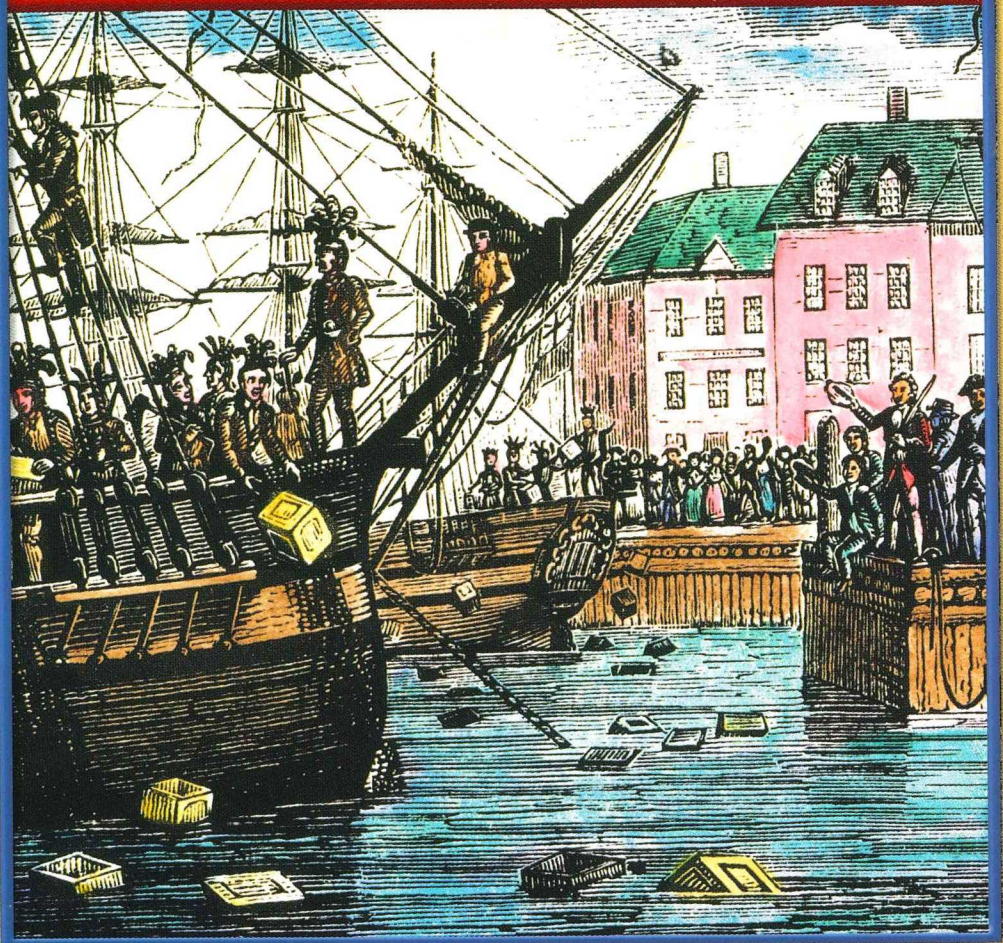


Social Studies

CHOOSING ★ FREEDOM

by Ann Rossi



In the 1700s Britain and the American colonies did not always agree. Disagreements led to problems, and problems led to war. In this book you will read about some of the disagreements and how they led American Patriots to fight for their freedom from Great Britain.

