Ideas That Sparked Change

Trace three kinds of ideas behind the American Revolution.

5.H.8 "Explain how the political, religious, and economic ideas brought about the American Revolution."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a political idea, circle a religious idea, and number two economic problems or protest actions to show how different ideas pushed some colonists toward revolution.

Why Did Colonists Challenge Britain?

1. In 1775, a printer in Boston could see arguments about British rule posted across town. Many colonists believed a government should protect their rights and listen to the people it governed. They elected their own colonial assemblies, but they could not elect members of Britain's Parliament. When Parliament taxed them anyway, they protested that laws affecting them should have their consent. This political idea helped turn anger into calls for self-government.

2. Religious ideas also shaped some colonists' thinking. During the Great Awakening, traveling preachers urged listeners to think about faith for themselves instead of simply accepting what powerful leaders said. Some colonists connected that message to a larger question: If people could question religious leaders, could they question a king? Not everyone made this connection, but for some, it strengthened the belief that ordinary people should have a voice.

3. Money and trade made the dispute harder to ignore. Under the Stamp Act, Britain required tax stamps on newspapers and legal papers; it also taxed tea. Many colonists believed these taxes harmed their businesses and families, especially when they had no vote in Parliament. They organized boycotts, refusing to buy certain British goods. Political arguments about consent, religious ideas about questioning authority, and economic protests together helped push some colonists toward revolution.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the colonists' idea about consent make Parliament's taxes a political problem?

2. How could a message from the Great Awakening help some colonists question the king's power?

3. Why did taxes on newspapers, legal papers, and tea lead some colonists to boycott British goods?

4. How were religious ideas about questioning leaders and political ideas about consent alike in helping some colonists support revolution?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a colonist in 1776 writing to a neighbor who is unsure about independence. In three sentences, explain how two different kinds of ideas from the passage could lead someone to support breaking from Britain, then suggest one action your neighbor could take.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 5 · 5.H.8

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a political idea, circle a religious idea, and number two economic problems or protest actions to show how different ideas pushed some colonists toward revolution. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the colonists' idea about consent make Parliament's taxes a political problem?	**Colonists believed laws affecting them needed their consent, but they could not elect members of Parliament, which taxed them.**
2	How could a message from the Great Awakening help some colonists question the king's power?	**The message encouraged people to think for themselves rather than simply accept what powerful leaders said. Some applied that idea to the king.**
3	Why did taxes on newspapers, legal papers, and tea lead some colonists to boycott British goods?	**Some colonists believed the taxes harmed their businesses and families, so they refused to buy certain British goods in protest.**
4	How were religious ideas about questioning leaders and political ideas about consent alike in helping some colonists support revolution?	**Both ideas challenged the belief that people must simply accept a ruler's decisions. They helped some colonists argue that ordinary people should have a voice in government.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Neighbor, Parliament taxes our tea even though we cannot elect its members, so I believe we need a government that listens to us. Traveling preachers taught some colonists to question powerful leaders, and I think we can question the king too. Please come to our town meeting to discuss whether we should support independence.

Accept passage-based explanations that connect an idea to support for revolution. Religious arguments influenced some colonists, not all.