

# American History

## Road to Revolution

### Teacher's Guide

Grade Level: 9–12

Curriculum Focus: U.S. History

Lesson Duration: Two class periods

#### Program Description

Follow the route of revolutionaries as you discover the conditions and causes of the American Revolution. Explore events from the Boston Massacre to Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* to develop a deep understanding of the struggle to gain independence and the values of American democracy.

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#### Onscreen Questions

Part 1, "The Price of Independence" and "Boston Massacre: Facts and Fiction"

- Why did the British need to tax the colonies?
- What were the effects of Adams's calling the event in Boston a massacre?

Part 2, "Colonial Americans at War" and "The Revolutionary War: Rebels and Redcoats"

- How did George Washington's leadership help the colonists win the Revolutionary War?
  - How were the rebel tactics different from what the British had faced before?
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#### Lesson Plan

##### *Student Objectives*

- Discuss some of the different viewpoints of the British and the colonists at the time of the American Revolution.
- Describe different events and sentiments of the revolution as expressed in quotationquotations from the period.
- Read three primary sources and rewrite one in their own voice, including the main ideas and sentiment of the original writer.
- Describe what these primary sources reveal about the feelings of American colonists.

##### *Materials*

- *American History: Road to Revolution* video
- Computer with Internet access

## Procedures

1. After watching the video, discuss some of the different viewpoints of the British and the colonists before the American Revolution. Did all colonists consider themselves Americans? (*Many considered themselves British Americans.*) Did all colonists support the revolution and independence from Britain? How did the British feel about the colonists in America?
2. Remind students that the video included many personal quotations from the time of the revolution. They were pulled from primary sources of the period, original documents, such as letters or diaries, that describe an event in the words of those who witnessed it. Tell students they will receive a series of quotations and their challenge is to match the quotation to the correct speaker. On the board, write the names of the speakers listed below. Ask student volunteers to read aloud the quotations or provide the quotations to students on a printout. After students have identified the speakers for each quotation, ask them to briefly explain the situation or event the speaker is describing. What is the general sentiment of the quotation?

Quotation	Speaker	Primary Source
"Having received intelligence that ammunition, artillery, and small arms have been collected for the avowed purpose of raising rebellion against his Majesty, you will march to Concord where you will seize and destroy all military stores whatever."	General Thomas Gage, Commander of the British forces in America	
"The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age. Posterity will be affected, even to the end of time."	Thomas Paine, Revolutionary War author	<i>Common Sense</i> (1776) <a href="http://www.constitution.org/civ/comsense.htm">http://www.constitution.org/civ/comsense.htm</a> (see "Thoughts of the Present State of American Affairs")
"Men without clothes to cover their nakedness, without blankets to lay on, without shoes. Their marches might be traced by the blood from their feet marching through frost and snow."	George Washington, Commander of the Continental Army	Letter from George Washington to John Banister (April 21, 1778) <a href="http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/banister.html">http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/banister.html</a>
"About 10 o'clock, Dr. Warren begged that I would immediately set off for Lexington. Two friends rode me across the Charles River. They landed me on the Charlestown side, went on to the town and there got a horse. The moon shone bright."	Paul Revere, official courier of the Massachusetts Provincial Congress	Letter to Dr. Jeremy Belknap (1798) <a href="http://www.historycarper.com/resources/articles/prevere.htm">http://www.historycarper.com/resources/articles/prevere.htm</a>
"Stand your ground, don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here."	John Parker, Militia Captain	

<p>"Tears stand in my eyes when I think of this once happy land of liberty. All is anarchy and confusion. We are all in arms. May God put a speedy and happy end to this contest between a mother and her children."</p>	<p>Congressman (Unknown)</p>	
<p>"These fellows say we won't fight. By Heaven, I hope I shall die up to my knees in British blood."</p>	<p>Joseph Warren, Leader of Boston Rebels</p>	
<p>"Dr. Warren, I found among the slain and stuffed the scoundrel with another Rebel into one hole, and there he and his seditious principles may remain."</p>	<p>British Officer</p>	
<p>"I have just heard that our dear friend, Dr. Warren, fell gloriously fighting for his country. Great is our loss. Almighty God, cover the heads of our countrymen. May we be supported and sustained in the dreadful conflict. I cannot compose myself to write any further."</p>	<p>Abigail Adams</p>	<p>Letter to John Adams (June 18, 1775) <a href="http://www.masshist.org/bh/adamp1text.html">http://www.masshist.org/bh/adamp1text.html</a></p>
<p>"A gentleman from Virginia who is among us here and very well known to all of us. A gentleman with skill and experience as an officer, independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character."</p>	<p>John Adams, Congressman</p>	<p>John Adams autobiography (June- August 1775) <a href="http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/cfm/doc.cfm?id=A1_20">http://www.masshist.org/digitaladams/aea/cfm/doc.cfm?id=A1_20</a></p>
<p>"I go fully trusting in that Providence which has been more bountiful to me than I deserve. I retain an unalterable affection for you, which neither time nor distance can change."</p>	<p>George Washington</p>	<p>Letter to Martha Washington (June 23, 1775) <a href="http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/martha.html">http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents/revolution/martha.html</a> (see second letter)</p>

