Why Colonists Protested

Trace how British actions raised tensions in the colonies

SS24.4.5b "Describe key events that caused tension and led American colonists to protest against Great Britain, including the Sugar Act, Stamp Act, Townshend Acts, Boston Massacre, Tea Act, Boston Tea Party, and Intolerable Acts."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each British law or Boston event. Circle a nearby detail that shows how it raised tension or led to protest.

From Taxes to Protest

1. In the 1760s, Great Britain needed money after a costly war. Parliament passed the Sugar Act in 1764, taxing imported molasses and making trade rules stricter. Colonial merchants worried about losing money. The Stamp Act of 1765 taxed newspapers, legal papers, and other printed items. Colonists protested both laws because they had no elected representatives in Parliament to speak for them. Some refused to buy British goods.

2. In 1767, the Townshend Acts put new taxes on goods such as glass, paper, and tea. Colonists again stopped buying some British goods. British soldiers arrived in Boston as tensions grew. In 1770, a crowd faced soldiers in the street. The soldiers fired, killing five colonists. This event, called the Boston Massacre, made many colonists angrier at British rule, and news of it spread.

3. In 1773, the Tea Act gave the British East India Company special rights to sell tea in the colonies. The tax on tea remained, and colonists feared the company would push local sellers aside. In the Boston Tea Party, protesters dumped the company's tea into the harbor. Britain answered in 1774 with the Intolerable Acts, closing Boston's port and limiting Massachusetts's power to govern itself. Colonists in other colonies joined protests.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did the Sugar Act and Stamp Act upset colonists? What did some colonists do in protest?

2. How did colonists protest the Townshend Acts?

3. How did the Boston Massacre add to tensions with Britain?

4. How did the Tea Act lead to the Boston Tea Party, and how did Britain respond?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence note from a colonist to a neighbor in 1774. Connect two events from different years to explain why tension grew, then suggest a peaceful protest the neighbor could join.

ANSWER KEY

Why Colonists Protested

GRADE 4 · SS24.4.5b

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each British law or Boston event. Circle a nearby detail that shows how it raised tension or led to protest. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did the Sugar Act and Stamp Act upset colonists? What did some colonists do in protest?	**The laws taxed goods and printed items, but colonists had no elected representatives in Parliament. Some refused to buy British goods.**
2	How did colonists protest the Townshend Acts?	**They stopped buying some British goods that the acts taxed.**
3	How did the Boston Massacre add to tensions with Britain?	**British soldiers killed five colonists, making many colonists angrier at British rule.**
4	How did the Tea Act lead to the Boston Tea Party, and how did Britain respond?	**Colonists objected to the tea tax and feared the British company would push local sellers aside, so protesters dumped its tea into the harbor. Britain passed the Intolerable Acts, closing Boston's port and limiting Massachusetts's power to govern itself.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Neighbor, the Stamp Act taxed our newspapers even though we had no voice in Parliament. Now the Intolerable Acts have closed Boston's port and limited the way Massachusetts governs itself. Each new law makes me worry that Britain will not listen to us. Let us meet with neighbors and write a petition asking Parliament to change these laws.

Accept accurate connections between any two events from different years. The suggested protest should be peaceful, such as a petition, meeting, or boycott.