Chapter 4

The Road to Independence
(1753–1783)
America: Pathways to the Present

Chapter 4: The Road to Independence (1753–1783)

Section 1: The French and Indian War

Section 2: Issues Behind the Revolution

Section 3: Ideas Behind the Revolution

Section 4: Fighting for Independence

Section 5: Winning Independence
• What were the causes of the French and Indian War?
• How did the British win the French and Indian War?
• How did the war weaken the colonists’ loyalty to Britain?
North American Colonies

- European colonization dominated the continent.
- Colonized to spread empire and make money.
- British – mid-continent along east coast
- French – northern and central part of continent
- Spanish – southern and western part of continent
European Colonization
The French and Indian War ended a struggle between the British, the French and Native Americans over land in eastern North America. Name due to British vs. French/Native American

The conflict began because both Britain and France claimed the upper Ohio River valley territory.

June 1954, Benjamin Franklin proposed the Albany Plan of Union.

Franklin thought that the colonies would benefit from greater unity, following the examples of Iroquois unity.

The colonists rejected Franklin’s plan, but it later provided a model for the United States government.
Early War

• The French and their Native American allies won many important victories.
• The British troops and colonial **militia**, armed citizens who served as soldiers, tended to fight in the open and in straight lines, as was common in Europe.
• The French and Native Americans used the element of surprise and hid behind rocks and trees.
In 1756, Great Britain formally declared war on France. Fighting spread to Europe and Asia, but the British suffered defeats there too, as they had in America.

William Pitt, Britain’s prime minister, the highest official in a parliamentary government, believed that the entire British Empire was at stake.

Pitt persuaded Parliament to raise taxes and borrow money to fight the war. In 1758, British troops began to overwhelm the French and Native American forces.
In spring of 1759, the British began a campaign to invade New France and capture Quebec. British General Wolfe laid siege to the city.

During a siege, an enemy force is surrounded; trapped and without access to supplies, the enemy is starved into surrender.

The British successfully won Quebec, and then Montreal, giving them control over all of New France.

The Iroquois, who played both sides, saw the French’s cause was hopeless, began supporting the British actively.

The Treaty of Paris (1763), officially ended the French and Indian War in America and the Seven Years’ War in Europe.

In the treaty, France turned present-day Canada over to Britain and surrendered its claim to all lands east of the Mississippi River. Britain also returned Cuba to Spain in exchange for Florida.
Weakened Loyalty to Britain

• Despite the victory, the French and Indian War seriously strained relations between the British and the American colonists.
• The British thought that the colonists did not provide enough support for the long and expensive war that Britain had fought to protect them.
• The American colonists were shocked by the weakness of British military tactics. The Americans demanded to be led by colonial officers.
• Many American colonists felt a loss of respect for British military power. Many also believed that the British did not share the same values as the colonists.
• Now that the French no longer held Canada or the region west of the Appalachian Mountains, the colonists saw no reason why they should not expand and prosper on their own, without British help. These feelings would soon combine with events to expand the rift between Britain and its colonies.
New Colonial Land

AFTER 1763
- English
- New Spain
- New France
- Russian
What tactic did the British use to win the city of Quebec?

(A) They fought in the open, as was common in Europe.
(B) They laid siege to the city.
(C) They borrowed military tactics from the Iroquois.
(D) They hid behind rocks and trees.

How did the French and Indian War strain relations between the British and the American colonists?

(A) The British believed that the colonists did not provide enough support.
(B) The colonists felt a loss of respect for the British military.
(C) The colonists wanted to expand and prosper on their own without the help of the British.
(D) All of the above

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Cool Down

• Explain how the French Indian war both helped and hurt England’s empire in North America?
Issues Behind the Revolution

Chapter 4, Section 2

• How and why did British policies in the colonies change after 1763?
• What were the causes and effects of the Stamp Act?
• How did rising tensions in the colonies lead to fighting at Lexington and Concord?
Britain’s Financial Problems

Chapter 4, Section 2

- The costs of governing and defending Britain’s empire made the British people the most heavily taxed people in the world.
- Britain struggled with debts and taxes, the colonies in America were prospering.
- Decided colonies should help pay off debt
- **Sugar Act in 1764** marked the start of a new British policy designed to raise more income from the colonies.
- **The Quartering Act of 1765** required colonists to provide housing and supplies for British troops in America.
- Colonists complained that the changes violated their rights as British subjects, but mostly they went along with them.
The Stamp Act Crisis