Vocabulary

revenue

tyranny

repeal

tariff

boycott

Patriot

massacre

intolerable

militia

minutemen

ISBN: 0-328-14672-2

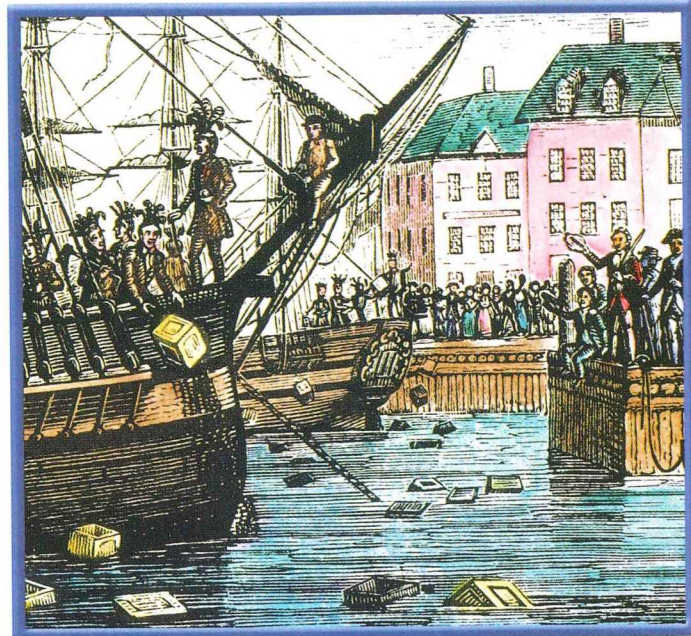
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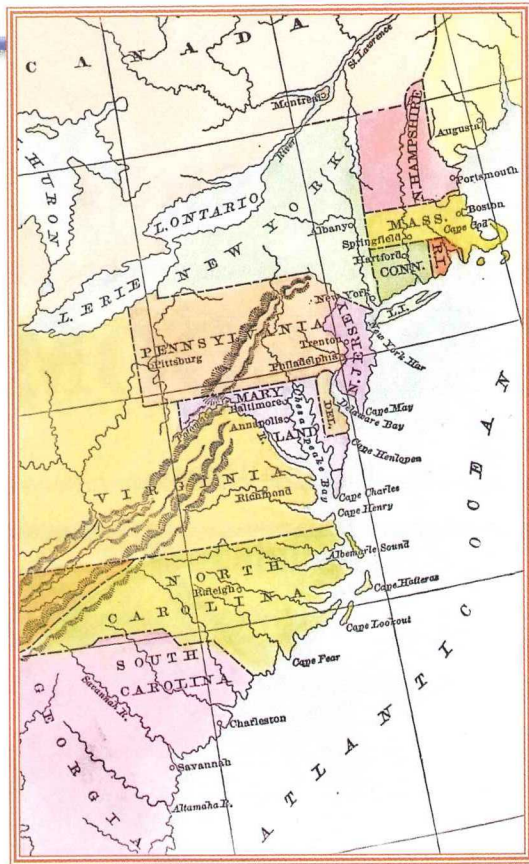
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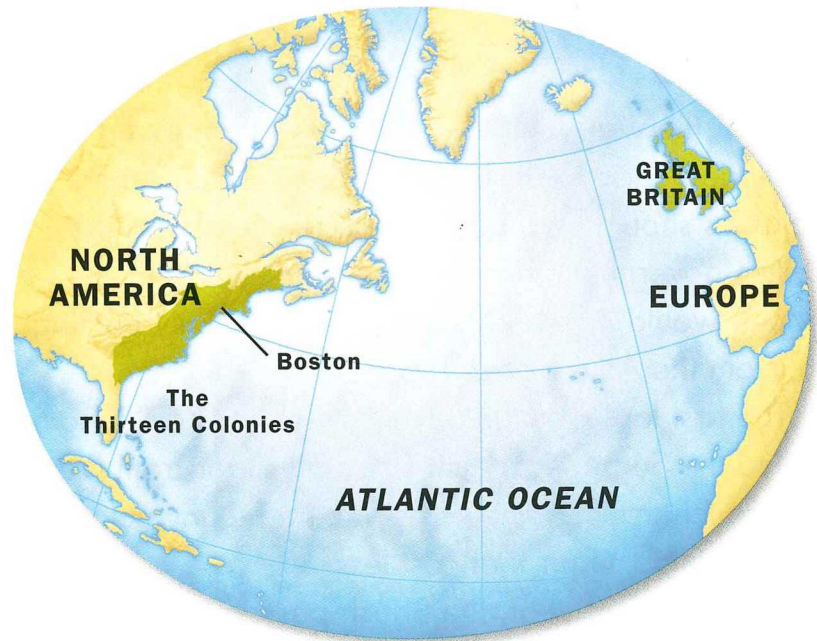


This is a map of the Thirteen Colonies.

Great Britain and the Colonies in 1763

When the French and Indian War ended in 1763, Great Britain had won most of France's North American territories. King George III of Great Britain now had the time to govern the colonies more closely. However, new ideas would make it difficult for him to control his colonies.





With the war over, Great Britain could pay more attention to its colonies in North America.

