

8th Grade Practice Document Analysis
“Events That Led to the American Revolutionary War”

Name: _____ Teacher _____
Date: _____ School _____

Directions:

The task below is based on documents 1-6. This task is designed to test your ability to use historical documents. Study each document and answer the question or questions that follow it. Use your answers to these questions to help you write your essay.

Historical Background:

Many Europeans came to the New World during the 1600 - 1700's. They settled and formed colonies along the eastern coast of North America. By the middle of the 1700's, these thirteen colonies were supported and ruled by Great Britain. The American Revolutionary War fought between 1776 and 1783 gave the colonists their independence from Great Britain. This ended Great Britain's rule over the colonies.

Task:

For Part A, read each document carefully and answer the questions after each document. These answers will help you write your essay. Then read the directions for Part B and write your essay.

For Part B, use the information from the documents, your answers to the questions from Part A, and your knowledge of social studies to write a well-organized essay. In the essay you should:

Describe **three** events that led to the American Revolutionary War **and** how the colonists reacted to **each** one.

Document 1

The Stamp Act - 1765

The Stamp Act was passed by the British government on March 22, 1765. The new tax was placed on every piece of printed paper they used. Ship's papers, legal documents, licenses, newspapers, other publications, and even playing cards were taxed. The money collected by the Stamp Act was to be used to help pay the costs of protecting the American frontier.

In the past, taxes on colonial trade had always been viewed as measures to regulate commerce [trade], not to raise money. The Stamp Act, however, was viewed as a way for Great Britain to raise money in the colonies without the approval of the colonial legislatures [government]. The colonists believed if this new tax was allowed to pass there could be more troublesome taxation in the future.

Adapted from:

<http://www.history.org/other/teaching/tchcrsta.htm>

1. What items were taxed by the Stamp Act?

2. How did the colonists feel about the Stamp Act?

Document 2

The Boston Massacre - 1770

Tensions between the British and American colonists had been building for years. The British government had come up with a plan to use part of the colonists' salaries to pay British soldiers. This upset the colonists. On March 5, 1770, colonists began throwing snowballs at soldiers. When a colonist threw a rock-filled snowball at a soldier and hit him in the eye, the British soldiers opened fire without orders, killing and wounding eleven colonists. It was the first major clash between the colonists and the British. This event was known as the Boston Massacre and was the first step to the Revolutionary War.

Adapted from:

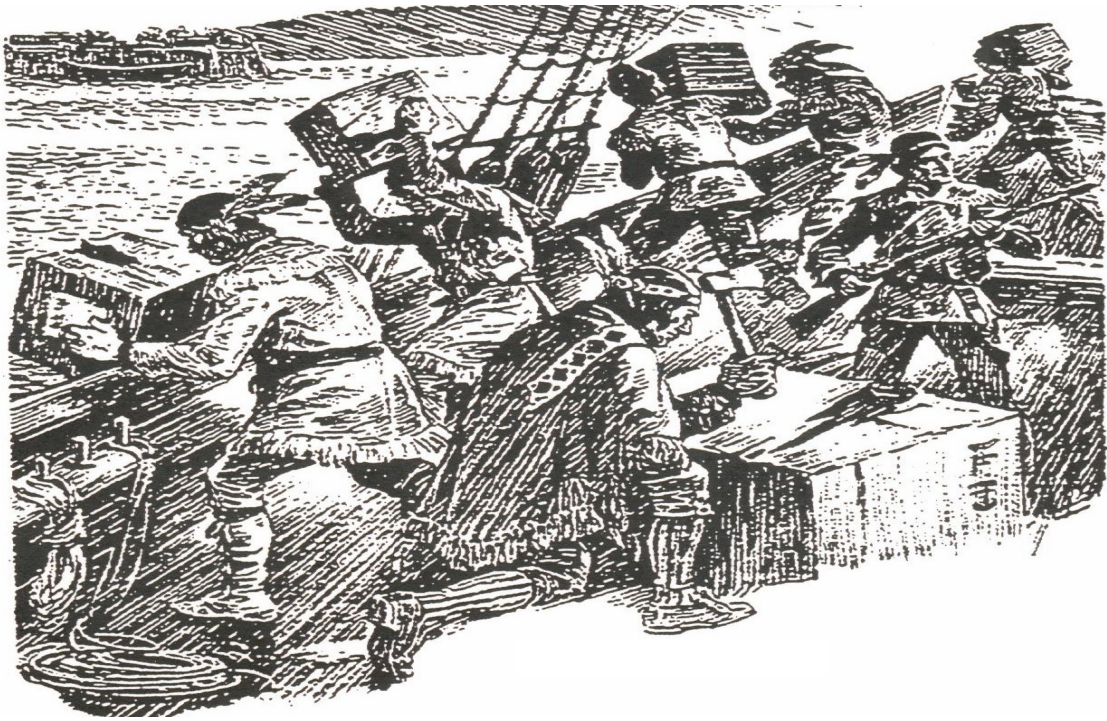
<http://www.efu.edu/macicw01/1770bostmass.htm>

http://www.stjohnsprep.org/htdocs/sjp_tec/projects/internet/massacre.htm

1. Why were the colonists upset with the British government?

2. Name the first major clash between the colonists and the British

Document 3



As one way of raising money, Great Britain taxed products the colonists used. The British tax on tea angered the colonists. One night, in 1773, they dressed as Mohawk Indians, boarded a British ship loaded with tea, and dumped the tea into Boston Harbor. This event was known as the Boston Tea Party.

