Costs and Voices

Trade, taxes, and representation in the colonies

SS24.6.7c "Describe the positive and negative effects of taxation and trade on the economic livelihood of American colonies in the 1760s and 1770s and explain how this issue violated colonists' expectations of representative government."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one way trade could help colonists and circle one way it could hurt them. Write 1 beside a possible benefit of taxes, 2 beside a cost of taxes, and a star beside the reason many colonists challenged Parliament's taxes.

A Price on Colonial Trade

1. Imagine a ship reaching a colonial port in the 1760s. It unloads cloth and tools from Britain, then takes on barrels of colonial fish and flour. Trade gave some colonists customers for their goods and supplied items they could not easily make at home. British trade rules also favored British ships, which could bring work to colonial sailors. Yet those rules limited whom colonists could trade with and where some goods could be sold. A merchant might earn money on one voyage but lose a better deal with a buyer outside the empire.

2. After Britain fought a costly war against France, its leaders wanted the colonies to help pay for soldiers in North America. They said taxes could help support troops who might protect settlements and trade. In 1765, the Stamp Act taxed many paper items, including newspapers and legal papers. A printer had to pay for stamped paper, which raised business costs. Parliament repealed that act in 1766, but later placed duties on imported goods such as glass and tea. These taxes could raise prices and make it harder for some colonists to earn a living.

3. Colonists disagreed about British policies, but many objected to how taxes were decided. They elected representatives to colonial assemblies, which had long voted on many local taxes. Colonists could not elect members of Parliament, yet Parliament set taxes for them. To many, that broke the expectation that elected representatives should approve taxes paid by the people they represented. Some colonists stopped buying British goods to protest. Such boycotts pressured British merchants, but they also reduced sales for colonial shopkeepers. The dispute became a fight about who had a voice in government.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How could British trade rules both help a colonial sailor and limit a colonial merchant's earnings?

2. How did British leaders say tax money could help the colonies, and how did the Stamp Act affect a printer's livelihood?

3. Why did many colonists think Parliament's taxes violated their expectation of representative government?

4. How could a boycott put pressure on British merchants while also hurting colonial shopkeepers?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence note from a colonial shopkeeper to a neighbor. Describe a possible economic benefit and cost of British trade or taxes, explain your concern about representation, and propose an action that could also hurt your business.

ANSWER KEY

Costs and Voices

GRADE 6 · SS24.6.7c

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way trade could help colonists and circle one way it could hurt them. Write 1 beside a possible benefit of taxes, 2 beside a cost of taxes, and a star beside the reason many colonists challenged Parliament's taxes. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How could British trade rules both help a colonial sailor and limit a colonial merchant's earnings?	**Rules favoring British ships could give a colonial sailor work. Limits on buyers and places to sell could keep a merchant from getting a better deal.**
2	How did British leaders say tax money could help the colonies, and how did the Stamp Act affect a printer's livelihood?	**Leaders said taxes could support troops who might protect settlements and trade. The Stamp Act made a printer pay for stamped paper, raising business costs.**
3	Why did many colonists think Parliament's taxes violated their expectation of representative government?	**Colonists expected elected representatives to approve their taxes, but they could not elect members of Parliament.**
4	How could a boycott put pressure on British merchants while also hurting colonial shopkeepers?	**A boycott reduced purchases of British goods, pressuring British merchants, but it also reduced sales for colonial shopkeepers.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

British trade brings cloth and tools that I can sell, but its rules may keep my neighbors from getting better prices for their goods. Taxes might pay soldiers who protect trade, but higher prices can leave customers with less money for my shop. We elect our assembly, not Parliament, so Parliament's taxes leave us without a vote through our own representatives. I will join a boycott of British goods, even though it may cut my shop's sales.

Accept other passage-supported benefits and costs that clearly affect livelihoods. For the note, look for a stated economic trade-off, the lack of elected colonial representatives in Parliament, and an action with a plausible business drawback.