Middle School Packet (Grades 6-8)

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For Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)

Have your students read the following article “What is the Big Deal with Taxes?” Once finished with the article, have your students answer the questions and fill in the timeline.
“What is the Big Deal with Taxes?”

All of Boston was very happy. The French and Indian War ended in 1763. People in the colonies were proud to be a part of the British Empire. King George III was a very popular man. People in Boston were happy to be English and not French. In just two years, these good feelings would come to an end. After the French and Indian War ended, King George still wanted to keep soldiers in Massachusetts in case the French and their Indian friends decided to invade again. Feeding the soldiers and supplying them with a place to live was very expensive. So King George thought that people in the colonies should help pay for the soldiers’ upkeep. To King George and Parliament, it was not unreasonable. Some people in the colonies were happy to pay a tax for the soldiers. Others were angry that they were being taxed.

Above: Colonists were happy they won the French and Indian War. They were also happy that King George III was their ruler.

Left: The British win the French and Indian War with the help of American colonists.

Above: King George III.
The Taxes are Coming!

Patriots protested King George III and his taxes in different ways. Some refused to buy or sell anything that came from England. They organized a boycott against everything made by English people. Other Patriots protested illegally. They destroyed the homes and shops of Loyalists, tarred and feathered tax collectors, and smuggled illegal things into Boston to avoid paying taxes.

In 1770, Parliament agreed to repeal all of the taxes except the tax on tea. King George and Parliament wanted to show the Patriots that they would not back down. King George felt that he had the right to tax the colonies without their consent. The Patriots demanded representation in Parliament or else they would not pay a single penny in taxes.
The Boston Massacre and the Townshend Acts

On the same day the Townshend Acts were repealed in England, redcoats in Boston were being picked on by Patriots. Many of the Patriots were boys who were throwing snowballs at the soldiers. Some of the Patriots were men who threw large stones and wooden bats at the soldiers. This went on all day. Later that night, one of the wooden clubs hit a redcoat in the head, and as his musket fell from his hands and hit the ground, it fired off a shot. All of the other redcoats thought they could fire too. After the smoked cleared, five Bostonians lay dead in the street. Paul Revere and Samuel Adams called this the Boston Massacre.

Even after this terrible event, Parliament still wanted to punish the colonies. All of the Townshend Acts were repealed except for the tax on tea. Patriots continued to smuggle in tea illegally to avoid paying taxes. It was only a matter of time before Parliament cracked down on their unlawful behavior.

Above: The Boston Massacre. The picture you see before you was an engraving by Paul Revere. The massacre made colonists very upset that redcoat soldiers were living in their homes.

Left: Colonists smuggled tea to avoid paying taxes. Here they smuggle in barrels under the cover of night.

Right: Paul Revere was one of the Patriot leaders who encouraged colonists to resist Parliament and King George III.
In 1773, the East India Company was losing a lot of money. King George and Parliament wanted to help them out. They gave the East India Company a monopoly on selling tea in the colonies. This meant that only the East India Company could be sold in the colonies.

Parliament selected seven loyal merchants to sell the tea. Patriot merchants were left out in the cold. Patriots would no longer be able to sell their smuggled tea. This made them very angry. Colonists had to something about the 340 chests of tea already on its way to Boston.

Sam Adams (left) and Royal Governor Thomas Hutchinson (right) fought against each other on the issue of taxation. Governor Hutchinson believed that Sam Adams and the Patriots had no right to protest King George III and his laws.
Sam Adams and his Patriot friends agreed that they would not let the tea into Boston. This time the Patriots tried to send the tea back to England legally. Sam Adams spoke with the customs official Richard Harrison. Harrison demanded that the tea be unloaded and the taxes paid. The Patriots made one last attempt on December 16, 1773 to send the tea back where it came from. Sam Adams sent Francis Rotch to talk to the Royal Governor Thomas Hutchinson.

Thomas Hutchinson agreed with Richard Harrison. The tea would have to be brought into Boston, and the taxes would have to be paid. His decision was final. Sam Adams called on the Sons of Liberty to go aboard the three ships at Griffin’s wharf and destroy the tea before it could be brought into Boston. The Sons of Liberty smeared burnt cork on their faces, stuck feathers in their caps, and wore blankets to keep their identities a secret. Once the tea was in the water, they vowed never to speak of the Boston Tea Party again.