- Next, ask students to choose and read three of the quotations above for which a source is given. Their assignment is to briefly describe each one, then choose one to rewrite in their own words. (You may want to assign these to ensure each of the sources is covered.) Their writing should reflect the important points of the original primary source, as well as the general sentiment of the writer.
- Ask students to read aloud their rewrites of the primary sources. After they have shared their writing, discuss what these primary sources reveal about American sentiment at the time of the revolution. What were some of the different feelings held by American colonists?

## Assessment

Use the following three-point rubric to evaluate students' work during this lesson.

- 3 points: Students identified and analyzed several quotations from the period, explaining what events and sentiments they reflect from the revolution; developed a thorough, engaging rewrite of the primary source that reflected the main ideas and sentiment of the original document; clearly described various sentiments of American colonists.
- 2 points: Students identified and analyzed a few quotations from the period, explaining what events and sentiments they reflect from the revolution; developed a clear rewrite of the primary source that reflected the main ideas and sentiment of the original document; clearly described a few of the different sentiments of American colonists.
- 1 point: Students did not identify or analyze any of the quotations from the period, or explain what events and sentiments they reflect from the revolution; developed a vague or inaccurate rewrite of the primary source that did not reflect the main ideas and sentiment of the original document; did not describe any of the different sentiments of American colonists.

## Vocabulary

### **boycott**

Definition: To stop from using, buying, or dealing with as an act of protest

Context: Angry colonists boycotted British goods

### **delegate**

Definition: A person chosen to represent another person or group; a representative

Context: Some delegates wanted to remain loyal to Britain, others wanted independence, and others were undecided.

### **militia**

Definition: A body of citizens organized for military service

Context: The British regulars had served an average of ten years, while the American militia was mostly untrained.

### **pamphlet**

Definition: A short printed publication, usually without a cover, that explains a topic or supports a position

Context: In a pamphlet called "Common Sense," author Thomas Paine criticized the idea of being ruled by a British monarch.

**patriot**

Definition: A person who is loyal to his or her country; in the American Revolution, patriots were the people living in the American colonies who wanted to be free of British control

Context: Two lanterns glowed briefly in the steeple of Boston's Old North Church, just long enough to signal patriots across the Charles River that the Redcoats would move that night by water.

**rebel**

Definition: Someone who opposes or disobeys one in authority; an American colonist who fought against the British

Context: The rebels included farmers, blacksmiths, writers, fathers and sons, and many other ordinary men who sacrificed their lives for freedom.

**tax**

Definition: A charge, usually of money, imposed by authority on persons or property for public purposes

Context: In 1765 Britain passed the Stamp Act, which placed a tax on all printed material, from newspapers to playing cards.

*Academic Standards*

**Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL)**

McREL's Content Knowledge: A Compendium of Standards and Benchmarks for K-12 Education addresses 14 content areas. To view the standards and benchmarks, visit <http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

This lesson plan addresses the following national standards:

- U.S. History – Revolution and the New Nation (1754–1820s): Understands the causes of the American Revolution, the ideas and interests involved in shaping the revolutionary movement, and reasons for the American victory

**The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)**

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has developed national standards to provide guidelines for teaching social studies. To view the standards online, go to <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/strands/>.

This lesson plan addresses the following thematic standards:

- Time, Continuity, and Change
  - Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
  - Power, Authority, and Governance
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## Support Materials

Develop custom worksheets, educational puzzles, online quizzes, and more with the free teaching tools offered on the Discoveryschool.com Web site. Create and print support materials, or save them to a Custom Classroom account for future use. To learn more, visit

- <http://school.discovery.com/teachingtools/teachingtools.html>
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## DVD Content

This program is available in an interactive DVD format. The following information and activities are specific to the DVD version.

### *How To Use the DVD*

The DVD starting screen has the following options:

**Play Video**—This plays the video from start to finish. There are no programmed stops, except by using a remote control. With a computer, depending on the particular software player, a pause button is included with the other video controls.

**Video Index**—Here the video is divided into sections indicated by video thumbnail icons; brief descriptions are noted for each one. Watching all parts in sequence is similar to watching the video from start to finish. Brief descriptions and total running times are noted for each part. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the remote for TV playback; on a computer, click once to highlight a thumbnail and read the accompanying text description and click again to start the video.

**Curriculum Units**—These are specially edited video segments pulled from different sections of the video (see below). These nonlinear segments align with key ideas in the unit of instruction. They include onscreen pre- and post-viewing questions, reproduced below in this Teacher's Guide. Total running times for these segments are noted. To play a particular segment, press Enter on the TV remote or click once on the Curriculum Unit title on a computer.

