Pressure on Parliament

How colonial arguments and actions challenged British policies

8.C.1.3.C "Explain the strategies utilized by colonists to oppose imperial policies, including the issuance of the Stamp Act Resolves and the use of propaganda, exemplified by the work of the Committees of Correspondence, the Sons of Liberty..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline four ways colonists opposed British policies. Circle a phrase that shows what each way was meant to change.

From Resolutions to Boycotts

1 In 1765, a Boston printer faced a new cost: the Stamp Act required paid stamps on newspapers, legal papers, and other printed materials. Parliament passed the law without colonial representatives voting on it. In Virginia, lawmakers issued the Stamp Act Resolves, arguing that only their own elected assembly could tax Virginians. These statements did not stop a tax collector at the door. Instead, they gave colonists a shared argument about political rights and challenged Parliament's authority to impose taxes without colonial consent.

2 An argument could not travel far unless people heard it. In the early 1770s, Committees of Correspondence linked towns through letters about British policies and colonial responses. Members shared reports and persuasive claims that encouraged readers to see imperial actions as threats to their rights. Such propaganda presented a point of view to shape public opinion; it was not simply a neutral list of events. By passing messages from town to town, the committees helped colonists coordinate resistance beyond a single street or colony.

3 Other resistance was visible in shops and streets. The Sons of Liberty organized protests against the Stamp Act and sometimes pressured people who helped enforce it. Colonists also boycotted British goods, agreeing not to buy or import certain products. A shopkeeper who stopped ordering British cloth might lose sales, but British merchants could also lose customers. Supporters hoped those merchants would urge Parliament to change its policies. Together, public arguments, organized messages, street protests, and boycotts applied different kinds of pressure to imperial officials.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Stamp Act Resolves challenge Parliament's power to tax the colonists?

2. How did the Committees of Correspondence use letters to build opposition beyond one town?

3. What did the Sons of Liberty do to oppose the Stamp Act, and whom did they sometimes pressure?

4. How could refusing to buy British goods put pressure on Parliament?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence message to a colonial shopkeeper in 1774 urging a boycott of British goods. Use the earlier Stamp Act Resolves to support your argument, explain how a boycott might pressure Parliament, and describe how you would spread your message.

ANSWER KEY

Pressure on Parliament

GRADE 8 · 8.C.1.3.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline four ways colonists opposed British policies. Circle a phrase that shows what each way was meant to change. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Stamp Act Resolves challenge Parliament's power to tax the colonists?	**They argued that only Virginians' own elected assembly could tax them, challenging Parliament's authority to tax them without their consent.**
2	How did the Committees of Correspondence use letters to build opposition beyond one town?	**They passed reports and persuasive claims between towns, shaping opinion and helping colonists coordinate resistance.**
3	What did the Sons of Liberty do to oppose the Stamp Act, and whom did they sometimes pressure?	**They organized protests and sometimes pressured people who helped enforce the act.**
4	How could refusing to buy British goods put pressure on Parliament?	**British merchants could lose customers and then urge Parliament to change its policies.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Stamp Act Resolves argued that colonists should not be taxed without their own representatives' consent, and that concern still matters. Please stop ordering British cloth to protest Parliament's policies. If enough shops refuse British goods, British merchants may ask Parliament to change course. I will share this appeal through a committee's letters so other towns can join us.

Accept responses that accurately connect each strategy to its intended effect. In the message, students should treat the Stamp Act Resolves as an earlier argument, not claim that the Stamp Act was still in force in 1774.