was to tell the world why America was breaking away from British rule



[Articles of Confederation](#)

America's first attempt at organized government was the ill-conceived Articles of Confederation. This government gave the new "states" too much power and was insufficient as a means of governing a nation.



[Boston Tea Party](#)

Angry Bostonians known as the Sons of Liberty boarded a British tea vessel dressed as Indians and dumped all of its tea into Boston Harbor in protest of the Tea tax. This event resulted in the Intolerable Acts.

[First Continental Congress](#) | [Second Continental Congress](#)

The Continental Congress was formed for the purposes of drawing consensus within the colonies for action against the growing threat of British occupation.



[Bill of Rights](#)

Although many legislators believed a Bill of Rights was not necessary as part of the Constitution, it was nevertheless included. The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution.



[Treaty of Paris](#)

This document outlined the terms of the British surrender. Its ratification officially ended the Revolution, making America a free country.



[Federalist Papers](#)

The Federalist Papers were a series of essays written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison, which outlined reasons why the states should ratify the Constitution.

Stamp Act



Bill of Rights



Boston Massacre



Townshend Acts



French and Indian War



Trials and Tribulations



Declaration of Independence



Boston Tea Party



Constitutional Convention

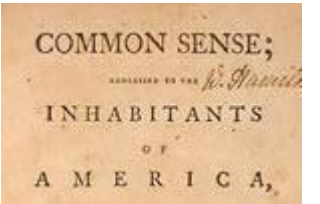


Treaty of Paris



Continental Congress

Thomas Paine/Common Sense



Articles of Confederation



Federalist Papers



Articles of Confederation

The Articles of Confederation served as the first constitution of the United States. This document officially established the government of the union of the thirteen states. The colonies knew they needed some form of official government that united the thirteen colonies. They wanted to have written down rules that all the states agreed to. The Articles allowed the Congress to do things like raise an army, be able to create laws, and print money. The Articles of Confederation was first prepared by a committee of thirteen men from the Second Continental Congress. The chairman of the committee and primary author of the first draft was John Dickinson.

In order for the Articles to be official, they had to be ratified (approved) by all thirteen states. The Congress sent the articles to the states to be ratified. Virginia was the first state to ratify and the last state was Maryland.



- 1. Established the name of the union as "The United States of America."
- 2. The state governments still had their own powers that were not listed in the Articles.
- 3. Refers to the union as a "league of friendship" where the states will help to protect each other from attacks.
- 4. People can travel freely between states, but criminals shall be sent back to the state where they committed the crime for trial.
- 5. Establishes the Congress of the Confederation where each state gets one vote and can send a delegation with between 2 and 7 members.
- 6. The central government is responsible for foreign relations including trade agreements and declaring war. States must maintain a militia but may not have a standing army.
- 7. States may assign military ranks of colonel and below.
- 8. Money to pay for the central government will be raised by each of the state legislatures.
- 9. Gives power to the Congress in regard to foreign affairs like war, peace, and treaties with foreign governments. Congress will act as the court in disputes between states. Congress shall establish official weights and measures.
- 10. Established a group called the Committee of the States which could act for Congress when Congress was not in session.
- 11. Stated that Canada could join the union if it wanted.
- 12. Stated that the new union would agree to pay for earlier war debts.

- 13. Declared that the Articles were "perpetual" or "never ending" and could only be changed if Congress and all the states agreed.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/american_revolution/articles_of_confederation.php

Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights are the first 10 amendments to the United States Constitution. The idea behind the Bill of Rights was to insure certain freedoms and rights to the citizens of America. It put limits on what the government could do and control. Freedoms protected include freedom of religion, speech, assembly, the right to bear arms, unreasonable search and seizure of your home, the right to a speedy trial, and more. Many delegates of the states were against signing the Constitution without a Bill of Rights included. It became a major issue in ratifying the Constitution in some states. As a result, James Madison wrote 12 amendments and presented them to the First Congress. Two years later, ten of the amendments were passed and made a part of the Constitution. They would later become known as the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights was based on several previous documents including the Magna Carta, the Virginia Declaration of Rights, and the English Bill of Rights.



The First Amendment - states that Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting its free exercise. Also protected are freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and the right to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

The Second Amendment - protects citizen's right to bear arms.

The Third Amendment - prevents the government from placing troops in private homes. This was a real problem during the American Revolutionary War.

