

American Revolution

Lesson Two

The Road to Revolution

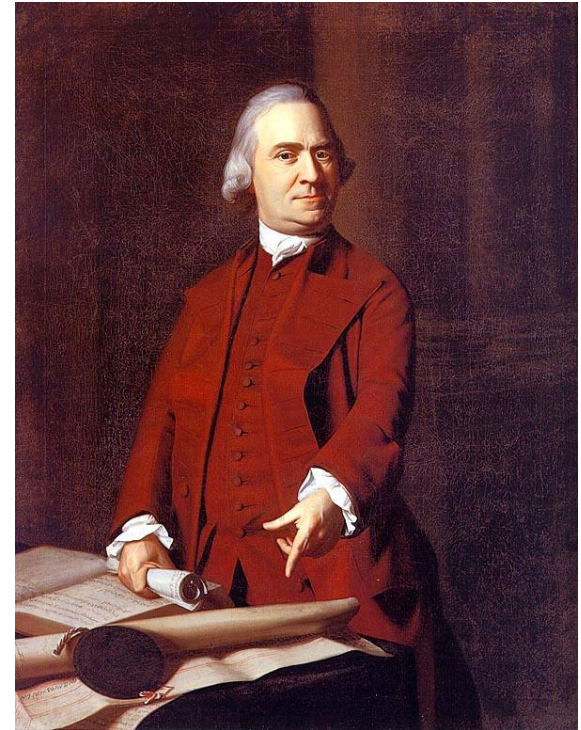
- The Proclamation on 1763 and later British actions convince the colonists that the British government does not care about their needs
- 1764—British Parliament wants to reduce debt from French and Indian War, enacts **Sugar Act**
 - act changes taxes on imports
- Violators tried by vice-admiralty court, not colonial court

- 1765—**Stamp Act** taxes printed items like wills and newspapers
- Colonial assemblies protest lack of representation in Parliament
- Merchants in New York, Boston, Philadelphia boycott British goods
- 1766—Parliament repeals Stamp Act, passes Declaratory Act same day

—full right “to bind the Colonies in all cases whatsoever”

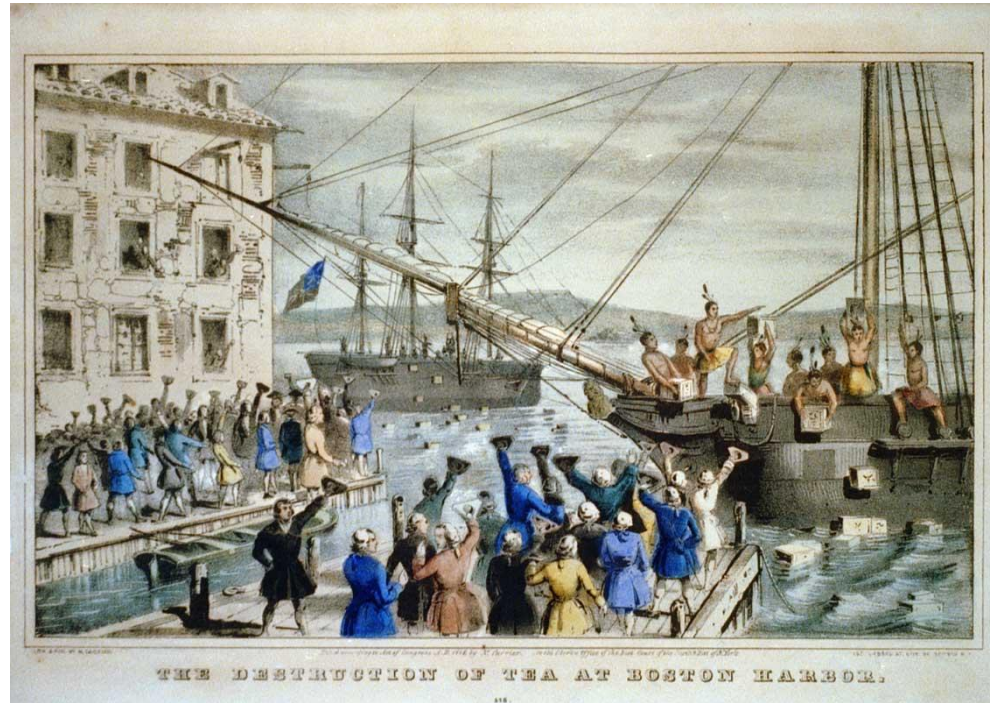


- Townshend Acts tax imports from Britain, like paint, paper, tea
- Samuel Adams, a founder of the Sons of Liberty, leads new boycott