People were beginning to talk and write about the rights of the individual. Among the freedoms and rights talked about were the right to own property and the right to participate in government.

In the Thirteen Colonies, people enjoyed many rights and freedoms. When Great Britain's Parliament and king began passing new laws, many colonists felt that their rights and freedoms were being threatened.



Taxing the Colonies

After the war with France Great Britain owed a lot of money. Many British leaders felt that the American colonies should help pay these debts. In 1764 the British government began passing laws that they hoped would increase **revenues**, or money coming in, from the American colonies.

The first law was the Revenue Act of 1764, also called the Sugar Act. It set taxes on sugar from French and Dutch traders. The taxes angered many colonists. They wanted sugar that cost less.

The following year, the British passed the Stamp Act. This required colonists to pay a tax on business and legal papers. The colonists were angry, and many refused to pay.



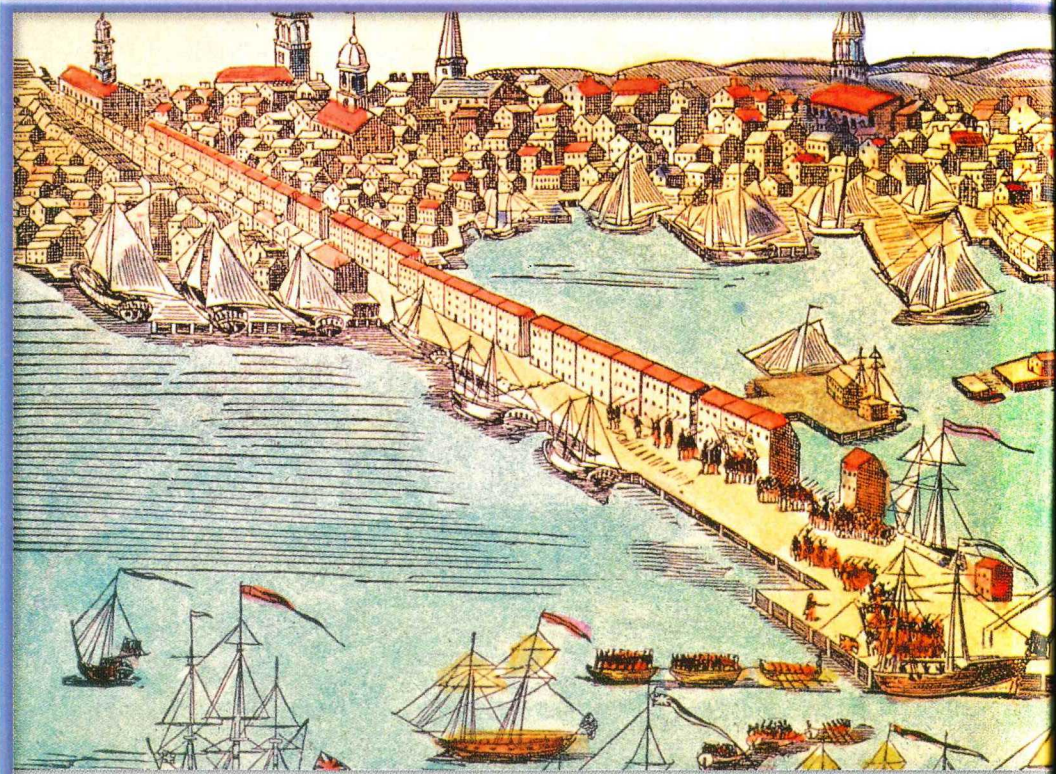


Tax stamps such as the ones on these pages showed that a tax had been paid.

Representatives from several colonies met in New York to speak out against the Stamp Act. They believed that only their elected representatives could tax them, but they had no representatives in Parliament. So Parliament should not tax the colonies. They said that ignoring their rights was **tyranny**, or the cruel or unfair use of power.

When colonists stopped buying British goods, it hurt British businesses. The Stamp Act was **repealed**, or canceled, in 1766 but another law was passed that said that Parliament could make laws for the colonies.