The Fourth Amendment - this amendment prevents the government from unreasonable search and seizure of the property of US citizens. It requires the government to have a warrant that was issued by a judge and based on probable cause.

The Fifth Amendment - The Fifth Amendment is famous for people saying, "I'll take the Fifth". This gives people the right to choose not to testify in court if they feel their own testimony will incriminate themselves. In addition, this amendment protects citizens from being subject to criminal prosecution and punishment without due process. It also prevents people from being tried for the same crime twice. The amendment also establishes the power of eminent domain, which means that private property cannot be seized for public use without just compensation.

The Sixth Amendment - guarantees a speedy trial by a jury of one's peers. Also, people accused are to be informed of the crimes with which they are charged and have

the right to confront the witnesses brought by the government. The amendment also provides the accused the right to compel testimony from witnesses, and to legal representation (meaning the government must provide a lawyer).

The Seventh Amendment - provides that civil cases also be tried by jury.

The Eighth Amendment - prohibits excessive bail, excessive fines, and cruel and unusual punishments.

The Ninth Amendment - states that the list of rights described in the Constitution is not exhaustive, and that the people still have all the rights that are not listed.

The Tenth Amendment - gives all powers not specifically given to the United States government in the Constitution, to either the states or to the people.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_bill_of_rights.php

Boston Massacre

The Boston Massacre occurred when British soldiers in Boston opened fire on a group of American colonists killing five men.

The Boston Massacre began with a small argument between British Private Hugh White and a few colonists outside the Custom House in Boston on King Street. The argument began to escalate as more colonists gathered and began to harass and throw sticks and snowballs at Private White.



Soon there were over 50 colonists at the scene. The local British officer of the watch, Captain Thomas Preston, sent a number of soldiers over to the Custom House to maintain order. However, the sight of British soldiers armed with bayonets just aggravated the crowd further. They began to shout at the soldiers, daring them to fire. Captain Preston then arrived and tried to get the crowd to disperse. Unfortunately, an object thrown from the crowd struck one of the soldiers, Private Montgomery, and knocked him down. He fired into the crowd. After a few seconds of stunned silence, a number of other soldiers fired into the crowd as well. Three colonists died immediately and two more died later from wounds.

After the Incident

The crowd was eventually dispersed by the acting governor of Boston, Thomas Hutchinson. Thirteen people were arrested including eight British soldiers, one officer, and four civilians. They were charged with murder and put in jail awaiting their trial. British troops were removed from the city as well.

The Trials

The trial of the eight soldiers began and the government wanted the soldiers to have a fair trial, but they were having difficulty in getting a lawyer to represent them. Finally, John Adams agreed to be their lawyer. Although he was a patriot, Adams thought that the soldiers deserved a fair trial.

Adams argued that the soldiers had the right to defend themselves. He showed that they thought their lives were in danger from the mob that had gathered. Six of the soldiers were found not-guilty and two were found guilty of manslaughter.

Results

The Boston Massacre became a rallying cry for patriotism in the colonies. Groups like the Sons of Liberty used it to show the evils of British rule. Although the American Revolution would not start for another five years, the event certainly moved people to look at British rule in a different light.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/american_revolution/boston_massacre.php

Boston Tea Party

The Boston Tea Party was one of the key events leading up to the American Revolution. The Boston Tea Party was a protest by the American Colonists against the British government. They staged the protest by boarding three trade ships in Boston Harbor and throwing the ships' cargo of tea overboard into the ocean. They threw 342 chests of tea into the water. Some of the colonists were disguised as Mohawk Indians, but the costumes didn't fool anyone. The British knew who had destroyed the tea.



At first, throwing tea into the ocean dressed as Mohawks might seem a bit silly, but the colonists had their reasons. Tea was a favorite drink among the British and the colonies. It also was a major source of income to the East India Trading company. This was a British company and the colonies were told they could only buy tea from this one company. They were also told they had to pay high taxes on the tea. This tax was called the Tea Act.

This didn't seem fair to the colonies as they were not represented in British Parliament and didn't have a say on how the taxes should be done. They refused to pay taxes on the tea and asked that the tea be returned to England. When it wasn't, they decided to protest Britain's unfair taxes by throwing the tea into the ocean.