King George was very upset at Sam Adams and the Patriots for destroying the tea. After hearing about the Boston Tea Party, King George and Parliament passed the Intolerable Acts. Patriots were angry, so they started to collect guns to fight the British Army. When the British heard about this, they sent over 800 soldiers to Concord, Massachusetts to take away all of the guns from the Patriots. The Patriots took a stand against the redcoats in a small town called Lexington. The battle of Lexington-Concord was the first battle of American Revolution. Once the tea was thrown into Boston Harbor, it was clear to the Patriots there would be no turning back.
Questions for “What is the Big Deal with Taxes?”

**Directions**: Use the article and the glossary of terms to answer the questions below.

1. **What is a boycott?**
   - A. The combined effort of a group of people who *refuse* to buy goods from a country or shop.
   - B. When friends get together and drink a lot of soda.
   - C. The combined effort of people to buy as many goods from a country or shop as they can.

2. **Why did King George III tax the colonies?**
   - A. He needed money for a video game.
   - B. To pay for the British soldiers in the colonies.
   - C. Because he wanted to buy ice cream.
   - D. All of the above.

3. **Who are the Sons of Liberty?**
   - A. Patriots that were against King George III and all of his laws.
   - B. Loyalists that supported the King and Parliament.
   - C. Indians.
   - D. All of the above.

4. **What is a monopoly?**
   - A. When a lot of businesses sell the same thing at the same time.
   - B. When *only one* business is allowed to sell a good or service, and nobody else can.
   - C. A cheeseburger with bacon and lots of ketchup.

**True or False**

*Circle true if the statement is correct, or false if the statement is wrong.*

1. Sam Adams was best friends with King George III.
   - True
   - False

2. The Battle of Lexington-Concord was the first battle of the American Revolution.
3. **Patriots** are people who are loyal to King George III and all of his laws.

   True

   False

4. Patriots were angry because they would not be able to sell their smuggled tea once the **East India Company** tea made it to Boston.

   True

   False

5. To **repeal** an Act means that the Act has been cancelled, and colonists do not have to pay the tax.

   True

   False
**Match the Act!**

**Directions:** Draw a line from the Act on the left to the year it was passed and the goods that were taxed on the right.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Townshend Acts</th>
<th>Passed in 1773, this Act forced colonists to drink the East India Company tea.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stamp Act</td>
<td>This made it illegal for colonists to settle west of the Appalachian Mountains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Act</td>
<td>Passed in 1767, this Act taxed paint, lead, and glass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proclamation of 1763</td>
<td>Passed in 1765, this Act taxed newspapers, playing cards, and dice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Glossary

1. **Boston Massacre**: On March 5, 1770 British Regulars in Boston were attacked by patriots that were throwing oysters, stones, and wooden bats. After hours of this, the British fired their muskets at them leaving five patriots dead.

2. **Boycott**: The effort of a group of people to refuse to buy or sell goods from a shop or country. Patriots in Boston led a boycott against goods that were being taxed by Parliament.

3. **British**: People from England or any part of the world that was controlled by England.

4. **Colonist**: A person who leaves their native country and settles in another land that is still ruled by the native country.

5. **Consignee**: A loyalist merchant that was handpicked by Parliament to sell the tea.

6. **Customs Official**: A person that was appointed by the crown to enforce rules and laws in British ports. These men would usually count the cargo aboard each ship once it arrived in harbor and calculate how much the ship owner would have to pay the crown in taxes.

7. **Declaratory Act**: A law passed by Parliament in 1766 right after the repeal of the Stamp Act. This Act announced that Parliament had the right to tax colonists without their permission whenever they pleased.

8. **East India Company**: A company that traded goods from many different parts of the world. In 1773, Parliament granted them a monopoly to sell tea in the colonies. Most of this tea had been expired for four years!

9. **French and Indian War**: A war fought between the French and the British in North America from 1754 to 1763. Both sides had Native American allies in the fight. The war had cost so much money that Parliament thought the colonists should pay for some of it.

10. **Goods**: Things that were bought and sold by merchants or shopkeepers. This is what Parliament wanted to tax.
11. **Government:** A collection of people that rule a nation. In 1773, Parliament and King George III together were the government of the British Empire that ruled over the North American colonies. On July 4, 1776 the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence, making this the new government of the thirteen colonies.

12. **Intolerable Acts:** In England these were called the Coercive Acts. They were Parliament’s response to the Boston Tea Party. The point of the Intolerable Acts was to punish Boston for the tea party.

13. **Liberty Affair:** In 1768 customs officials tried to count the amount of cargo on John Hancock’s ship the *Liberty* but were locked in a cabin below deck while Hancock’s sailors illegally brought the cargo into town. The crown seized the *Liberty* and turned it into a patrol boat because of this.

