

Road to Independence

Trace how British actions and colonial responses led to a break with Britain.

SS.7.CG.1.5 "Describe how British policies and responses to colonial concerns led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each British policy, circle each colonial concern or response, and number the events in the order they build toward independence. Use your marks to trace why a break from Britain came to seem necessary.

From Complaints to Independence

- ① After the French and Indian War ended in 1763, Britain faced heavy debt and wanted the colonies to help pay for defense. Parliament passed the Sugar Act and later the Stamp Act, which placed taxes on goods and printed paper. Many colonists argued that Parliament could not tax them because they had no elected representatives there. They organized protests, boycotts, and petitions. Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766, but also passed the Declaratory Act, claiming full power to make laws for the colonies.
- ② Britain continued to raise revenue through the Townshend Acts, which taxed imported glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea. Colonists renewed their boycotts. In Boston, tension between residents and British soldiers ended in violence in 1770, when soldiers fired and killed five civilians. Parliament removed most Townshend taxes but kept the tax on tea. The Tea Act gave the East India Company advantages in selling tea. Colonists saw it as another attempt to make them accept Parliament's taxing power. In 1773, protesters dumped tea into Boston Harbor.
- ③ Parliament answered the Boston Tea Party with the Coercive Acts in 1774, closing Boston's port, changing Massachusetts's government, and expanding the quartering of troops. Colonists called these the Intolerable Acts. Delegates to the First Continental Congress organized boycotts and sent petitions. After fighting began at Lexington and Concord in 1775, King George III rejected the Olive Branch Petition. Many colonists concluded that peaceful appeals had failed. In 1776, the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence. It listed grievances, including taxation without consent, denied jury trials, and troops kept in the colonies.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 Why did many colonists object to the Stamp Act, and how did they respond?

2 What message did the Declaratory Act send to colonists, and why could that increase conflict?

3 Choose two British policies from the passage. For each one, name a colonial action it caused.

4 How did the response to colonial petitions and the start of fighting help lead to the Declaration of Independence?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write four sentences tracing one chain of events from a British policy to the Declaration of Independence. Name the policy, explain the colonial concern, describe a colonial response, and explain why the chain made independence seem necessary.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each British policy, circle each colonial concern or response, and number the events in the order they build toward independence. Use your marks to trace why a break from Britain came to seem necessary. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did many colonists object to the Stamp Act, and how did they respond?	They said Parliament could not tax them because they had no elected representatives there. They protested, boycotted goods, and sent petitions.
2	What message did the Declaratory Act send to colonists, and why could that increase conflict?	It said Parliament had full power to make laws for the colonies. This challenged colonists who believed Parliament should not tax or govern them without representation.
3	Choose two British policies from the passage. For each one, name a colonial action it caused.	Answers may include Stamp Act, protests, boycotts, and petitions; Townshend Acts, renewed boycotts; Tea Act, tea dumped into Boston Harbor; Coercive Acts, boycotts and petitions through the First Continental Congress.
4	How did the response to colonial petitions and the start of fighting help lead to the Declaration of Independence?	After fighting began, King George III rejected the Olive Branch Petition. Many colonists decided peaceful appeals had failed, so the Second Continental Congress adopted the Declaration in 1776.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Tea Act gave the East India Company advantages in selling tea and kept a tax on tea. Colonists believed this policy pushed them to accept Parliament's taxing power without representation. Protesters answered by dumping tea into Boston Harbor. Parliament's Coercive Acts and later rejection of peaceful petitions convinced many colonists that independence was necessary.

Accept equivalent policy-to-response chains that are supported by the passage and accurately explain cause and effect. For the open response, look for all four required parts and a clear connection to the decision for independence.