It's unclear to historians if the protest was planned. There had been a big town meeting earlier that day led by Samuel Adams to discuss the tea taxes and how to fight them. However, no one is quite sure if Samuel Adams planned the destruction of the tea or if a bunch of people just got mad and went and did it unplanned. Samuel Adams did later say that it was the act of people defending their rights and not the act of an angry mob. The 342 containers totaled 90,000 pounds of tea! In today's money that would be around a million dollars in tea.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/boston_tea_party.php

Constitutional Convention

The Constitutional Convention gathered to discuss changes to the Articles of the Confederation. After some debate it became apparent to the representatives that a new Constitution was needed. A lot of the debate was held in secret so that the delegates would feel free to speak their minds.

A primary aim of the Constitution was to create a government that would be powerful enough to run the country but would not impose on people's or state's rights. To avoid too much power being held by one person or group, they created the Balance of Power between the three branches of government: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial.



There were two primary competing plans for the Constitution:

Virginia Plan - The Virginia plan was written by James Madison. It represented the desires of the larger states and said that the number of representatives to Congress should be based on the state's population.

New Jersey Plan - The New Jersey plan was written by William Paterson from New Jersey. It represented the smaller states and said that each state should have the same number of representatives.

In the end, an agreement was reached called The Great Compromise. This allowed the number of representatives to the House be based on the state's population while each state would have two representatives in the Senate.

Articles of the Constitution

The Constitution is organized into seven articles:

- Legislative Power
- Executive Power
- Judicial Power
- States' Powers and Limits
- Amendments
- Federal Power
- Ratification

Ratification - In order for the Constitution to go into effect, 9 of the 13 states needed to ratify it. The first state to ratify the Constitution was Delaware and the last state was Rhode Island.

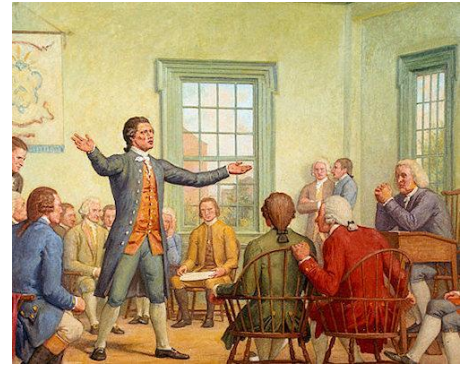
https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_constitution.php

Continental Congress

The Continental Congress was a meeting of delegates from each of the [thirteen American colonies](#). These delegates served as the government during the Revolutionary War.

The First Continental Congress

The First Continental Congress took place with delegates from each colony, except Georgia, and met at Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They discussed the current situation with Britain including the Intolerable Acts, which the British Parliament had imposed on Boston as punishment for the Boston Tea Party.



The delegates took two major actions:

1. They sent a letter to King George III explaining the issues the colonies had with the way they were being treated. They demanded that the King stop the Intolerable Acts or they would boycott English goods. However, the King chose to ignore them and the Americans began the boycott.
2. They planned to meet again if the British did not meet their demands. Members of the First Continental Congress included John Adams, Patrick Henry, and George Washington. The President of the First Congress was Peyton Randolph.

The Second Continental Congress

The Second Continental Congress first met and continued to meet until the Articles of the Confederation were ratified. The first meeting was at the State House in Philadelphia, which would later be called Independence Hall, but they also had sessions in other locations including Baltimore, Maryland and York, Pennsylvania. Unlike the First Continental Congress, this time the colony of Georgia would join and all thirteen colonies were represented. Much had happened in the previous months since the end of the First Continental Congress including the start of the Revolutionary War with the Battles of Lexington and Concord. The congress had some serious business to take care of immediately including forming an army to fight the British. The Second Continental Congress was led by John Hancock. Other new members included Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin. This congress acted much more like a government sending ambassadors to foreign countries, printing its own money, getting loans, and raising an army.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/continental_congress.php

Declaration of Independence

The thirteen colonies in the America's had been at war with Britain for around a year when the Second Continental Congress decided it was time for the colonies to officially declare their independence. This meant that they were breaking away from British rule. They would no longer be a part of the British Empire and would fight for their freedom.



The Continental Congress appointed five leaders, called the Committee of Five, to write a document explaining why they were declaring their independence. The five members were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Robert Livingston, Roger Sherman, and Thomas Jefferson. The members decided that Thomas Jefferson should write the first draft. Thomas Jefferson wrote the first draft over the next few weeks and, after some changes made by the rest of the committee, they presented it to Congress on June 28.