- Hostilities between colonists and British mount; Boston grows tense
- Boston Massacre—British guards fire on a colonial mob, kill five
- Lord North, prime minister, repeals the Townshend Acts—except the tax on tea
- Tensions rise again; group of Rhode Island colonists destroy British customs schooner
- King George III wants to find suspects for trial in England
- Massachusetts and Virginia create committees of correspondence to track British threats

- 1773—Lord North devises Tea Act; lets British East India Company avoid tax, undercuts colonists
- Disguised Boston rebels dump tea into Boston harbor—**Boston Tea Party**
- King George pressures Parliament; enact Intolerable Acts—harbor closes, city under martial law
- 1774—First Continental Congress forms, meets to declare colonial rights



- Civilian soldiers known as minutemen pledge to fight the British on a minute's notice
- Minutemen begin to stockpile firearms and gunpowder
- 700 British troops march to Concord to disarm colonial militia
- At Lexington, British soldiers fight 70 minutemen, 8 colonists killed
- British find Concord's arsenal empty; return to Boston, are ambushed



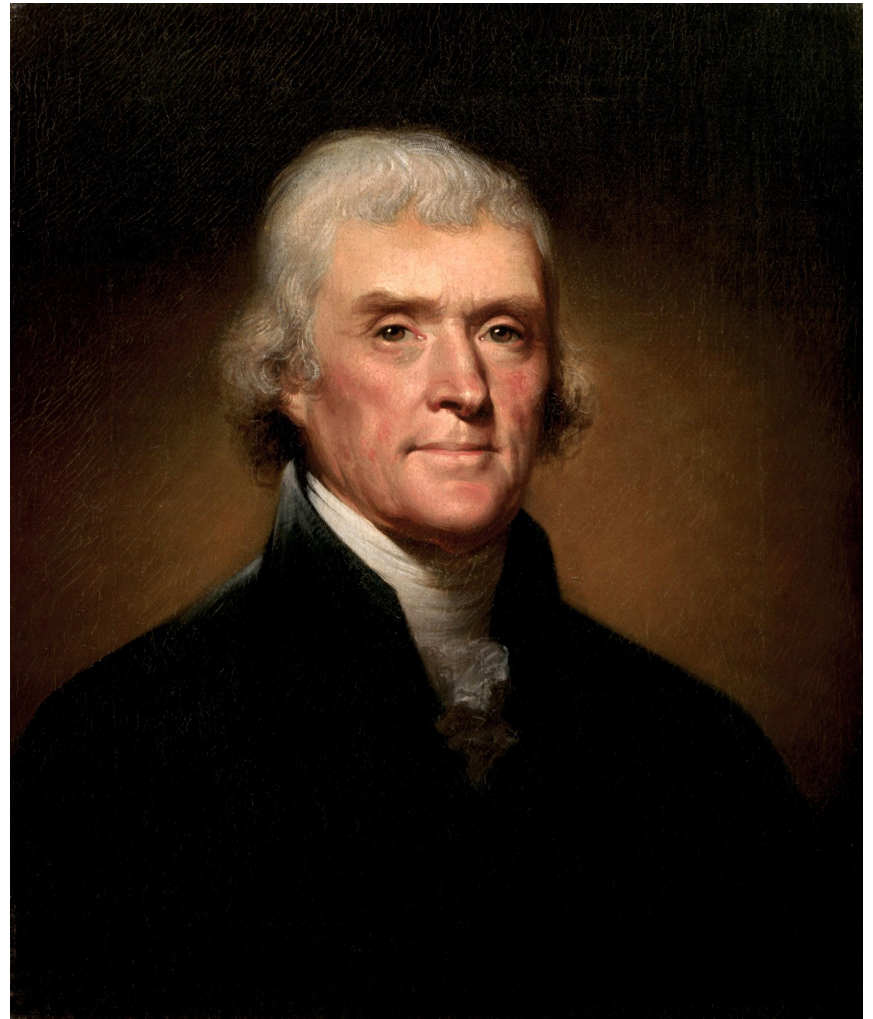
- May 1775—Colonial leaders call Second Continental Congress in Philadelphia
- Congress forms Continental Army; George Washington in command
- 2,400 British battle militia on Breed's Hill, suffer 1,000 casualties
- King George III rejects Continental Congress's Olive Branch Petition



