"What a glorious morning for America!"

- Samuel Adams
Gaspée Incident (1772)

- A British customs schooner that had been enforcing unpopular trade regulations, ran aground in shallow water on June 9, 1772, near Rhode Island.
- In a notorious act of defiance, a group of men led by Abraham Whipple and John Brown attacked, boarded, looted, and torched the ship.
- Wasn’t the first colonial “attack” but is the spark that lights the fuse.
Committees of Correspondence

• Shadow governments served an important role in the Revolution, by disseminating the colonial interpretation of British actions between the colonies and to foreign governments.
  • Rallied opposition on common causes and established plans for collective action.
• A total of about 7000 to 8000 Patriots served on these committees at the colonial and local levels, comprising most of the leadership in their communities—the Loyalists were excluded.

• In Massachusetts, in November 1772, Samuel Adams and Dr. Joseph Warren formed a committee in response to the Gaspée Affair
Tea Act to Tea Party

• The Tea Act’s Objectives
  • Reduce the massive surplus of tea held by the financially troubled British East India Company in its London warehouses and to help the struggling company survive.
  • Colonists were forced to pay the tax on tea, while the BEIC paid no corporate export tax.
  • Price of tea went down, but it validated the taxing the colonies.
    • Also undercut the tea being smuggled in.
Boston Tea Party (1773)

- 1846 lithograph by Nathaniel Currier
The Boston Tea Party was the culmination of a resistance movement throughout British America against the Tea Act.

The Sons of Liberty vocally refused the unloading of a November delivery so as to not pay the taxes, and after a month in the harbor...

On December 16, 1773, after officials in Boston refused to return three shiploads of taxed tea to Britain, a group of colonists, ~150, (some disguised as Mohawks) boarded the ships and destroyed the tea by throwing it into Boston Harbor.

In less than 3 hours, over 300 chests of tea are dumped overboard.
Lord North - 1773

“The Americans have tarred and feathered your subjects, plundered your merchants, burnt your ships, denied all obedience to your laws and authority; yet so clement and so long forbearing has our conduct been that it is incumbent on us now to take a different course. Whatever may be the consequences, we must risk something; if we do not, all is over”
The Coercive/Intolerable Acts

- The **Boston Port Act** closed the port of Boston until the East India Company had been repaid for the destroyed tea and until the king was satisfied that order had been restored.
  - Colonists objected that the Port Act punished all of Boston rather than just the individuals who had destroyed the tea, and that they were being punished without having been given an opportunity to testify in their own defense.

- The **Massachusetts Government Act** almost all positions in the colonial government were to be appointed by the governor or the king. The act also severely limited the activities of town meetings in Massachusetts to one meeting a year, unless the Governor calls for one.
  - Colonists outside Massachusetts feared that their governments could now also be changed by Parliament.

- The **Administration of Justice Act** allowed the governor to move trials of accused royal officials to another colony or even to Great Britain if he believed the official could not get a fair trial in Massachusetts.
  - The act stipulated that witnesses would be paid for their travel expenses, in practice few colonists could afford to leave their work and cross the ocean to testify in a trial.
  - George Washington called this the "Murder Act" because he believed that it allowed British officials to harass Americans and then escape justice.
  - Some colonists believed the act was unnecessary because British soldiers had been given a fair trial following the Boston Massacre in 1770.

- The **Quartering Act** allowed a governor to house soldiers in other buildings if suitable quarters were not provided.
  - Although many colonists found the Quartering Act objectionable, it generated the least protest of the Coercive Acts.
Quebec Act

- Part of the Intolerable Acts, but had nothing to do with the BTP
  - The province's territory was expanded.
  - The oath of allegiance was replaced with one that no longer made reference to the Protestant faith.
  - It guaranteed free practice of the Catholic faith.
    - Including the ability to tithe
  - It restored the use of the French civil law for private matters while maintaining the use of the English common law for public administration, including criminal prosecution.