• In March 1765 - **Stamp Act** - Tax on newspapers, pamphlets, legal documents, and most other printed materials.
• In October 1765, Stamp Act Congress.
• “no taxation without representation.”
• Britain had no right to force laws on the colonies because the colonists had no representatives in the British Parliament.
• American merchants organized a **boycott** of British goods. refusal to buy certain products or use certain services as an act of protest.
• Groups, known as the Sons of Liberty and Daughters of Liberty, sprang up to enforce the boycott and organize other ways of resisting British policies.
• By November 1765, when the Stamp Act was to take effect, most stamp distributors had resigned or fled, leaving no one to sell the stamps. In 1766, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act.
Rising Tensions in the Colonies

- In 1767, Parliament passed the **Townshend Acts**.
- The colonists protested these acts, which put taxes on certain goods, such as glass and tea.
- British troops were sent to Boston, Massachusetts, to put down violent resistance to the Townshend Acts.
The Boston Massacre
The Real Boston Massacre

• In March 1770, a small crowd threatened the British soldiers. In what became known as the **Boston Massacre**
• Colonists protested the presence of the soldiers and threw rocks, snowballs and ice at the troops. Someone yelled out “FIRE”
• Soldiers killed five colonists
• Soldiers were tried and found guilty of manslaughter.
• Punishment – thumb branding
• Soon after the Boston Massacre, Parliament canceled all the Townshend taxes, except for the tax on tea.
The Boston Tea Party

• In May 1773, the Parliament passed the Tea Act, an act that gave a British company special tax exemption in the colonies. The American colonists protested.

• Sons of Liberty planned a protest.

• On December 16, 1773, colonists, dressed as Native Americans boarded three tea ships in Boston and dumped all of the tea into the harbor. This incident became known as the Boston Tea Party.
Rising Tensions in the Colonies

On September 5, 1774, a gathering of 56 delegates met in Philadelphia in what became known as the First Continental Congress.

The delegates decided to renew a boycott of British goods and organize armed militias. They also made a direct appeal to the king, drafting the Declaration of Rights and Grievances.

King George repealed some taxes but imposed new ones.
The Americans whom King George had labeled “rebels” called themselves *Patriots* formed armed militias.

Massachusetts Patriots gathered guns and ammunition and stored a major stockpile in Concord, a town about 20 miles from Boston.

On April 18, 1775, about 800 British troops moved out of Boston to seize the weapons.

Boston Patriots learned about the British soldiers’ plan. When the main British force arrived at Lexington, about five miles from Concord, they encountered an armed militia, warned by Paul Revere. The battles that ensued became known as the **Battles of Lexington and Concord**.

The Battles of Lexington and Concord sparked the **Revolutionary War**, which became a war for American independence from Britain.
What was the first tax the British imposed over the colonies?

(A) The Tea Act
(B) The Stamp Act
(C) The Townshend Acts
(D) The Sugar Act

Which battles sparked the Revolutionary War?

(A) The battles against the Intolerable and Tea Acts
(B) The Battles of Lexington and Concord
(C) The Boston Massacres
(D) The Battles of Lexington and Townshend

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Who do you feel was most responsible for paying off the war debt from the French and India war, the Colonies or England? Explain.
• What was the importance of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*?
• What ideas and arguments are presented in the Declaration of Independence?
• *Common Sense*, a pamphlet written by Thomas Paine, was an important document during the Revolution. Paine wrote about the importance of armed struggle against the British Empire and about the ideological importance of American independence.

• The pamphlet, written in a simple, direct style, appealed to the American people. *Common Sense* convinced many readers, including many who had favored a peaceful settlement with the British government, to support a complete—and likely violent—break with Britain.
The Declaration of Independence

Chapter 4, Section 3

- *Common Sense* appeared at the same time as the meeting of the *Second Continental Congress* in Philadelphia. This Congress met less than a month after the Battles of Lexington and Concord, and it continued to meet throughout the Revolution.

- The Congress sent an *Olive Branch Petition* to King George III of England. This petition expressed the colonists’ loyalty to the king and requested a halt in fighting until a solution could be found. The king refused the petition.