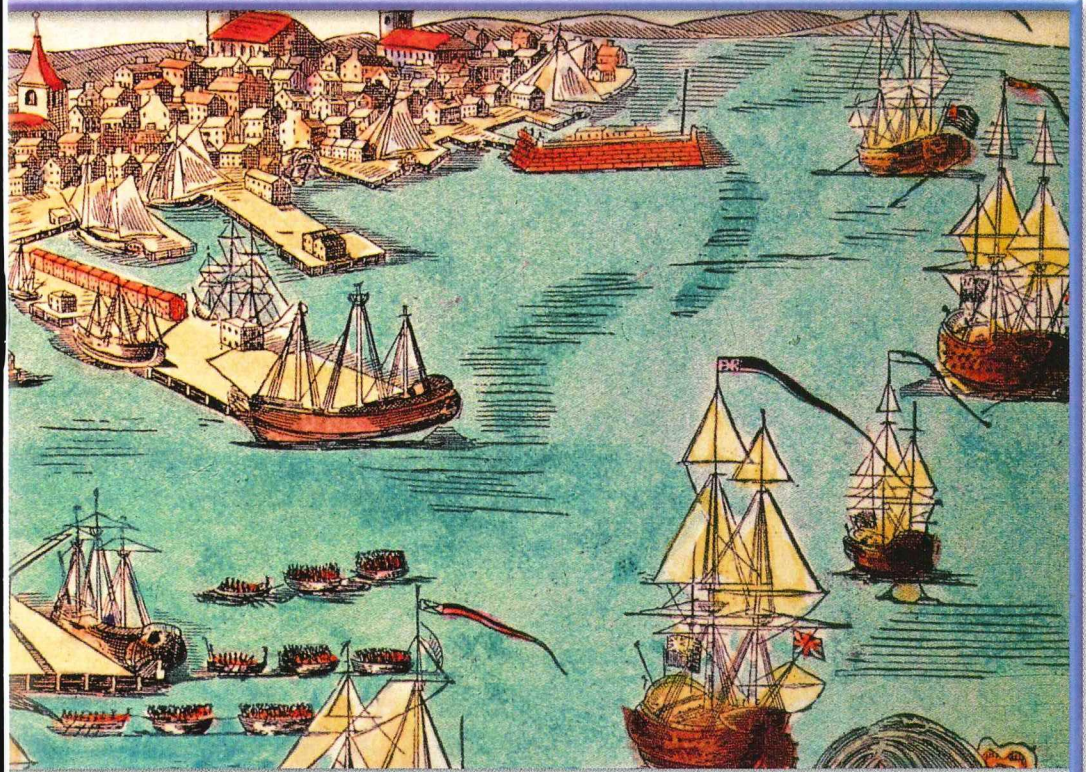




Parliament also passed the Quartering Act in 1765. This law required colonists to provide food, drink, housing, coal or firewood, and candles to troops in their towns.

Colonists often provided fewer supplies than the soldiers needed. The New York Assembly refused to assist with quartering British troops.





British soldiers arrive at Long Wharf, Boston Harbor in 1768. .

In 1767 Britain passed laws called the Townshend Acts. One of these laws said that the New York Assembly could not do business until it obeyed the Quartering Act. Another law created **tariffs**, or taxes, on many imported goods. In 1768 soldiers were sent to Boston to make people obey the Townshend Acts.

Angry colonists organized **boycotts** of British goods. On March 5, 1770, the British Parliament agreed to repeal some of the taxes. However, it did not repeal the tax on tea.



Violence in Boston

The people of Boston were not happy that Great Britain had sent more soldiers to their town. Fistfights became common between soldiers and colonists.

On March 5, 1770, an unfriendly crowd surrounded a group of British soldiers. Some people who were there said that people began yelling at the soldiers and throwing things at them. The soldiers fired into the crowd. Three people were killed and two more died later.

Patriots called the incident a **massacre**, or the needless killing of a large number of people. The Patriots called the incident the Boston Massacre. They used stories of the event to stir up anti-British feelings among the colonists.

Samuel Adams, a Patriot leader, thought that using soldiers to make people obey the Townshend Acts was wrong. He said that the Boston Massacre was a battle for American liberty.



The British soldiers were put on trial. John Adams, a cousin of Samuel Adams, defended them. Adams said that the crowd had started the fight with the soldiers, so the soldiers were innocent of murder. Two of the soldiers were found guilty of manslaughter, which meant they had not planned on killing anyone.



This engraving of the Boston Massacre is by Paul Revere. It helped build bad feelings against the British.