Colonial Reactions

- Land speculators and settlers
- Catholic French vs Protestant Colonials
- Some say that the Quebec Act was aimed directly at Benjamin Franklin who was starting an Ohio Colony. (Not because of his affinity for French Prostitutes and Belles)
The First Continental Congress (1774)

- 56 delegates from 12 colonies
- Agenda ➔ How to respond to the Intolerable Acts
  - Economic boycott of British trade
  - Petitioning King George III for halting of the Intolerable Acts.
- The delegates also urged each colony to set up and train its own militia.
British are Coming

- British troops march out of Boston on a mission to confiscate the American arsenal at Concord and to capture Patriot leaders, Samuel Adams and John Hancock, known to be hiding at Lexington.

- Charged by Dr. Joseph Warren
  - Paul Revere - Silversmith & Engraver
    - Captured
  - William Dawes - Tanner & Revolutionary
    - Wedding Day & Townshend Acts
  - Dr. Samuel Prescott - Physician
    - Made it to Concord
  - Sybil Ludington (Drunk History)
    - Covered 40 Miles
- Malcolm Gladwell’s *Tipping Point*
  - Connectors
“The Shot Heard Round the World”

• The **Battles of Lexington and Concord** were the first military engagements & were fought on April 19, 1775

• The battles marked the outbreak of open armed conflict between the Kingdom of Great Britain and its thirteen colonies in the mainland of British North America.
  • Double the forces and less than half the casualties for the colonists.

• It was important to the early American government that an image of British fault and American innocence be maintained for this first battle of the war.
Lex & Con Depositions

- Read the depositions and discuss with your partner the following...
  - Similarities
  - Differences
  - Why might the depositions be different?
  - What does it say about the colonial militias that they are different?
The Second Continental Congress

- Olive Branch Petition
  - An attempt to avoid a full-blown war with Great Britain. The petition affirmed American loyalty to Great Britain and entreated the king to prevent further conflict.
  - First drafted by Thomas Jefferson, but John Dickinson found Jefferson’s language too offensive.
  - **REJECTED** by George III!
- The second Congress managed the colonial war effort, and moved incrementally towards independence.
  - By raising armies, directing strategy, appointing diplomats, and making formal treaties, the Congress acted as the *de facto* national government of what became the United States.
Common Sense

• In clear, simple language it explained the advantages of and the need for immediate independence.
  • Less like Enlightenment writers and more like sermons.
  • Frequent use of biblical He connected independence with common dissenting Protestant beliefs as a means to present a distinctly American political identity
• In proportion to the population of the colonies at that time (2.5 million), it had the largest sale and circulation of any book published in American history.

"the most incendiary and popular pamphlet of the entire revolutionary era“ —Gordon Wood
Common Sense

• The colonists’ belief in the superiority of republican self-government based on the natural rights of the people found its clearest American expression in Common Sense...

• and in the Declaration of Independence that will follow.

"the most incendiary and popular pamphlet of the entire revolutionary era“ —Gordon Wood
Paine's arguments against British rule

• It was absurd for an island to rule a continent.
• America was not a "British nation"; but was composed of influences and peoples from all of Europe.
• Even if Britain were the "mother country" of America, that made her actions all the more horrendous, for no mother would harm her children so brutally.
• Being a part of Britain would drag America into unnecessary European wars, and keep her from the international commerce at which America excelled.
• The distance between the two nations made governing the colonies from England unwieldy. If some wrong were to be petitioned to Parliament, it would take a year before the colonies received a response.
• Britain ruled the colonies for her own benefit, and did not consider the best interests of the colonists in governing them.

To argue with a person who has renounced the use of reason is like administering medicine to the dead.
  • Thomas Paine
Paine vs Inglis

• Read an excerpt from Paine’s Common Sense and Inglis’ loyalist rebuttal from The True Interest of an American.

• Respond to the following:
  • Using evidence from the documents and your understanding of major acts by the British, which argument might colonists have found more persuasive? Why?