**Standards Link**—Selecting this option displays a single screen that lists the national academic standards the video addresses.

**Teacher Resources**—This screen gives the technical support number and Web site address.



## *Video Index*

### I. The Price of Independence

Although the British crown protected colonists from Indian invasions, English authorities also extracted huge taxes and stifled freedoms. Examine the events leading up to the American Revolution.

### II. Boston Massacre: Facts and Fiction

On March 5, 1770, British soldiers fired at an angry group of colonists in an event now known as the Boston Massacre. Investigate the real story behind the event.

### III. Colonial Americans at War

Explore the differences between the Patriots and Loyalists and examine major events in the Revolutionary War.

### IV. The Revolutionary War: Rebels and Redcoats

The American Revolution pitted colonial rebels against British soldiers in a long and bloody war. Take a closer look at its battles and victories.

## *Curriculum Units*

### **1. Leading to the Revolution**

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever been bullied into doing something?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What were the Coercive Acts and why were they passed?

A: The British Parliament passed the laws known as the Coercive Acts to force the colonists to give into the king's power. Called the Intolerable Acts by the American colonists, they closed Boston's port, reduced the power of town meetings, and increased the authority of British royal officials.

### **2. Increased Taxation and Tension**

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever been stopped from doing something that you really wanted to do?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What was the Stamp Act and why was it repealed?

A: The Stamp Act required that every piece of paper sold in the colonies, from pamphlets to playing cards, have a revenue stamp. A year of complaints, boycotts, and protests by the colonists forced the British to repeal the Stamp Act.

### 3. A Massacre in Boston

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you know about the Boston Massacre?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Who do you think started the conflict known as the Boston Massacre?

A: Answers will vary.

### 4. The Colonies Go to War

Pre-viewing question

Q: What political issues do Americans debate today?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Describe the difference between Patriots and Loyalists.

A: Patriots were American colonists who wanted complete independence from Britain. Loyalists were American colonists who supported the British government, and they saw the Patriots as traitors.

### 5. American Victory

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever fought for something?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: What contributed to the American victory in the Revolutionary War?

A: George Washington's skilled leadership helped secure victory for the colonists. The French helped, too, by signing a treaty and offering soldiers and other help to the colonists. The patriotic spirit and commitment of the soldiers motivated the Colonial Army to continue their battle despite great hardship. Also, the British did not have enough troops and had a difficult time trying to control a large area of land.

### 6. The Redcoats Are Coming

Pre-viewing question

Q: What rights and freedoms do you enjoy in the United States?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why did Paul Revere call the British soldiers "the Regulars"?

A: The colonists regarded themselves British, so in his warning, Paul Revere said that "the Regulars" were coming. Revere and others referred to the British soldiers as the Regulars or Redcoats.



## 7. The Battle of Lexington

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever learned about an event that is supposed to be a surprise?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Would the Revolutionary War have taken place if the Battle of Lexington had never occurred?

A: Answers will vary.

## 8. Fighting at the North Bridge

Pre-viewing question

Q: What things make you angry?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why did the colonial militiamen finally move against the Redcoats at the North Bridge?

A: The militiamen gathering on a hill outside of Concord moved against the Redcoats because they mistakenly assumed that the soldiers were burning their homes. In reality, the Redcoats were burning the few armaments they had found.

## 9. The British Retreat

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever broken any rules?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you agree that the colonists should have used guerrilla tactics or should they have followed the rules of war?

A: Answers will vary.

## 10. The Capture of Fort Ticonderoga

Pre-viewing question

Q: What do you know about Benedict Arnold?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Why was the Continental Congress alarmed by the capture of Fort Ticonderoga?

A: The capture of this major military fort was an overt act of aggression. Despite the bloodshed at Lexington and Concord, the Congress hesitated to go to war against England, hoping like many other colonists for reconciliation. The Continental Congress immediately ordered all the captured guns and inventory returned to the British as soon as hostilities had cooled down.

### **11. Preparing for the Battle of Breed's Hill**

Pre-viewing question

Q: How do you think soldiers feel when they prepare for battle?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Would you have followed Gage's strategy at Breed's Hill or attacked the colonists in a different way?

A: Answers will vary.

### **12. Fighting at Breed's Hill**

Pre-viewing question

Q: Do you think there are beliefs worth dying for?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you think Joseph Warren and the others who died with him were heroes?

A: Answers will vary.

### **13. George Washington Becomes Commander**

Pre-viewing question

Q: Have you ever been chosen to lead something?

A: Answers will vary.

Post-viewing question

Q: Do you think there was any way the British could have won the Revolutionary War?

A: Answers will vary.

### ***Credit***

Joy Brewster, curriculum writer, editor, and consultant