14. **Loyalist:** A person who supports King George III, Parliament, and the laws they created.

15. **Massachusetts Charter:** An agreement or pact between the King of England and the governing body in Massachusetts. The Massachusetts Charter allowed the colonists to rule themselves since 1691.

16. **Merchant:** A person who makes money by buying and selling goods. Merchants often owned fleets of ships and would buy goods in one place of the world, and sell them in another place.

17. **Mohawk disguises:** The Sons of Liberty loosely disguised themselves as Mohawk Indians before they destroyed the tea in Boston Harbor. They stuck feathers in their tricorn hats, smeared burnt cork on their faces, and wore blankets over their coats so nobody would recognize them.

18. **Monopoly:** A business that controls the selling of a good or service. It could be illegal for anyone else to sell the same good or service. The East India Company had a monopoly on tea.

19. **Navigation Acts:** A series of laws passed by Parliament as early as 1651 that stated the rules for trading across the high seas.

20. **Old South Meeting House:** The largest public building in Boston. This is where Boston citizens met on December 16, 1773 to decide what should be done with the East India
Company tea. Sam Adams, John Hancock, and Dr. Joseph Warren kept the meeting going while the Sons of Liberty threw the tea into Boston Harbor.

21. **Patriot**: A person that was against King George III and Parliament, and questioned their right to rule over the colonies.


23. **Protest**: An activity performed by a group of people that dislike or refuse to obey the wishes of someone.

24. **Repeal**: To cancel or remove. When an Act was repealed, the colonists no longer had to pay taxes for that Act.

25. **Representative**: Person that is chosen to act based on the wishes of the people that elected them. No colony in America had a single representative in Parliament.

26. **Royal Governor**: Person that was put in place by the King to rule over Massachusetts. Thomas Hutchinson was the Royal Governor during the Boston Tea Party.

27. **Sons of Liberty**: A group of Patriots in the colonies that protested against the authority of King George III and Parliament.

28. **Smuggle**: To bring a good in or out of a country illegally. Many merchants in Boston smuggled goods into the city without paying taxes. This was illegal.

29. **Stamp Act**: A law passed by Parliament in 1765 which forced colonists to get their papers stamped. The Act taxed legal papers, playing cards, and dice.

30. **Stamp Act Riots**: In August 1765, Bostonians that were angry over the passage of the Stamp Act tore down the houses of British government workers. Stamp Master Andrew Oliver, Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson, and William Story all lost their homes.

31. **Tax**: Money that people in a country have to pay to support the King and Parliament.

32. **Tea Act**: A law that was passed in 1773 that forced the colonists to pay a 3 penny tax on every pound of tea. This Act gave a monopoly on the selling of tea in the colonies to the East India Company. This meant that colonists were forced to buy the East India Company tea, they could not buy tea from anywhere else.
33. **Townshend Acts**: Laws passed by Parliament in 1767 which taxed commonly used goods such as glass, paper, lead, paint, and tea. The tax was repealed on March 5, 1770, the same day as the Boston Massacre.

34. **Tyrant**: A brutal person who rules their people unfairly. King George III was often called a tyrant by Patriots and the Sons of Liberty.

35. **Wharf**: A wooden dock along the shore where ships unload their cargo. In December 1773, the three ships carrying the East India Company tea were tied up at Griffin’s Wharf.
The Boston Committee of Correspondence

In an attempt to rally support for his cause, Samuel Adams proposed that Boston Patriots form a committee of correspondence. On November 2, 1772 the Boston Committee of Correspondence was established. While many textbooks make little mention of the committee’s activities, its role was crucial in resisting the laws of Parliament and King George III. The Boston Committee of Correspondence wrote letters to other colonies in British North America to keep them informed on the protest movement led by the Sons of Liberty in Boston. One year later, New York, Philadelphia, and Boston used their committees of correspondence to communicate with each other in deciding what they were going to do with the East India Company tea.

**Directions:** Create your own committee of correspondence! Choose one of the options below, and write a one or two paragraph letter to Paul Revere. Remember, it will take at least two weeks for this message to reach him overland. If the weather is bad and the roads are rocky it will take even longer! Address your letters to Paul Revere at 306 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210.

1. **Tell Paul Revere and the Sons of Liberty about your weekend.** What did you do last weekend? Was it fun or interesting? What do you plan to do next weekend?

