A Colony Divided

Arguments and compromise before independence

SS24.6.7d "Summarize the arguments put forth by Patriots and Loyalists regarding the question of independence from Great Britain, and describe efforts to compromise."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two reasons Patriots wanted independence, circle two reasons Loyalists opposed it, and box the sentence that tells what the Olive Branch Petition asked the king to do.

Two Sides of Independence

1 In 1775, a printer in Philadelphia could set two very different opinions in type. Patriots argued that Parliament taxed the colonies even though colonists had no elected members there. British troops and laws that limited colonial self-government made them fear that their rights were in danger. Some Patriots said the colonies should become independent so they could make their own laws and choose their own leaders. To them, staying under British rule meant trusting a government that had ignored their complaints.

2 Loyalists saw a different danger. They argued that breaking away from Great Britain could bring a long war and split families and neighbors. Some believed the British army could protect the colonies from attack and keep order. Others worried that independence would hurt trade with Britain, on which many workers and merchants relied. Loyalists did not all approve of every British tax or law. Many still thought it was safer to seek changes within the empire than to form a new country during a war.

3 Before independence was declared, some colonists tried to keep a door open to peace. In July 1775, the Second Continental Congress sent King George III the Olive Branch Petition. It asked him to help end the fighting and restore good relations, while colonists remained connected to Britain. The king did not accept the petition. As fighting continued, the hope of settling the dispute without independence faded for many colonists. In July 1776, Congress declared independence, but the debate between Patriots and Loyalists did not disappear.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Summarize two reasons Patriots gave for independence.

2. Summarize two reasons Loyalists gave for staying with Britain.

3. How did the Olive Branch Petition try to settle the dispute without independence?

4. Why might the king's response to the petition have strengthened the Patriot argument for independence?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are writing a note to your neighbors after the king rejected the Olive Branch Petition. In four sentences, give one Patriot argument, one Loyalist argument, explain the attempted compromise, and say which path you think the colonies should take and why.

A Colony Divided

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two reasons Patriots wanted independence, circle two reasons Loyalists opposed it, and box the sentence that tells what the Olive Branch Petition asked the king to do. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Summarize two reasons Patriots gave for independence.	**Patriots objected to taxes set by a Parliament where they had no elected members. They also wanted to protect their rights by making their own laws.**
2	Summarize two reasons Loyalists gave for staying with Britain.	**Loyalists feared that independence could bring a long war and harm trade with Britain.**
3	How did the Olive Branch Petition try to settle the dispute without independence?	**Congress asked the king to help end the fighting and restore good relations while the colonies remained connected to Britain.**
4	Why might the king's response to the petition have strengthened the Patriot argument for independence?	**His refusal made peaceful change under British rule seem less likely and supported the Patriot concern that the British government ignored colonial complaints.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Patriots say independence would let colonists make laws instead of accepting taxes from a Parliament where they have no elected members. Loyalists warn that leaving Britain could bring a long war and damage trade. Congress tried to avoid a break by asking the king through the Olive Branch Petition to restore peace while keeping the colonies tied to Britain, but he refused. I would support independence because his refusal makes peaceful change within the empire seem less likely.

Accept other arguments supported by the passage. For the open task, accept either choice if the reason fits the historical situation and the response has four sentences.