Declaring Independence

- 1760s to 1770s—Enlightenment ideas spread throughout colonies
- **John Locke**, English philosopher, influences colonists:
 - people have natural rights to life, liberty, property
 - people consent to obey a government that protects these rights
 - people can resist or overthrow government
- British have religious, legal tradition of civil and property rights
- Thomas Paine writes **Common Sense**—pamphlet attacking King George and monarchy
- Argues for independence, influences many colonists

- Congress appoints committee to prepare declaration to Britain
- Thomas Jefferson**, Virginia lawyer, writes final draft
- Declaration of Independence is colonies' formal statement of freedom
- Lists British violations and colonists' rights as citizens
- One of the most important, influential legal documents of modern times, written by Thomas Jefferson
- Continuing relevance, inspires leaders in the struggle for democratic ideals, civil and human rights



- Main purpose of government is to protect rights of the people who consent to be governed by it
- These rights cannot be taken away; if government tries, people have the right to change or do away with it
- The people can form a new government that respect these rights
- Patient sufferance of colonies; repeated injuries and usurpations, Tyranny over the States

- Charges against King George:
 - mistreatment of colonists, in order to gain total control over colonies
 - rejects many laws passed by colonial legislatures
 - makes colonial legislatures meet at inconvenient times and locations
 - king and his governors often dissolve colonial legislatures for disobeying orders
 - stops people from moving to the colonies and into western lands
 - prevents colonists from choosing their own judges; king selects and keeps only when satisfied



- hires people to help collect taxes in the colonies
- appointment of General Thomas Gage as governor of Massachusetts
- expects colonists to provide housing and supplies for British soldiers in the colonies
 - demands that colonists pay many taxes when colonists did not agree to do so
- British naval courts try colonists without juries
- accused colonists sent to Britain for treason trials
- allows General Gage to take military action to enforce British laws in the colonies
- hires and sends Hessian mercenaries to fight colonists
 - king's governor in Virginia promises freedom to enslaved people that join British forces
- creates plan to use Indians to fight colonists

- Declaration explains the efforts of the colonists to avoid separation from Britain
- Colonists state that the king ignores their protests
- The writers of the Declaration conclude that the king is not fit to rule free people
- The writers declare that the colonies are now free, independent states
- All ties with Britain are broken
- States claim right to make war and peace, to trade, do all things free countries can do
- To support declaration, signers promise one another their lives, fortunes, honor
- Members of Continental Congress state that copies of the Declaration are to be sent to:
 - all Committees of Correspondence, commanders of troops
- The Declaration should be read in every state



The Revolutionary War

- Americans on different sides as war begins
- **Loyalists**—colonists who support King George III and Britain
- **Patriots**—colonists in favor of independence from Britain
- Many Americans also remain neutral





- British take New York in 1776; Washington retreats to Pennsylvania
- Washington takes Trenton; British take Philadelphia in 1777
- British general John Burgoyne surrenders to American troops at Saratoga
- Patriot's victory convinces French to aid Continental Army
- 1778—Washington and his army lose over 2,000 soldiers at **Valley Forge** winter camp

- Congress needs to pay troops; prints paper money, causing inflation
- Robert Morris and Haym Salomon raise money to pay Continental Army
- Women manage homes, businesses; some fight in war
- Many slaves escape during the war; about 5,000 join Continental Army

- Winter 1778—American troops begin transformation
- Friedrich von Steuben, Prussian captain and drillmaster helps train the Continental Army
- Marquis de Lafayette—encourages France to send reinforcements, 1779



- British shift operations to the South; **Charles Cornwallis**, British general, wins many victories
- He camps at **Yorktown**, plans to take Virginia
- Cornwallis is surrounded at Yorktown, surrenders in October 1781
- 1783—**Treaty of Paris** establishes colonial independence and borders



- War stimulates egalitarianism—belief in equality of all people
- In 1780s, egalitarianism applies to white men only
- Women have few legal or political rights
- African Americans still face slavery or discrimination
- Native Americans continue to be pushed off their land by settlers
- June 1782—Continental Congress approves official seal of the United States