Not everyone agreed at first on declaring independence. Some wanted to wait until the colonies had secured stronger alliances with foreign countries. In the first round of voting South Carolina and Pennsylvania voted "no" while New York and Delaware chose not to vote. The Congress wanted the vote to be unanimous, so they continued to discuss the issues. The next day, July 2nd, South Carolina and Pennsylvania reversed their votes. Delaware decided to vote "yes" as well. This meant that the agreement to declare independence passed with 12 yes votes and 1 abstention (meaning New York chose not to vote). On July 4th, the Congress officially adopted the final version of the Declaration of Independence. This day is still celebrated in the United States as Independence Day. After the signing, the document was sent to a printer to make copies. Copies were sent to all the colonies where the declaration was read aloud in public and published in newspapers. A copy was also sent to the British government.

The Declaration of Independence did more than just say the colonies wanted their freedom. It explained why they wanted their freedom. It listed all the bad things that the king had done to the colonies and that the colonies had rights which they felt they should fight for. Perhaps one of the most famous statements in the history of the United States is in the Declaration of Independence: *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*

https://www.ducksters.com/history/declaration_of_independence.php

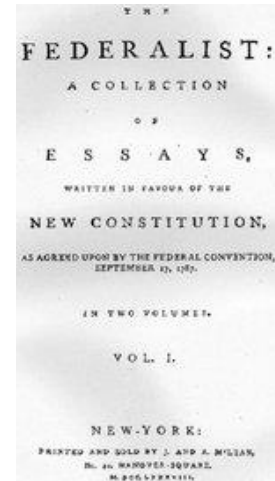
Federalist Papers

The Federalist Papers are a series of 85 articles about the United States Constitution, first published serially in New York City newspapers (the *Independent Journal*, the *New-York Packet* and the *Daily Advertiser*) with a compilation, called *The Federalist*, made at a later date.

The articles were intended to explain the new Constitution to the residents of New York state and persuade them to ratify it. The articles were written under the pseudonym "Publius" by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay. Madison is generally credited as the father of the Constitution and became the fourth President of the United States. Hamilton was an influential delegate at the Constitutional Convention, and later the first Secretary of the Treasury. John Jay would become the first Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Hamilton penned the majority, Madison made several significant contributions to the series, Jay wrote but a handful. The authorship for 73 of the papers is fairly certain. But there are 12 of them that are in dispute, with no definitive way to say who wrote them, though all 12 were generally considered to be written by either Madison or Hamilton. Adding to the difficulty, Hamilton claimed authorship of some of them well after they were written. Statistical analysis has been undertaken a number of times to try to decide based on word frequencies and writing styles, and nearly all of the statistical studies show that all 12 papers were written by Madison. (Fung, 2003)

The Federalist Papers serve as a primary source for interpretation of the Constitution. They also outline the philosophy and motivation of the proposed system of government, as it was presented by Madison, Hamilton, and Jay. The authors of the Federalist Papers were not above using the opportunity to provide their own "spin" on certain provisions of the constitution to (i) influence the vote on ratification and (ii) influence future interpretations of the provisions in question.

https://academickids.com/encyclopedia/index.php/Federalist_Papers



French and Indian War

The French and Indian War was a major war fought in the American Colonies between 1754 and 1763. The British gained significant territory in North America as a result of the war. From the name of the war, you would probably guess that the French fought the Indians during the French and Indian War. Actually, the main enemies in the war were the French and the British. Both sides had American Indian allies. The French allied with several tribes including the Shawnee, Lenape, Ojibwa, Ottawa, and the Algonquin peoples.



The British allied with the Iroquois, Catawba, and the Cherokee (for a time). The French and Indian war is considered part of the Seven Years War. The Seven Years War was fought throughout much of the world. The portion of the Seven Years War that was fought in North America is called the French and Indian War.

The war was fought mostly in the northeast along the border between the British colonies and the French Colonies of New France. As the American colonies began to expand to the west, they came into conflict with the French. The first real conflict began when the French moved into the Ohio country and built Fort Duquesne on the Ohio River (where the city of Pittsburgh is today). It was over the construction of this fort that the first battle of the war, the Battle of Jumonville Glen, took place on May 28, 1754.