- In June 1776, after more than a year of war, the Congress decided it was time for the colonies to cut ties with Britain. They prepared a statement of the reasons for separation—a *Declaration of Independence*. Thomas Jefferson drafted the document.
• Thomas Jefferson divided the Declaration into four sections:
  – The **preamble**, or introduction, explained the Declaration’s purpose.
  – In the declaration of rights, Jefferson drew heavily on the writings of John Locke. Locke believed that people have **natural rights** —rights that belong to them simply because they are human. Jefferson called these **unalienable rights**, meaning rights that could not be taken away.
  – In the complaints against the king, Jefferson wrote that public officials must make decisions based on the law, not on their own personal wishes. He called this a **rule of law**.
  – The resolution, in declaring the colonies free and independent states, concluded the Declaration.
• Jefferson’s document not only declared the nation’s independence, it also defined the basic principles on which American government and society would rest.
• Congressional delegates voted to approve the Declaration on July 4, 1776.
What was the impact of Thomas Paine’s pamphlet *Common Sense*?

(A) *Common Sense* explained “no taxation without representation” to the British Parliament.

(B) *Common Sense* helped the colonists understand the ancient Greek system of democracy.

(C) *Common Sense* provided the inspiration for the Olive Branch Petition.

(D) *Common Sense* convinced many readers to support a break with Britain.

Which of the following writers influenced the Declaration of Independence?

(A) Oliver Cromwell

(B) Nicolo Machiavelli

(C) John Locke

(D) Ernest Hemingway

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• What happened during the Siege of Boston? What was its outcome?
• What were the strengths and weaknesses of the British and American forces?
• Why was the Battle of Saratoga considered a turning point of the war?
The Siege of Boston

- Following the clashes at Lexington and Concord in April 1775, 20,000 Patriots surrounded Boston and prevented the 6,000 British troops from quickly crushing the rebellion.
- In June 1775, the British and Americans fought for control of two strategically important hills north of Boston: Breed’s Hill and Bunker Hill. The British won the **Battle of Bunker Hill**, but victory came at a high cost. Almost half of the British soldiers (nearly 1,100 of 2,400) were killed or wounded. Patriot **casualties**—persons killed, wounded, or missing—numbered fewer than 400.
- The remaining British troops were pinned down in Boston for the next nine months. In July 1775, George Washington arrived and, as newly named commanding general of the Patriot forces, worked to transform the militia groups into the Continental Army.
- In March 1776, the British abandoned Boston. The British fleet moved the army to the Canadian city of Halifax, taking along some 1,000 **Loyalists**, or people who remained loyal to Great Britain. During the Revolution some Loyalists fled to England, the West Indies, or Canada. Many others remained in the colonies.
Strengths and Weaknesses

The British

- The British had a well-trained and equipped army, and the finest navy in the world.
- The British also had assistance from Loyalists, some African Americans, most Native Americans, and 30,000 mercenaries—foreign soldiers who fight for pay.
- Weaknesses: The war was unpopular at home. Many British citizens resented paying taxes to fight the war and sympathized with the Americans. Additionally, British troops had to fight in hostile territories and did not adapt their tactics to conditions in America.

The Americans

- Patriot forces were fighting on their own territory.
- Many officers were familiar with fighting tactics from the French and Indian War.
- More African Americans served with American forces than with the British.
- Weaknesses: For much of the war, the Americans lacked a well-equipped and effective fighting force. New recruits were constantly arriving, while experienced soldiers were heading home.
Crossing the Delaware
By the winter of 1776, the British army had captured New York City and had pushed the Continental Army into Pennsylvania. Many troops deserted the Continental Army, and the Patriot cause seemed on the point of collapse. Fearing for their safety, the Continental Congress fled Philadelphia.

Lacking adequate financial support, supplies, and experienced troops, George Washington had to be innovative. He abandoned the army tradition of not fighting during winter and led his troops across the Delaware River on Christmas night. Early the next morning, the American troops landed in New Jersey and surprised about 1,400 mercenaries. The battle that followed was called the Battle of Trenton, in which nearly the entire mercenary force was captured and the Americans suffered only five casualties.

A similar victory in Princeton, New Jersey, boosted Patriot morale and convinced more Americans to support the Patriot cause.
Victory at Saratoga

Chapter 4, Section 4

• Despite the increasing Patriot numbers and the victories in New Jersey, the Patriots still suffered defeats. British General Howe was advancing to capture Philadelphia, and another British army, led by General John Burgoyne, was attempting to cut off New England from the rest of the colonies.

