Costs and Control

Economic and political reasons for independence

8.C.1.5.F "Identify specific economic and political grievances against British policies used by the colonists to justify independence."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about lost money, work, or trade. Circle details about taxes without representation or limits on self-government so you can tell economic grievances from political ones.

Why Colonists Objected

1. In 1765, a Boston printer opened a fresh pack of paper and faced a new cost: the Stamp Act required paid stamps on newspapers, legal papers, and other printed goods. Parliament passed the law to raise money from the colonies. Printers and customers would pay more, but the colonies had no elected representatives in Parliament to vote on the tax. Many colonists called this "taxation without representation." They had elected local assemblies, yet Parliament could still tax them. To critics, the price of a newspaper now raised a question about political power.

2. At Boston's waterfront in 1773, ships carried tea sold under the Tea Act. The act helped the British East India Company sell tea directly to the colonies while keeping an existing tax on tea. Some colonial merchants feared losing business to the company's favored sales system. Others objected to paying any tea tax set by a Parliament in which they had no representatives. Protesters dumped tea into Boston Harbor. In response, Parliament passed laws in 1774 that closed Boston's port until the tea was paid for, cutting off trade and dockworkers' wages.

3. The same 1774 laws also changed Massachusetts's government, reducing the power of its elected assembly and moving some decisions to royal officials. Colonists saw this as more than a fight over money: Britain could limit how they governed themselves. In 1776, the Declaration of Independence listed complaints about rulers who dissolved colonial legislatures and imposed taxes without colonists' consent. Those complaints linked losses to a larger claim. If distant leaders could control trade, collect taxes, and weaken local lawmaking, some colonists believed a separate government was the only way to protect their rights.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What economic complaint could a Boston printer make about the Stamp Act?

2. What political complaint could colonists make about the tax kept by the Tea Act?

3. How did closing Boston's port give colonists an economic reason to oppose British policy?

4. How did the 1774 changes to Massachusetts's government give colonists a political reason to favor independence?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence proposal for how Britain could have kept the colonies loyal. Suggest one change to address a specific economic grievance and one change to address a specific political grievance from the passage, then explain why colonists might seek independence if Britain made neither change.

Costs and Control

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details about lost money, work, or trade. Circle details about taxes without representation or limits on self-government so you can tell economic grievances from political ones. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What economic complaint could a Boston printer make about the Stamp Act?	**The required stamps raised the cost of newspapers and other printed goods.**
2	What political complaint could colonists make about the tax kept by the Tea Act?	**Parliament kept a tax on tea even though colonists had no elected representatives there.**
3	How did closing Boston's port give colonists an economic reason to oppose British policy?	**The closure cut off trade and dockworkers' wages.**
4	How did the 1774 changes to Massachusetts's government give colonists a political reason to favor independence?	**The laws reduced the power of an elected assembly and gave more control to royal officials. Colonists could see independence as a way to protect self-government.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Britain should reopen Boston's port so merchants and dockworkers can earn money again. It should also restore the power of Massachusetts's elected assembly instead of giving more control to royal officials. These changes would let colonists trade and help govern their colony. If Britain refused both changes, colonists might seek independence to protect their work and their political rights.

Accept other accurate grievances from the passage when students identify the British policy and explain its economic or political effect. The proposal should suggest a change for each type of grievance and connect Britain's refusal to the case for independence.