End of the War and Results

The French and Indian War ended on February 10, 1763 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. France was forced to give up all of its North American territory. Britain gained all of the land east of the Mississippi River and Spain gained the land west of the Mississippi. The French and Indian War had some major consequences on the future of the British colonies in America. The war was expensive for the British government to fight. In order to pay for it, they issued taxes on the colonies. The British government considered this fair as they were protecting the interests of the colonies. The colonies, however, felt that they should not be taxed unless they had representation in the British government. Also, this war was the first time that the colonies united together to fight a common enemy. They built up colonial militias and gained confidence in their fighting abilities.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/colonial_america/french_and_indian_war.php

Stamp Act

The Stamp Act was a tax put on the American colonies by the British in 1765. It said they had to pay a tax on all sorts of printed materials such as newspapers, magazines and legal documents. It was called the Stamp Act because the colonies were supposed to buy paper from Britain that had an official stamp on it that showed they had paid the tax.



The French and Indian War was fought between the British American colonies and the French, who had allied with the American Indians. The American colonies eventually won the war, but only with the help of the British army. The British government felt that the colonies should share in the expense of the war and help to pay for the British troops in the Americas. The Stamp Act was a tax to help the British pay for the French and Indian War. The British felt they were well justified in charging this tax because the colonies were receiving the benefit of the British troops and needed to help pay for the expense. The colonists didn't feel the same. The colonists felt that the British government had no right to tax them because there were not any representatives of the colonies in the British Parliament. The colonies had no say in how much the taxes should be or what they should pay for. They didn't think this was fair. They called this "taxation without representation". The colonies reacted in protest. They refused to pay the tax. The tax collectors were threatened or made to quit their jobs. They even burned the stamped paper in the streets. The colonies also boycotted British products and merchants.

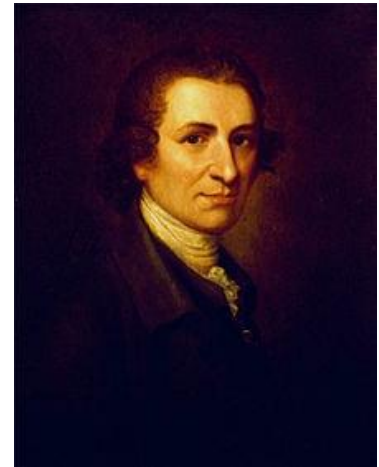
The American colonies felt so strongly against the Stamp Act that they called a meeting of all the colonies. It was called the Stamp Act Congress. Representatives from the colonies gathered together in New York City from October 7 to October 25. They prepared a unified protest of the Stamp Act to Britain. It was during this time that groups of American patriots called the Sons of Liberty began to form. They took the protests of British taxes to the streets. They used intimidation to get tax collectors to resign from their jobs. The Sons of Liberty would play an important role later during the American Revolution.

Eventually, the protests of the colonies to the Stamp Act began to hurt British merchants and businesses. The Stamp Act was repealed. However, the British Parliament wanted to send a message to the colonies. The Stamp Act may not have been a good way to tax the colonies, but they still felt they had the right to tax the colonies. The same day they repealed the Stamp Act, they passed the Declaratory Act which stated that the British Parliament had the right to make laws and taxes in the colonies.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/american_revolution/the_stamp_act.php

Thomas Paine / Common Sense

Thomas Paine was born in Thetford, England on January 29, 1737. His father, Joseph, was a tailor who specialized in corsets. His mother, Frances, came from a wealthy family. Thomas grew up as an only child. His only sibling, a sister, died when she was still a baby. Thomas' parents each came from a different Christian religion. His mother, Frances, was a member of the Anglican Church. His father was a Quaker. The Quakers were looked down upon by most of English society. They fought for the rights of all people and considered all people equal before God. Thomas' parents often argued over religion and religion would shape a large part of his life. He wrote some of his essays on the subject.



Some people say that he was an atheist who did not believe in God, but he actually stated many times that he did believe there was a God. The Quaker beliefs of his father would also influence Thomas' other writings and political beliefs.

Paine was in debt and needed a change in his life. He met an American named Benjamin Franklin in London who told him he should move to America. In 1774 he sold his house to pay off his debts and took a ship to Philadelphia.

Thomas got his first job in America as the editor of the Pennsylvania Magazine. He began to write articles for the magazine as well. Many of his articles denounced injustice in the world such as slavery.

Common Sense

Common Sense put forth an argument that the colonies should break away from British rule. Thomas wrote in such a way that the average reader could understand his argument and would be forced to make a decision. Many people of the time were still undecided. After reading Common Sense, they became convinced that revolution and independence from Britain was the best direction for the colonies.