2. **Tell Paul Revere about what you are doing in class.** Do you enjoy the subjects being covered? What subjects would you like to learn about next and why?
The Loyal Nine was a secret society that started meeting at Chase & Speakman’s Distillery next to the Liberty Tree as early as 1765. Their mission was to organize a protest movement in Boston against the laws of Parliament and King George III. Members of the Loyal Nine were responsible for the Stamp Act Riots on August 14, 1765 and again on August 26, 1765. While many textbooks do not mention this underground organization, the Loyal Nine was the first group to openly defy Parliament and King George III. In the coming years, the Loyal Nine would be responsible for forming the Sons of Liberty, the secret society that was responsible for destroying the tea on December 16, 1773. These secret societies later became the foundation for democracy in America.

Objective: Separate into groups of five and create your own secret society! Follow the steps below to turn your secret society into a powerful force for political change.

1. Name your society.
2. Give everyone in your society a title. For example: President, Chief, Chairman, Writer, Vice-President, Senator etc. (Someone should be chosen to write everything down).
3. Choose one of the three topics below for your secret society to argue:
   - Taxes are not fair.
   - We should be represented in Parliament.
   - We have a right to govern ourselves.
4. Once you have picked one issue that everyone can agree on, your group should come up with five reasons to back up the argument you have picked. Only spend one or two sentences per reason.
5. Finally, list three ways or methods to go about making change happen. Some members of your group might wish to start a revolution; others might want to negotiate with Parliament and King George III. Be creative! No answers are wrong; just make sure that everyone in your group agrees on the method!

6. Present your secret society to your class. Tell them your name, the titles of people in your group, the issue you care most about, and how you plan to go about changing the world around you.

**Analyze your Secret Society’s Success**

**Instructions:** Working alone, in one or two paragraphs write a journal entry about what happened when you met with your group. Did some of your classmates disagree with the issue you picked or the method you chose to bring about change? How did you come to an agreement? Do you think meeting in a group and compromising with each other is the best way to change the world around you?
Suggested Readings for Disciples of Liberty

These titles are suggested for students who have not yet learned about the British government’s administration of North America, and the War of Independence which followed. They have been categorized as fiction and non-fiction. While the fictional books are great for sparking a student’s interest, they should be used in combination with the non-fictional works listed below. In addition, parents and teachers should work with students to make sure they know the difference between historical fiction and non-fiction.

🌟 Fiction 🌟

I. Johnny Tremain

Author: Esther Forbes


Rating: 🌟🌟🌟🌟🌟

Review

This fictional account of revolutionary Boston immerses students in the movement for independence. *Johnny Tremain* tells the story of the early revolutionary period through the eyes of a silversmith’s apprentice, Johnny Tremain. The story follows Tremain in his discovery of the independence movement through his work for a Whig newspaper, the *Boston Observer*. Here, he comes into contact with influential revolutionaries and decides to join the struggle for liberty. While this book was only loosely based in reality, its vivid account of colonial Boston goes unmatched. This book should be on every student’s summer reading list!

Illustrations: No

II. The Boston Tea Party

Author: Rod Espinosa

Published:
Rating:

Review

This is an excellent novel for students who are just beginning to learn about the Boston Tea Party and the War of Independence. This text chronicles the effects of the French and Indian War on colonial America, the acts of taxation which sparked the protest movement in British North America, the Boston Massacre, and the Boston Tea Party. In addition, this book provides the reader with the viewpoints of patriots, as well as Tories (loyalists). The text coupled with the graphic illustrations gives students a snapshot of the period along with the personalities and perspectives of eighteenth century colonial America. This book is great for students who have not yet studied the American Revolution, but is too simple for advanced students.

Illustrations: Yes.

III. Why Don’t You Get a Horse, Sam Adams?

Author: Jean Fritz


Rating: ★★★★★

Review

Jean Fritz has written many children’s books about the American Revolution, and this novel is perfect for the novice reader. The story follows Samuel Adams and his dog Queue around Boston. The book paints an accurate portrait of Samuel Adams and his perspective on the world in early revolutionary Boston. While this book is digestible for students 3rd grade and up, younger readers may require a reading partner.

Illustrations: Yes.

Non-fiction

I. The American Revolution Battles and Leaders

Editor: Aaron R. Murray
II. *The American Revolution for Kids*

**Author:** Janis Herbert

**Published:** Chicago Review Press Inc., 2002.

**Rating:** ★★★★★

**Review**

This book offers a number of features which make it ideal for students who are just starting to learn about the War of Independence. For one, it contains a comprehensive timeline which details the founding of Massachusetts Bay Colony, the protest movement against taxation without representation, culminating in the Boston Tea Party, and the outbreak of the American Revolution. In addition, this book contains twenty one activities to reinforce the text. The activities teach students about the principles of democracy and the town meeting, and also explain the complicated inner workings of Congress. This book is a great foundational piece because it covers the American Revolution, but also the early struggles the founding fathers faced in building an effective democracy.

