Boston Tensions Rise

Trace how two British laws led to conflict in Boston.

5.C.3.2.C "Explain how the enactment of the Townshend Duties and the Tea Act led to escalated tensions, such as the Boston Massacre and the Boston Tea Party."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Circle the names of the two laws, and underline one way colonists reacted to each law. Number the Boston Massacre 1 and the Boston Tea Party 2 to show the order of the events.

From Taxes to Protest

1. In 1767, Parliament passed the Townshend Duties, taxes on goods shipped to the colonies, including glass, paper, paint, lead, and tea. Colonists had no representatives in Parliament, so many argued that these taxes were unfair. Some refused to buy British goods. In Boston, customs officers tried to collect the duties, and British soldiers arrived in 1768 to support them. Streets grew tense.

2. In Boston, soldiers and townspeople often argued. On March 5, 1770, a crowd surrounded British soldiers. The soldiers fired, killing five colonists. This became known as the Boston Massacre. The duties did not make the soldiers fire, but anger over the taxes and the troops in the city had raised tensions. Later that year, Parliament removed most Townshend Duties but kept the tea tax.

3. In 1773, Parliament passed the Tea Act. It let the East India Company ship tea directly to the colonies and sell it through chosen agents, often at lower prices, but kept the tea tax. Many colonists thought buying the tea meant accepting Parliament's right to tax them. When tea ships reached Boston, protesters wanted the tea sent back. On December 16, colonists dumped the tea into the harbor in the Boston Tea Party.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did many colonists think the Townshend Duties were unfair, and how did some react?

2. How did the Townshend Duties help raise tensions in Boston before the Boston Massacre?

3. Why did the Tea Act upset many colonists even though the company's tea could cost less?

4. How did the disagreement over the Tea Act lead to the Boston Tea Party?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a Boston resident writing to a cousin just after the Tea Party. In 4 to 5 sentences, explain how each law led to its Boston event, then say which event you think was a more direct response to a law and why.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 5 · 5.C.3.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Circle the names of the two laws, and underline one way colonists reacted to each law. Number the Boston Massacre 1 and the Boston Tea Party 2 to show the order of the events. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did many colonists think the Townshend Duties were unfair, and how did some react?	**They had no representatives in Parliament, which passed the taxes. Some refused to buy British goods.**
2	How did the Townshend Duties help raise tensions in Boston before the Boston Massacre?	**Customs officers collected the duties, and soldiers came to support them. Anger over the taxes and the troops raised tensions between soldiers and townspeople.**
3	Why did the Tea Act upset many colonists even though the company's tea could cost less?	**The tea tax remained. Many colonists thought buying the tea would mean accepting Parliament's right to tax them.**
4	How did the disagreement over the Tea Act lead to the Boston Tea Party?	**Protesters wanted the tea ships to leave. Colonists then dumped the tea into the harbor.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Cousin, the Townshend Duties angered colonists because Parliament taxed goods without our representatives there. Soldiers came to Boston, and arguments with townspeople grew until soldiers fired into a crowd in the Boston Massacre. The Tea Act kept the tea tax, even though the company's tea could cost less. Colonists then dumped the tea into the harbor to reject that tax. I think the Tea Party was a more direct response to a law because the protesters destroyed the tea covered by the Tea Act.

Accept different supported judgments about which event was more direct. Responses should connect each law to rising tensions without claiming that the Townshend Duties directly caused soldiers to fire.