• In mid-September 1777, the Americans, led by General Horatio Gates, attacked and defeated Burgoyne’s forces in New York. This series of American victories is called the Battle of Saratoga. Burgoyne, surrounded by a force much larger than his own, surrendered on October 17. This was the biggest American victory yet, and a turning point in the war.

• The American victory at Saratoga brought a foreign power to aid the American cause. France openly entered the war on the side of the Americans, followed by Spain and the Netherlands. These alliances provided the Americans with much needed supplies, troops, and a navy. In addition, Britain now had to defend itself in Europe.
Loyalists were ______________.

(A) people loyal to the Patriots’ cause
(B) people loyal to Great Britain
(C) people loyal to the Native American nations
(D) people loyal to Canadian independence

Which victory brought a foreign power to aid the American cause?

(A) The Battle of Saratoga
(B) The Battle of Trenton
(C) The Battle of Bunker Hill
(D) The Siege of Boston

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Fighting for Independence-Assessment

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Winning Independence

Chapter 4, Section 5

- What hardships did the Americans endure during the war?
- How did American victories in the West and South lead to an end to the war?
- What was the impact of the American Revolution?
• Although the British had seized New York, Philadelphia, and almost every other important colonial city, George Washington knew that the Americans would win the war because they had the determination to outlast their rulers.

• A major source of hardship for Washington’s army was the lack of financial support from the Continental Congress. The Congress had very little real power. Congress could ask the states to provide troops, money, and supplies, but without taxation power, it could not force them to do so.

• The civilians suffered hardships too. During the war, the British navy blockaded, or cut off from outside contact, the Atlantic Coast, which severely disrupted American trade.

• Necessities were scarce. A few colonists took advantage of these shortages by profiteering, or selling scarce items at unreasonably high prices. Washington suggested that profiteers should be hanged.
Victories in the West and South

Chapter 4, Section 5

- The Patriots, with the help of the French army, won important victories in the West and the South, culminating with the **Battle of Yorktown**:
  - In August 1781, British General Cornwallis set up camp at Yorktown, Virginia, to reinforce his troops and wait for the Royal navy to arrive.
  - Washington, who was in the North, saw the opportunity to deal the British a fatal blow. A French army had just joined the Continental Army in New York. Washington moved the combined troops south (toward Yorktown), while the French fleet set up a blockade off the Virginia coast to block British ships.
  - A few days later, Washington’s troops arrived to reinforce American forces at Yorktown. Cornwallis now faced an army more than twice the size of his own.
  - With land and sea escape routes blocked, Cornwallis realized that escape was impossible. On October 19, 1781, Cornwallis surrendered to Washington.
The Treaty of Paris

Nearly two years passed between the surrender of Cornwallis and the signing of the peace treaty that ended the war. Four nations were involved: Great Britain, France, Spain, and the United States.

The Treaty of Paris (1783) contained these major provisions:

- Great Britain recognized the independence of the United States of America.
- The northern border between the United States and Canada was set from New England to the Mississippi River, primarily along the Great Lakes.
- The Mississippi River was set as the border between the United States and Spanish territory to the West. Navigation on the river was open to American and British citizens.
- Florida, which Britain had gained from the Spanish, was returned to Spain.
- Britain agreed to withdraw its remaining troops from United States territory.
- The Congress pledged to recommend to the states that the rights and property of American Loyalists be restored and that no future action be taken against them.
The Impact of the Revolution

The Revolution did more than establish American independence. It also helped inspire Americans’ patriotism. Patriotism is the passion that inspires a person to serve his or her country, either in defending it from invasion, or protecting its rights and maintaining its laws or institutions.

For African Americans the results of the Revolution were mixed. Most northern states abolished slavery, while southern states made slavery more restrictive.

For Native Americans the war’s outcome was a disaster. The power of the Iroquois League was destroyed, and Americans justified their attacks on Cherokees, Shawnees, and other Indians by pointing out these nations’ support for the British.

Perhaps the greatest effect of the Revolution was to spread the idea of liberty, both at home and abroad. Thomas Jefferson’s assertion that “all men are created equal” has provided justification to many groups in their struggles for equal rights.
Selling scarce items at unreasonably high prices is known as _____________.

(A) inflation  
(B) profiteering  
(C) blockading  
(D) price indexing

The peace treaty that ended the war was called ___________________.

(A) the Treaty of Yorktown  
(B) the Treaty of Cornwallis  
(C) the Treaty of Saratoga  
(D) the Treaty of Paris

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