

The Spirit of Independence: Chapter Summary

Chapter Summary

THE SPIRIT OF INDEPENDENCE

Lesson 1 *No Taxation without Representation*

- After the French and Indian War, Great Britain issued the Proclamation of 1763. It prohibited colonists from moving west. In this way, the British could control the colonists.
- Britain also needed money, so it placed new taxes on the colonists.
- To avoid taxes some colonists smuggled goods. Britain passed the Sugar Act to try and stop the smuggling.
- The Stamp Act of 1765 put a tax on all printed materials.
- Colonists believed that only their elected officials had the right to tax them. They formed protest groups, such as the Sons and Daughters of Liberty.
- Colonists boycotted British goods to get Britain to remove the taxes.

Lesson 2 *Uniting the Colonists*

- In Boston, tension built between colonists and British soldiers. The tension led to the Boston Massacre in 1770. Colonial leaders used the killings as propaganda to build support against the British. Colonists began to unite to express their concerns in groups called committees of correspondence.
- Colonists boycotted tea, a major British import. The Sons of Liberty threw crates of tea off British ships in Boston Harbor. This rebellion is known as the Boston Tea Party.
- King George III retaliated with more laws to punish the colonists. Parliament passed the Coercive Acts. They banned town meetings, closed Boston Harbor, and forced colonists to let British soldiers live with them. Colonists called these laws the Intolerable Acts.

Lesson 3 *A Call to Arms*

- The Continental Congress, a meeting of colonial leaders, was held in Philadelphia. Delegates called for the repeal of the acts of Parliament.
- Delegates also called on colonists to form militias and gather military supplies to prepare for a fight against Britain.
- In 1775, the first conflicts between the British and colonists took place at Lexington and Concord. After those clashes, armed conflict spread quickly.

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- The Battle of Bunker Hill took place in Boston. The British won but suffered heavy losses.
- Colonists were divided into Patriots and Loyalists. The Patriots wanted to be free from Britain. The Loyalists remained loyal to King George III.

Lesson 4 *Declaring Independence*

- The Second Continental Congress met in 1775. Some of the great leaders of the time were there: John and Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, Richard Henry Lee, and George Washington.
- The Continental Congress authorized the printing of money and set up a post office. It created an army and chose George Washington as commander.
- The delegates sent a petition to King George III to give Britain one last chance for peace.
- Washington's troops forced the British out of Boston in March 1776. The British retreated to Canada.
- Writer Thomas Paine published a pamphlet called *Common Sense* that urged complete separation from Britain. *Common Sense* strongly influenced opinions throughout the colonies.
- In June, the Second Continental Congress began debating whether or not to declare independence. A committee that included Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson drafted a Declaration of Independence.
- On July 2, the Continental Congress voted for independence. On July 4, delegates approved the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration states that all people have certain basic rights and that government exists to protect those rights. It also states that when a government fails to protect those rights, the people can change or get rid of the government. Finally, the Declaration announces that America is a new and independent nation.

1. Essential Questions

- Why does conflict develop?
- What motivates people to act?