

Acts of Resistance

Analyze reasons and effects of civil disobedience.

8.20.B “analyze reasons for and the impact of selected examples of civil disobedience in U.S. history such as the Boston Tea Party and Henry David Thoreau's refusal to pay a tax.”

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each reason people chose to resist, circle each act of civil disobedience, and number each impact that followed so you can trace cause and effect.

Two Ways to Resist

- ① In 1773, Parliament kept a tax on tea imported into the American colonies. Many colonists argued that they should not be taxed by a government in which they had no elected representatives. The Tea Act also gave the British East India Company advantages in selling tea. In Boston, protest leaders tried to stop the tea from being unloaded. On December 16, men disguised as Mohawk Indians boarded three ships and dumped 342 chests of tea into Boston Harbor. They deliberately destroyed property to challenge British authority.
- ② British officials answered with the Coercive Acts, called the Intolerable Acts by many colonists. These laws closed Boston's port until the tea was paid for and increased British control of Massachusetts. The punishment hurt merchants, workers, and families who depended on the port. Instead of ending resistance, it convinced many colonists outside Massachusetts that Britain could threaten their rights too. Colonies sent aid to Boston and chose delegates for the First Continental Congress. The protest and British response helped deepen the conflict that led toward revolution.
- ③ More than seventy years later, Henry David Thoreau used a different form of civil disobedience. In 1846, he refused to pay a local poll tax in Concord, Massachusetts. Thoreau objected to slavery and to the Mexican-American War, which he believed would expand slavery. Because he would not pay, he spent one night in jail before someone else paid the tax. His action did not immediately change national policy, but it showed that an individual could resist an unjust government action without violence. In his essay “Civil Disobedience,” Thoreau argued that conscience should guide citizens.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What were two reasons many colonists opposed the tea policy in 1773?

2 How did the British response to the Boston Tea Party increase the protest's impact beyond Boston?

3 What did Thoreau oppose, and how did his act of civil disobedience differ from the Boston Tea Party?

4 Identify one immediate impact and one longer-term impact of Thoreau's refusal to pay the tax.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a five-sentence comparison of the Boston Tea Party and Thoreau's tax refusal. Include a reason for each protest, how each protester acted, and one impact of each action.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each reason people chose to resist, circle each act of civil disobedience, and number each impact that followed so you can trace cause and effect. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What were two reasons many colonists opposed the tea policy in 1773?	They objected to being taxed without elected representation, and they opposed the advantages given to the British East India Company.
2	How did the British response to the Boston Tea Party increase the protest's impact beyond Boston?	The Coercive Acts hurt Boston and increased British control, causing colonists elsewhere to fear for their own rights, send aid, and choose delegates for the First Continental Congress.
3	What did Thoreau oppose, and how did his act of civil disobedience differ from the Boston Tea Party?	Thoreau opposed slavery and the Mexican-American War. He refused to pay a poll tax and did not use violence, while the Boston protesters destroyed tea.
4	Identify one immediate impact and one longer-term impact of Thoreau's refusal to pay the tax.	Immediately, Thoreau spent one night in jail. In the longer term, his action showed that an individual could resist an unjust government action without violence.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Both protests challenged government policies participants believed were unjust. Boston colonists resisted a tea tax and trading advantages, while Thoreau resisted slavery and the Mexican-American War. The colonists destroyed tea, but Thoreau refused a poll tax without using violence. British punishment spread colonial resistance, whereas Thoreau's action modeled individual resistance. These examples show that civil disobedience can bring different consequences depending on its setting.

Accept equivalent explanations that connect each act of civil disobedience to its stated reasons and effects. For the open response, require accurate comparison evidence for both examples and at least one impact for each.