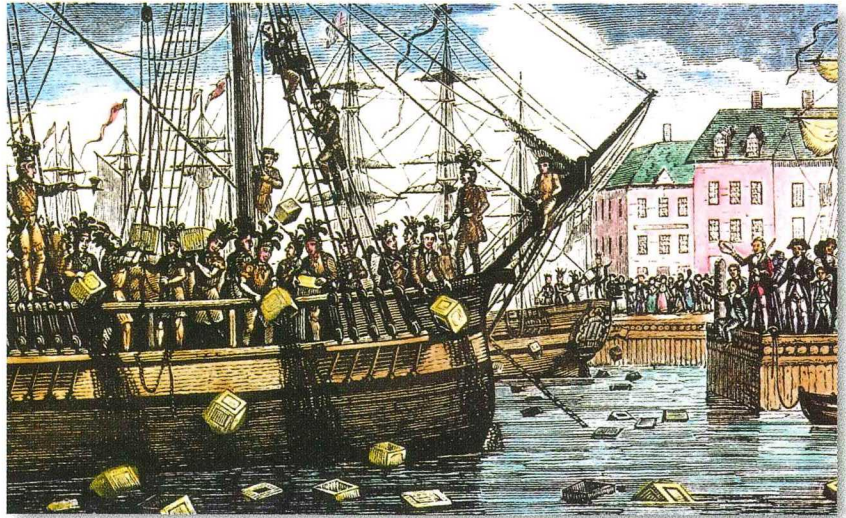
After the Boston Massacre

The British troops left Boston shortly after the Boston Massacre. In 1772 Samuel Adams and other Boston leaders formed a Committee of Correspondence. Members sent correspondence, or letters, to other communities. These letters kept people informed of events and helped unite the colonies.

Samuel Adams also organized people against the Tea Act, a law that made it easier for the East India Company to sell tea to the colonies. The East India Company did not have to pay high taxes, so their tea prices were the lowest available. In spite of the lower price, the colonists would not buy the tea.

This is the Boston Massacre Monument in Boston, Massachusetts.





This picture shows the Boston Tea Party.

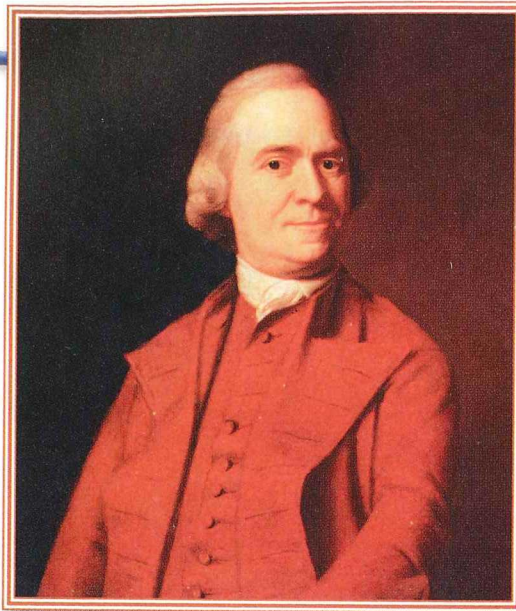
This bottle was filled with tea by T.M. Harris. The date on the label is the day after the Boston Tea Party.



Merchants in most cities canceled tea orders. However, the governor of Boston said that three ships waiting in the harbor should unload their tea—and they should be paid for it.

On the night of December 16, 1773, a group of about sixty Patriots, disguised as Mohawks, boarded the ships and dumped the tea into the harbor. Some colonists collected samples of tea as souvenirs.





Samuel Adams

The Colonies Move Toward War

Parliament passed several laws in 1774 to punish the Patriots for the Boston Tea Party. Colonists called these laws the Intolerable Acts, because they were **intolerable**, or unbearable. The port of Boston was closed, some town meetings were banned, and British soldiers returned.

In September 1774 representatives from every colony except Georgia gathered in Philadelphia for the First Continental Congress. They voted to stop trade with Britain until the Intolerable Acts were repealed. They also agreed to make each colony's **militia** stronger.



In February 1775 Britain announced that Massachusetts was in open rebellion. Two months later General Gage received secret orders to arrest leaders of the rebellion, including Samuel Adams. The Patriot leaders escaped to Lexington.

On April 18, 1775, Patriots in Boston learned that British soldiers were planning a nighttime march to Lexington, to search for the Patriot leaders, and then to Concord, to destroy Patriot supplies. They knew that the militia must be warned!