**Illustrations:** Yes.

III. *The Declaration of Independence*

**Author:** R. Conrad Stein
Published: Cornerstones of Freedom

Rating: ★★★★★

Review

Ideal for students who would like a more thorough understanding of colonial America from 1754-1783, *The Declaration of Independence* offers everything from a detailed timeline, to a comprehensive glossary of terms. In addition, this book covers the founding of British North America, the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, and everything in between. While this book is a great foundation for young historians, it is probably best for students with a reading level of 6th grade and up.

Illustrations: Yes (black and white).

IV.  The Boston Tea Party

Author: R. Conrad Stein

Published: Cornerstones of Freedom

Rating: ★★★★★

Review

This is another book in the series on U.S. History that Cornerstones of Freedom has produced. This book covers the complicated political events which led to the destruction of the East India Company tea, and the events that were precipitated by it. While it covers a period of history which is seldom covered in textbooks, it contains some embellished stories. Nonetheless, this book still makes the list as a good source for students grades 3-5.

Illustrations: Yes.
Suggested Readings for Advanced Readers

All of the books on this list below are for advanced readers, and could easily be found on a college syllabus. These sources are rated on their accuracy and ability to draw on primary sources to connect events with complicated political and economic trends in the British North American colonies on the eve of the American Revolution.

I. Defiance of the Patriots

Author: Benjamin L. Carp
Published: Yale University Press, 2009.
Rating: ★★★★★

Review

This book offers a wealth of knowledge on the colonists’ early struggles with the British government. Carp not only covers the Acts of taxation and the colonial protests, but also investigates the production, distribution, and consumption of tea. In addition, Carp uses a plethora of primary sources in order to place Boston’s political struggles with Parliament within the scope of the Sons of Liberty’s resistance to the Tea Act in New York and Philadelphia. Even still, he places the struggle of Boston’s patriots at the center of his analysis. While this book tackles complicated political, economic, and social issues, it presents them in a manner which is both fascinating, and informative.

II. As If an Enemy’s Country: The British Occupation of Boston and the Origins of Revolution

Author: Richard Archer
Published: Oxford University Press, 2010.
Rating: ★★★★★
As the title suggests, Archer’s work focuses on mob violence committed by Boston patriots, the decision of government officials to send regiments to occupy Boston, and the consequences which followed. While the scope of this book does not entail the Boston Tea Party, it still covers the era of political protest which preceded the destruction of tea, and chronicles the occupation of Boston which inevitably led to the Boston Massacre and the American Revolution. As If an Enemy’s Country offers a fascinating take on the Stamp Act Riots and Liberty Affair which persuaded Royal Governor Francis Bernard to request troops for the occupation of Boston. Further, Archer uses primary sources to demonstrate the extensive public relations campaigns in which Samuel Adams and the Sons of Liberty engaged in to demonize the British regulars, and those royal officials who requested their presence in the first place. As If an Enemy’s Country does an excellent job of shedding light on material which is seldom covered in most works on the American Revolution. For this reason, I would highly recommend this piece to anyone who would like to learn about the effects of the occupying British army during peacetime.

III. Samuel Adams: A Life

Author: Ira Stoll

Published: Free Press, 2009.

Rating: ★★★★★

Review

Ira Stoll, a journalist by trade, sets out to shine light on the place of Samuel Adams within the context of the American Revolution. In this biography of one of Boston’s leading patriots, Stoll asserts that Adams was deeply religious, and even went so far as to link his religious convictions with the political struggles between Boston and the British government. While this book offers the reader a glimpse at the persona of Samuel Adams, it falls short of answering questions about his involvement in the protest movement which is still a highly debated topic.

IV. John Adams

Author: David McCullough
Published: Touchstone, 2002.

Rating: ★★★★★

Review

*John Adams* by David McCullough masterfully pulls together the letters and correspondence of John Adams into a logical and cohesive narrative of his involvement in the Glorious Cause and later, in the foundation of the republic. In between great events, McCullough paints Adams as a man who was filled with insecurity and doubt. But these personal anxieties became the driving force behind his character, allowing him to fulfill his destiny as a founding father of the United States. This non-fictional account of Adams’ life reads like a novel, but offers the reader a rare glimpse at the complex figure of John Adams, and his role as a founding father. This book is a must read!
Bibliography


