

Road to Independence

ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE



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Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Analyze the causes of growing tensions between the American colonies and Britain.
- Explain key British policies (e.g., Stamp Act, Intolerable Acts) and colonial reactions.
- Evaluate the role of leaders like Samuel Adams in organizing resistance.
- Assess the differing colonial perspectives (Loyalists, moderates, revolutionaries) on independence

I Pre-requisites

To be able to properly follow the lesson of American Early Cultures, the students must have some prior knowledge, likewise:

- Basic colonial history.
- Concepts of self-government.

II Warm-up

1. Based on what you know, why do you think the American colonies wanted independence?

III Introduction

The American colonies' journey to independence was shaped by *growing tensions with Britain over taxation, governance, and colonial rights*. As British policies like *the Stamp Act* and *Intolerable Acts* imposed stricter control, colonists organized resistance, uniting in opposition to perceived oppression. Key figures, such as *Samuel Adams*, fueled revolutionary sentiment, while events like *the Boston Tea Party* deepened the divide. By 1774, the stage was set for a decisive struggle between *loyalty to the crown and the demand for self-rule*, paving the way for *the birth of a new nation* .



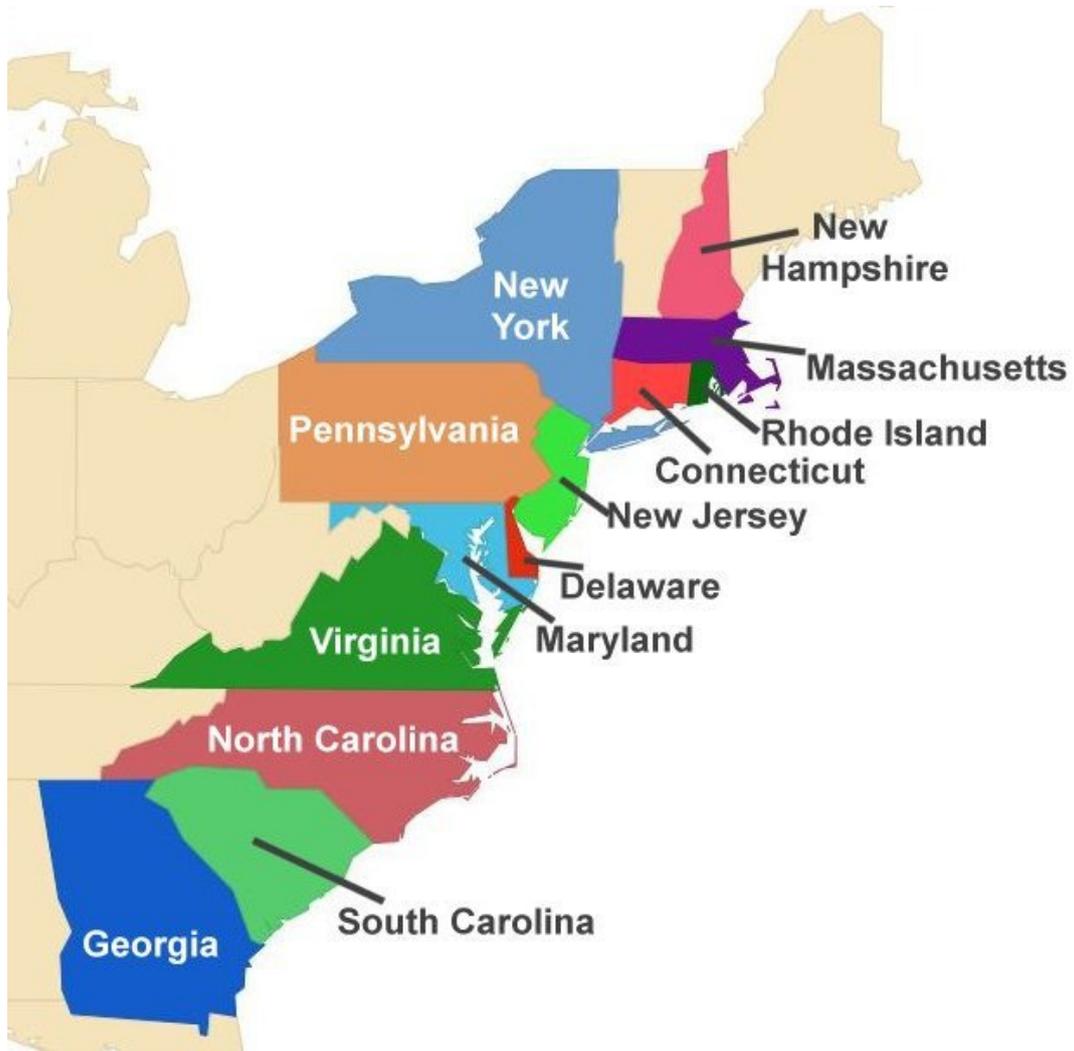
Boston tea

IV Colonial Growth & Tensions



Jamestown colony

The principles of *liberalism and democracy* — the political foundation of the United States — sprang naturally from the process of building *a new society on virgin land*. Just as naturally, the new nation would see itself as different and exceptional. Europe would view it with apprehension. *Britain's 13 North American colonies* matured during the 1700s. They grew in population, economic strength, and cultural attainment. They were experienced in self-government. Yet it was not until 170 years after the founding of the first permanent settlement *at Jamestown, Virginia, that the new United States of America emerged as a nation* ^{*}.



