

Reasons to Break Away

Read how colonists' rights, protests, and fighting led to independence.

VS.5.a "explaining the principles and events that convinced the colonists to declare independence and go to war with Great Britain, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence;"

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two British actions that colonists thought were unfair. Circle two ideas that show what rights or powers colonists believed people should have.

From Protest to Independence

- ① After the French and Indian War, Great Britain said the colonies should help pay war debts. Parliament passed taxes, including the Stamp Act, even though colonists had no representatives in Parliament. Many colonists believed government should not tax people without their consent. They protested, boycotted British goods, and asked for a voice in decisions that affected them.
- ② British leaders also sent soldiers to enforce their laws. Tension grew, and British soldiers killed five colonists in the Boston Massacre in 1770. In 1773, colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor to oppose a tea tax. Britain answered with harsh laws that closed Boston's port and limited self-government in Massachusetts. Colonists saw these actions as attacks on their rights.
- ③ In 1775, fighting began at Lexington and Concord when British troops marched to take colonial military supplies. This fighting marked the start of the Revolutionary War. In 1776, colonial leaders approved the Declaration of Independence. It said people have rights, including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and governments get power from the consent of the governed. It explained why the colonies declared independence from Great Britain.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What belief about taxes did many colonists have?

2 How did Britain respond after colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor, and why did colonists object?

3 What happened at Lexington and Concord, and why was it important?

4 Name one right in the Declaration of Independence. Then tell where governments get their power, according to the Declaration.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write 3 or 4 sentences explaining why the colonists chose to declare independence and go to war. Include one British action or event and one idea from the Declaration of Independence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline two British actions that colonists thought were unfair. Circle two ideas that show what rights or powers colonists believed people should have. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What belief about taxes did many colonists have?	They believed government should not tax people without their consent or representation.
2	How did Britain respond after colonists dumped tea into Boston Harbor, and why did colonists object?	Britain passed harsh laws that closed Boston's port and limited self-government in Massachusetts. Colonists thought these laws attacked their rights.
3	What happened at Lexington and Concord, and why was it important?	British troops marched to take colonial military supplies, and fighting began. The fighting marked the start of the Revolutionary War.
4	Name one right in the Declaration of Independence. Then tell where governments get their power, according to the Declaration.	Answers include life, liberty, or the pursuit of happiness. Governments get their power from the consent of the governed.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The colonists decided to break away because Britain taxed them even though they had no representatives in Parliament. When British troops marched to take military supplies, fighting at Lexington and Concord started the Revolutionary War. The Declaration said a government gets power from the consent of the governed, so the colonists believed Britain was not ruling fairly.

Accept equivalent language about consent, representation, rights, and self-government. In the open response, look for an accurate British action or event, a Declaration principle, and a clear explanation that connects them to independence or war.