Barnes, Eric, Free Men Must Stand, Whittlesey House, NY 1962.

1. Why were the colonists angry?

2. Name two things the artist is showing in this picture about the Boston Tea Party.

Document 4

This journal entry was written by a participant in the Boston Tea Party.

It was now evening, and I immediately dressed myself in the costume of an Indian, equipped with a small hatchet...with which, and a club, after having painted my face and hands with coal dust in the shop of a blacksmith, I repaired [went] to Griffin's Wharf, where the ships lay that contained the tea...I fell in with many who were dressed, equipped and painted as I was, and who fell in with me and marched in order to the place of our destination... We then were ordered by our commander to open the hatches and take out all the chests of tea and throw them overboard, and we immediately proceeded to execute [follow] his orders, first cutting and splitting the chests with our tomahawks, so as to thoroughly expose them to the effects of the water.

-George Hewes, a participant in the
Boston Tea Party

Hakim, Joy, A History of US, Vol. 3, Oxford University Press, NY, 1993.

1. What did the commander order the men to do?

2. Were the men successful in destroying the tea?

Document 5

DATE	ACT	DESCRIPTION	COLONISTS' RESPONSE
1764	Sugar Act	Increased tax on imported goods from countries other than Great Britain	Protests – claimed it was taxation without representation
1764	Currency Act	Prevented the colonies from printing their own money	Protests
1765	Quartering Act	Required colonists to open their homes and provide supplies for British soldiers	Formed organized protests – Created the Sons of Liberty
1767	Townshend Act	Tax on glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea	Tried to discourage the buying of British products
1773	Tea Act	Reduced tax on tea to encourage the colonists to buy British tea	Felt this was an unfair tax and it led to the Boston Tea Party
1774	Intolerable Act	Closed Boston Harbor to all ships- supplies could not be loaded or unloaded	Formed 1 st Continental Congress to discuss how to deal with Britain's laws in the colonies

1. Name **and** describe one of the acts that Great Britain forced on the colonists and their response to it.

Act: _____

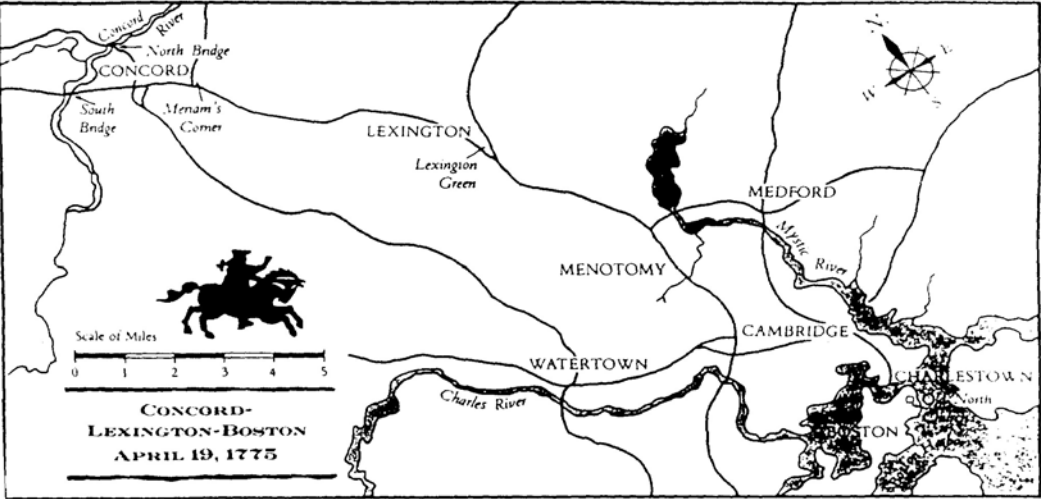
Response: _____

2. Name **and** describe another act and the colonists' response.

Act: _____

Response: _____

Document 6



The British were to march to Lexington to arrest Patriot leaders John Hancock and Samuel Adams who were staying there. Then they were to go on to Concord to seize [take by force] the Americans' weapons. Paul Revere and William Dawes, two of the best express riders, had to get a warning through the circle of British roadblocks around Boston. Due to their quick actions, the colonists were waiting for the British to arrive in Lexington and Concord. This showed the British that the colonists were willing to stand up for their rights.

Bliven, Bruce, The American Revolution, Random House, NY, 1958.
Johnson, Neil, The Battle of Lexington and Concord, Four Winds Press, NY, 1992.

1. Why was it important for Revere and Dawes to warn the colonists?

2. Were Revere and Dawes successful in warning the colonists?

3. What proof in the document supports your answer?

Document-Based Essay Part B

Directions: Using the documents, the answers to questions in Part A, and your knowledge of social studies, write a well-organized essay.

Historical Background:

Many Europeans came to the New World during the 1600 - 1700's. They settled and formed colonies along the eastern coast of North America. By the middle of the 1700's, these thirteen colonies were supported and ruled by Great Britain. The American Revolutionary War fought between 1776 and 1783 gave the colonists their independence from Great Britain. This ended Great Britain's rule over the colonies.

Task:

Describe **three** events that led to the American Revolutionary War **and** how the colonists reacted to **each** one.

In your essay remember to:

- Describe **three** events that led to the American Revolutionary War **and** how the colonists reacted to **each** one.
- Include an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use information from the documents in your answer.
- Include details, examples, or reasons in developing your ideas.