13 colonies

V British Policies & Colonial Resistance



British Reforms and Colonial Resistance

War between Britain and France in the 1750s was fought partly in **North America**. **Britain was victorious** and soon initiated policies designed to control and fund its vast empire. These measures imposed greater restraints on the American colonists' way of life.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 restricted the opening of new lands for settlement. **The Sugar Act of 1764** placed taxes on luxury goods, including coffee, silk, and wine, and made it illegal to import rum. **The Currency Act of 1764** prohibited the printing of paper money in the colonies. **The Quartering Act of 1765** forced colonists to provide food and housing for royal troops.

The Stamp Act of 1765 required the purchase of royal stamps for all legal documents, newspapers, licenses, and leases.

Colonists objected to all these measures, but **the Stamp Act** sparked the greatest organized resistance.

The main issue, in the eyes of a growing number of colonists, **was that they were being taxed** by a distant legislature in which they could not participate.

In October 1765, 27 delegates from nine colonies met in **New York to coordinate efforts to get the Stamp Act repealed**. They passed resolutions asserting the individual colonies' right to impose their own taxes.

Self-government produced **local political leaders**, and these were the men who worked together to defeat what they considered to be oppressive acts of Parliament. After they succeeded, their coordinated campaign against Britain ended.

During the next several years, however, a small number of radicals tried to keep the controversy alive.

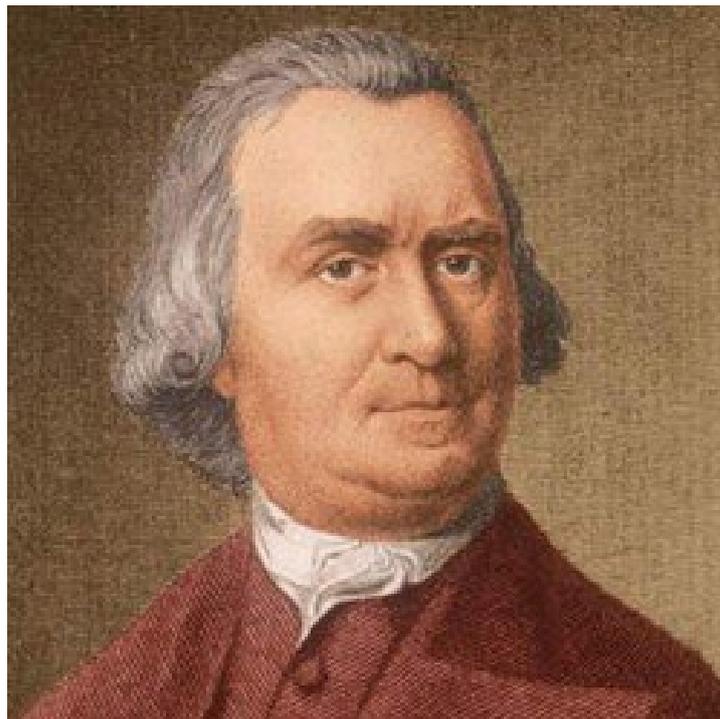
Their goal was not accommodation, but ***independence***.



British Reforms and Colonial Resistance

VI Rise of Organized Resistance

- **Samuel Adams of Massachusetts** was the most effective revolutionist .
- He wrote **newspaper articles** and made **speeches** appealing to **the colonists' democratic instincts**.
- He helped **organize committees throughout the colonies** that became **the basis of a revolutionary movement**.
- By 1773, the movement had attracted colonial traders who were angry with British attempts to regulate the tea trade.
- In December, a group of men sneaked on to three British ships in Boston harbor and dumped their cargo of tea overboard.



Samuel Adams

VII Intolerable Acts



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To punish **Massachusetts** for the vandalism, **the British Parliament** closed **the port of Boston** and restricted local authority.

The new measures, dubbed **the Intolerable Acts**, backfired. Rather than isolate one colony, they rallied the others.

All the colonies **except Georgia** sent representatives to **Philadelphia in September 1774** to discuss their **“present unhappy state.”** It was **the first Continental Congress**.

Colonists felt a growing sense of frustration and anger over British encroachment on their rights.

Yet by no means was there unanimity of thought on what should be done:

1. **Loyalists** wanted to remain subjects of the king.
2. **Moderates** favored compromise to produce a more acceptable relationship with the British government.
3. **Revolutionaries** wanted complete independence.

They began stockpiling weapons and mobilizing forces — waiting for the day when they would have to fight for it.

"Intolerable Acts"

1. Boston Port Act
2. Massachusetts Government Act
3. Administration of Justice Act
4. Quartering Act
5. Quebec Act

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VIII Quiz: Answer the following question in a short paragraph

How did British policies like the Stamp Act and Intolerable Acts contribute to the colonies' desire for independence? Provide specific examples

Conclusion

The Road to Independence was driven by **colonial resistance to British policies**, such as **the Stamp Act and Intolerable Acts**, which united the colonies against perceived oppression. Leaders like **Samuel Adams** mobilized public dissent, while events like the Boston Tea Party escalated tensions. By 1774, **the colonies were divided between Loyalists, moderates, and revolutionaries**, setting the stage for the eventual struggle for independence. **This period marked the beginning of America's transformation into a self-governing nation.**

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