A Line of Discontent

How a boundary became a colonial grievance

8.C.1.2.B "Describe how the Proclamation of 1763 and its restriction on migration into American Indian sovereign territories fed discontent among the colonies."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the rule that limited migration, circle two reasons colonists resented it, and number two details that show how the disagreement with Britain grew.

A Boundary After the War

1. In 1763, a colonial family might picture a farm beyond the Appalachian Mountains. But that land was not empty: American Indian nations lived there and governed their own lands. After Britain won the Seven Years' War, fighting continued on the frontier as Native nations resisted British expansion. To reduce conflict, King George III issued the Proclamation of 1763. It set a boundary along the Appalachians and barred colonists from settling west of that line without royal permission. British officials hoped fewer settlers would mean fewer clashes and lower costs for defending the frontier.

2. For many colonists, the boundary blocked plans that had seemed possible before the proclamation. A family hoping to move west could not legally start a farm there without permission. People who had invested in western land ventures feared that their investments would bring no quick profit. Some colonists thought Britain was placing distant officials' decisions above their own hopes for land. Yet the restriction was meant to limit intrusion into American Indian territories, not to declare those territories vacant. This clash of goals made the policy especially bitter for people expecting western opportunities.

3. The proclamation did not stop every settler from crossing the line. Those who moved west anyway risked conflict with American Indian nations and disputes with British officials enforcing the rule. Each dispute could sharpen resentment: land-seeking colonists saw British control as an obstacle, while officials saw unauthorized settlement as a danger. American Indian communities faced pressure on their territories despite the boundary. The rule did not by itself cause the American Revolution, but arguments over who could move and who could decide added to colonial discontent with British rule.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did British officials limit settlement west of the Appalachians, and why might colonists who wanted land resent that decision?

2. How could the boundary change a family's plan to start a farm, and how might that change the family's view of British rule?

3. Why might someone who invested in a western land venture oppose the proclamation?

4. How could settlers crossing the line despite the rule increase colonial discontent with Britain?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your family has packed a wagon to move west in 1764. Write four sentences from a family member's viewpoint that explain your plan, whose territories lie beyond the boundary, why British officials restrict settlement, and how the rule affects your feelings about British rule.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 8 · 8.C.1.2.B

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline the rule that limited migration, circle two reasons colonists resented it, and number two details that show how the disagreement with Britain grew. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did British officials limit settlement west of the Appalachians, and why might colonists who wanted land resent that decision?	**Officials hoped to reduce clashes and defense costs. Colonists who wanted western land saw the rule as an obstacle to their plans.**
2	How could the boundary change a family's plan to start a farm, and how might that change the family's view of British rule?	**The family could not legally settle west of the line without royal permission and might resent Britain for blocking its plan.**
3	Why might someone who invested in a western land venture oppose the proclamation?	**The settlement restriction could delay profit from the venture, giving the investor a reason to oppose Britain's decision.**
4	How could settlers crossing the line despite the rule increase colonial discontent with Britain?	**Crossing could lead to disputes with British officials enforcing the rule. Those disputes could deepen settlers' resentment of British control.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Our wagon is packed, but the proclamation keeps us from settling west of the mountains without permission. American Indian nations govern lands beyond the line. British officials say the rule could prevent fighting between settlers and those nations. I will not take someone else's land, but I resent officials far away deciding where my family may settle.

Accept responses that connect a specific effect of the settlement restriction to colonial resentment while recognizing American Indian nations' territories. Students may describe different colonial reactions without claiming that all colonists opposed the proclamation.