



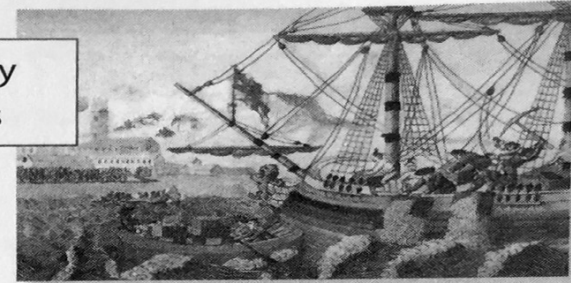
French and Indian War



- ▶ Stamp Act
- ▶ Townshend Duties

- ▶ Boston Tea Party
- ▶ Intolerable Acts

British tax colonists without their consent



Tea Duty

Causes of the American Revolution

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.

American Revolution begins

Americans Declare Their Independence

Declaration of Independence



Main Ideas

- ▶ Government made to protect unalienable rights (life, liberty and pursuit of happiness)
- ▶ Governments are created to protect these rights
- ▶ Governments that destroy rights can be overturned
- ▶ List of colonial grievances
- ▶ Colonists therefore declare their independence

- ▶ Paine's *Common Sense*
- ▶ George III refuses compromise
- ▶ Second Continental Congress approves independence
- ▶ Thomas Jefferson is main author



He has abdicated Government here, by destroying its only Foundation, the Consent of the People. — He has thus transported large numbers of his Colonies, to become the Associates of their friends and Acquaintance, and has endeavoured to bring on the Inhabitants of our Part, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions. In every Stage of these Oppressions We?

Review Cards: Americans Declare Their Independence

Causes of the American Revolution

- ▶ In 1754, Britain went to war with France in the French and Indian War. The French lost their North American colonies, but the costs of the war put the British in debt.
- ▶ After the war, the British government decided to place new taxes on the American colonists.
- ▶ Their first attempt was the Stamp Act, a tax on every official document. Colonists argued that because they did not have representatives in the British Parliament, they had not agreed to this tax: "Taxation without representation is tyranny!"
- ▶ Marches, rallies, petitions, boycotts, and even the tar-and-feathering of officials led Parliament to repeal the Stamp Act. It then passed the Townshend duties on various imports, like paper and glass. British troops were sent to control the protesting colonists, and these troops were sometimes quartered (*sheltered*) in colonists' homes.
- ▶ Because of continuing colonial unrest, Parliament also repealed the Townshend duties. However, it passed a tax on tea. Colonists protested the tea duty in December 1773 with the Boston Tea Party.
- ▶ Parliament passed the Intolerable Acts to punish Boston. These acts closed Boston Harbor and suspended the Massachusetts legislature.

Outbreak of the Revolution

- ▶ Twelve colonies sent representatives to a "Continental Congress" to coordinate their responses to British actions. The delegates sent protests, organized boycotts, and agreed to meet again.
- ▶ American Patriots and British troops fired at each other at Lexington and Concord, beginning the American Revolution in April 1775.
- ▶ The Second Continental Congress met and formed the Continental Army, commanded by George Washington.
- ▶ At first, most American colonists did not want independence. The Continental Congress declared its resistance to taxes but its loyalty to Britain. King George III ignored this and declared the Americans to be in open rebellion. He sent more British troops to fight them and also hired mercenaries.
- ▶ Some of the early battles were disastrous for American troops, and General Washington was forced to retreat.

The Declaration of Independence

- ▶ More colonists began to agree with Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense*, which urged the colonies to seek independence.
- ▶ Richard Henry Lee introduced a resolution in the Second Continental Congress, proposing independence.
- ▶ John Adams persuaded many members of the Continental Congress to vote for independence.
- ▶ A special committee wrote the Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson was the main author. The document was approved by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

Ideas and Complaints of the Declaration

- ▶ The Declaration announced American independence, presented a new theory on government, listed colonists' grievances, justified their conduct, and established the United States as a new nation able to make alliances and treaties. The Americans then formally allied with France and Spain.
- ▶ The Declaration explained that all people had certain "unalienable rights." Among these rights were "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Governments were "instituted" (*formed*) to protect those rights.
- ▶ People therefore had a right to overthrow any government that did not protect their natural rights.
- ▶ The Declaration claimed that Britain's government had become tyrannical and included a list of colonial grievances to prove it. The King had imposed taxes without their consent, quartered troops in their houses, cut off their trade, denied them trial by jury, suspended their legislatures, and sent troops to burn their towns and destroy their lives.
- ▶ Ever since it was written, the example of the Declaration has been followed by other countries seeking independence.
- ▶ The Declaration introduced a new theory of government based on liberty and equality. Its language has been used by many social movements in the United States, especially those on behalf of women and minorities.