At 11 P.M., Paul Revere rode from Boston to warn militias and leaders that the British were coming. William Dawes and Samuel Prescott also helped warn the colonists.



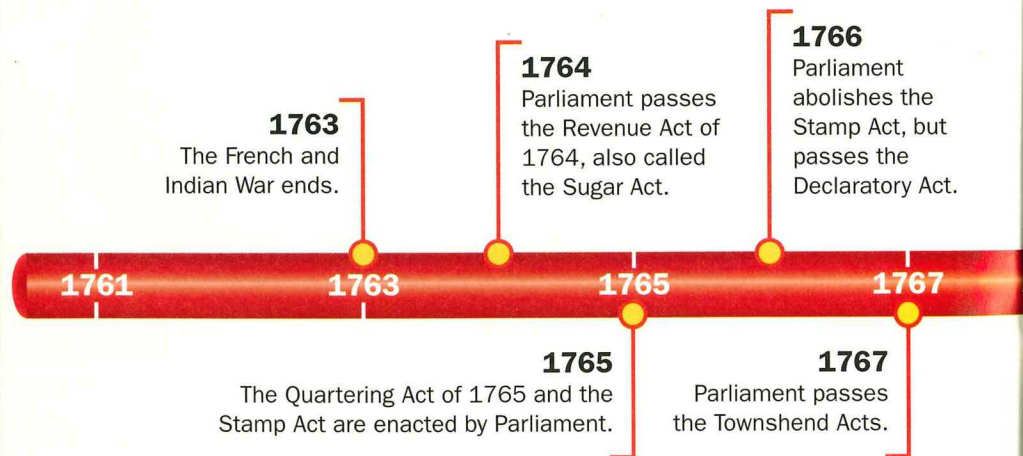
Paul Revere rode to Lexington to warn Patriots that the British were coming.



The three riders reached Lexington, but Revere and Dawes were stopped as they left. Only Prescott reached Concord. **Minutemen** were ready when the British arrived in Lexington.

The next day fighting began between British soldiers and American Patriots in Lexington, Massachusetts. No one knows who fired the first shot, but it marked the beginning of the Revolutionary War in North America.

Key Events on the Road to Revolution



The Shot Heard Round the World

In 1836 Ralph Waldo Emerson, an American writer, wrote about these events. He called the first shot fired at Lexington "the shot heard round the world." The Patriots' success in gaining independence inspired people in many other lands to fight for the independence of their own countries.



This is a letter written by Paul Revere, in which he describes the events of April 18–19, 1775.

1770
March 5:
Parliament repeals the Townshend Acts, except for the tax on tea. The Boston Massacre occurs.

1773
Parliament passes the Tea Act.
December 16:
The Boston Tea Party occurs.

1775
April 19: The Revolutionary War in America begins.

1769

1771

1773

1775

1774
Parliament passes the Intolerable Acts.
September 5–October 26: The first Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia.



Glossary

boycott organized refusal to buy goods

intolerable unbearable; too much to be endured

massacre the cruel and needless killing of many people

militia a volunteer army

minutemen colonial militia groups that could be ready to fight at a minute's notice

Patriot a colonist who opposed British rule of the American Colonies

repeal to cancel

revenue money coming in; income

tariff a tax on imported goods

tyranny cruel or unfair use of power



Write to It!

The slogan "Taxation without representation is tyranny" became popular before the Revolutionary War in America. Write another slogan that Patriots at that time could have used to protest British rule. Explain what the slogan means and why you think it would have been a good one for the Patriots.

Write your ideas on a separate sheet of paper.

Maps

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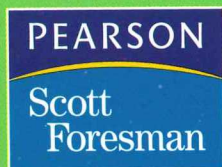
15 ©Revere, Paul. Letter to Jeremy Belknap, [1798]. Manuscript Collection/ Massachusetts Historical Society

Fascinating Facts

- When Britain occupied Boston, there was one British soldier for every four colonists.
- Land was very important to the colonists—nearly 90 percent of them were farmers!
- The British government thought the rebellion would be easy to end. They did not believe that farmers would be able to fight.

Genre	Comprehension Skill	Text Features
Nonfiction	Cause and Effect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Captions • Time Line • Maps • Sidebar

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