Common Sense became a best seller. It sold over 100,000 copies in just a few short months. Through his writing Thomas Paine had convinced many undecided people to become patriots. For this reason he is sometimes called the Father of the American Revolution.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/american_revolution/thomas_paine.php

Townshend Act

The Townshend Acts were a series of laws passed by the British government on the American colonies. They placed new taxes and took away some freedoms from the colonists including the following:

- New taxes on imports of paper, paint, lead, glass, and tea.
- Established an American Customs Board in Boston to collect taxes.
- Set up new courts in America to prosecute smugglers (without using a local jury).
- Gave British officials the right to search colonists' houses and businesses.

The acts were introduced to the British Parliament by Charles Townshend.

The British wanted to get the colonies to pay for themselves. The Townshend Acts were specifically to pay for the salaries of officials such as governors and judges.

The British thought that the colonists would be okay with taxes on imports. They had repealed an earlier tax called the Stamp Act because of colonial protests, but thought that taxes on imports would be okay. They were wrong, however, as the colonists once again protested these taxes.

The Townshend Acts continued to push the American colonists towards revolution. They showed that the British didn't understand that "taxation without representation" was a really big deal to many of the colonists.

The American colonies were not allowed any representatives in the British Parliament. They felt that it was unconstitutional for the Parliament to place taxes and laws on them without representation. It was not about the cost of the taxes, but more about the principle.

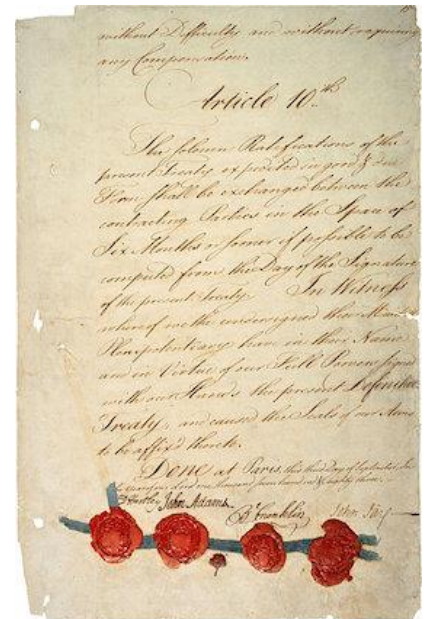
The acts caused continued unrest in the colonies. John Dickinson, who would later write the *Articles of the Confederation*, wrote a series of essays against the acts called *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*. He stated that the taxes set a dangerous precedent and, if the colonists paid them, more taxes would be coming soon. Many of the merchants in the colonies organized boycotts against British goods. They also began to smuggle in goods to avoid the taxes. Finally, protests in Boston turned violent when British soldiers panicked and killed several people in what would become known as the Boston Massacre.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/american_revolution/townshend_acts.php

Treaty of Paris

The Treaty of Paris was the official peace treaty between the United States and Britain that ended the American Revolutionary War. It was signed on September 3, 1783. The Congress of the Confederation ratified the treaty on January 14, 1784. King George III ratified the treaty on April 9, 1784. This was five weeks after the deadline, but nobody complained.

The treaty was negotiated in the city of Paris, France. That's where it gets its name. There were three important Americans in France to negotiate the treaty for the United States: John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, and John Jay. David Hartley, a member of the British Parliament, represented the British and King George III. The document was signed at the Hotel d'York, where David Hartley was staying.



After the British Army surrendered at the Battle of Yorktown it still took a long time for an agreement between Britain and the United States to be signed. It was around a year and a half later that King George finally ratified the treaty!

The three Americans did a great job in negotiating the treaty. They got two very important points agreed and signed off:

1. The first point, and most important to the Americans, was that Britain recognize the Thirteen Colonies to be free and independent states. That Britain no longer had any claim on the land or government.
2. The second major point was that the boundaries of the United States allowed for western expansion. This would prove important later as the US continued to grow west all the way to the Pacific Ocean

Other points in the treaty had to do with agreements on fishing rights, debts, prisoners of war, access to the Mississippi River, and the property of Loyalists. Both sides wanted to protect their citizen's rights and possessions.

Each of the points is called an article. Today the only article that is still in force is article 1, which recognizes the United States as an independent country.

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