Why These Taxes?

Trace Parliament's reasons for taxing the colonies

8.C.1.2.A "Explain Parliament's rationale for levying new forms of taxation."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each cost or goal Parliament wanted to pay for, and circle the tax or duty it used to raise money for that purpose.

Paying for an Empire

1. In 1765, a Boston printer picked up a sheet meant for a newspaper. Under the Stamp Act, the newspaper would need a paid stamp before it could be sold. Parliament had a reason for seeking money from the colonies. Britain had borrowed heavily to fight the French and Indian War, which ended in 1763. Keeping British troops in North America afterward also cost money. Members of Parliament argued that colonists benefited from British protection, so they should help pay for soldiers who defended the colonies and the empire.

2. Parliament tried several ways to collect that money. In 1764, the Sugar Act lowered the existing duty on molasses but strengthened efforts to collect it. British officials hoped that reducing smuggling would bring in more revenue, even at the lower rate. The Stamp Act of 1765 took a different approach: it taxed many printed items, including newspapers, legal papers, and playing cards. Parliament saw these taxes as ways to make colonial trade and daily transactions help cover the costs of defending and governing Britain's North American colonies.

3. In 1767, Parliament passed the Townshend Acts, placing duties on imports such as glass, paper, and tea. This money was meant, in part, to pay certain colonial governors and judges, so they would not depend on colonial assemblies for their salaries. Parliament believed this would make imperial government more effective. Many colonists answered that Parliament taxed them without their elected representatives' consent. Parliament, however, claimed it could make laws for the entire empire, including tax laws. The dispute was not only about the price of goods, but also about who could decide to tax.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did Parliament argue that colonists should help pay for British troops in North America?

2. Why did British officials strengthen collection of the molasses duty under the Sugar Act, even though they lowered its rate?

3. How did Parliament expect the Stamp Act to help pay the costs of defending and governing the colonies?

4. Why did Parliament want Townshend duties to help pay colonial governors and judges?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a member of Parliament in 1767 proposing an imaginary duty on imported clocks. Write four sentences defending it: explain how the money would serve two needs from the passage, and answer the colonial objection about representation.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.1.2.A

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline each cost or goal Parliament wanted to pay for, and circle the tax or duty it used to raise money for that purpose. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did Parliament argue that colonists should help pay for British troops in North America?	**Parliament argued that colonists benefited from the troops' protection, so they should share the cost of keeping them in North America.**
2	Why did British officials strengthen collection of the molasses duty under the Sugar Act, even though they lowered its rate?	**They hoped that reducing smuggling would bring in more revenue despite the lower rate.**
3	How did Parliament expect the Stamp Act to help pay the costs of defending and governing the colonies?	**By taxing printed items used in colonial transactions, Parliament expected to collect money toward those costs.**
4	Why did Parliament want Townshend duties to help pay colonial governors and judges?	**Parliament wanted those officials to be less dependent on colonial assemblies for their salaries, which it believed would make imperial government more effective.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I propose a duty on imported clocks to help pay for British troops stationed in North America. These soldiers protect colonies whose residents share in the benefits of the empire. Revenue from the duty could also pay colonial governors and judges, reducing their reliance on colonial assemblies. Some colonists say they have no elected representatives in Parliament, but Parliament claims the authority to tax across the empire.

Accept four-sentence speeches that connect the proposed duty to two needs identified in the passage and address the objection about representation. Students should present the clock duty as a proposal, not a tax Parliament actually passed.