

### Follow-up Activities

- Inspired by Patrick Henry's fiery speech which ended, "Give me liberty or give me death," the rebellion in the colony of Virginia intensified. Ask small groups of students to write newspaper accounts from a rebel perspective and other groups to write from a loyalist perspective reporting on Virginia Governor Lord Dunmore's response to the growing rebel resistance. Students should research the seizure of gunpowder in Williamsburg, the burning of Norfolk (often referred to as the South's Concord) and the issuance of Dunmore's Proclamation before writing their articles.
- Paul Revere was a major figure in the colonial protest against the British, serving as an organizer, chronicler and courier. When Revere did not return home immediately after his famous "Midnight Ride," his wife Rachel wrote him a letter, which he never received since it was taken by a spy. Share the account of Paul Revere's famous night and Rachel Revere's letter to her husband with your class. As a creative writing exercise, ask students to develop a story about Revere's actions had he received his wife's warning. Rachel Revere's 1775 letter to Paul may be found at this Web site: [www.si.umich.edu/spies/stories-networks-1.html](http://www.si.umich.edu/spies/stories-networks-1.html)
- Thomas Jefferson was a persuasive writer who expressed in simple language the reasons the colonies wanted their independence from Great Britain. Ask students to research the Thomas Jefferson Papers and to develop a time line of events that led to the writing of the Declaration of Independence. The Thomas Jefferson Papers may be found at this Web site: [memory.loc.gov/ammem/mtjhtml/mtjhome.html](http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/mtjhtml/mtjhome.html)
- King George III issued a Proclamation of Rebellion after learning of the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775. Read the Proclamation with your class and ask students to analyze its language and tone. Students may be asked to evaluate King George's statement. Was his Proclamation fair and justified based on the historical relationship between the colonies and Great Britain? The complete text of the Proclamation of Rebellion may be found at this Web site: [www.utulsa.edu/law/classes/rice/Constitutional/Proclamation\\_of\\_Rebellion.htm](http://www.utulsa.edu/law/classes/rice/Constitutional/Proclamation_of_Rebellion.htm)
- Despite colonial leaders' calls for freedom and independence, many people in America did not share these "inalienable rights." Abigail Adams expressed her thoughts on this contradiction in her famous "Remember the Ladies" letter to her husband John Adams. Share the correspondence between Abigail and John Adams regarding the rights of women and to describe the nature of their disagreement. Ask students to write letters to John Adams from the perspective of enslaved Africans and Native Americans who were also denied their personal freedom in America at this time. The "Remember the Ladies" letter and John Adams' response may be found at this Web site: [shs.westport.k12.ct.us/jwb/Women/Power/Abigail.htm](http://shs.westport.k12.ct.us/jwb/Women/Power/Abigail.htm)

### Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our Web site at [www.LibraryVideo.com](http://www.LibraryVideo.com)

- [www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt001.html](http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trt001.html)  
The Library of Congress provides Thomas Jefferson's "Original Rough Draught" of the Declaration of Independence.
- [libertyonline.hypermall.com/Paine/Crisis/Crisis-TOC.html](http://libertyonline.hypermall.com/Paine/Crisis/Crisis-TOC.html)  
Students may access a series of essays written by Thomas Paine related to the American Revolution, including "Common Sense."
- [www.archives.gov/exhibit\\_hall/charters\\_of\\_freedom/declaration/join\\_the\\_signers/creating\\_the\\_declaration.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibit_hall/charters_of_freedom/declaration/join_the_signers/creating_the_declaration.html)  
The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration's "Join the Signers of the Declaration of Independence" site contains a wealth of information on the process and personalities involved in creating the document and gives students a chance to sign it themselves!

### Suggested Print Resources

- Fradin, Dennis Brindell. *Signers: The 56 Stories Behind the Declaration of Independence*. Walker, New York, NY; 2002.
- Freedman, Russell. *Give Me Liberty! The Story of the Declaration of Independence*. Holiday House, New York, NY; 2000.
- Kallen, Stuart A. *Patrick Henry: Abdo & Daughters*, Edina, MN; 2001.

#### TEACHER'S GUIDE

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#### TITLES

- ORIGINS OF DEMOCRACY (1688-1765)
- CAUSES OF THE REVOLUTION (1765-1774)
- DECLARING INDEPENDENCE (1774-1776)
- THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR (1776-1783)
- CREATING A NEW NATION (1783-1791)

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## DECLARING INDEPENDENCE (1774-1776)

Grades 5-9

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting programs in the *The American Revolution for Students* series.

**Before Viewing:** Give students an introduction to the topic by relaying aspects of the program summary to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

**After Viewing:** Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up activities to inspire continued discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.



## Program Summary

After the French and Indian War, the British government began to pay more attention to their thirteen North American colonies. Colonial protestors claimed that the British were interfering unfairly in colonial affairs, and unpopular British tax laws such as the Stamp Act sparked the cry, “No taxation without representation.” Most colonists believed that some sort of compromise could be made with Great Britain, but others were beginning to consider the idea of breaking away from Great Britain completely.

The First Continental Congress met in 1774 and voted to cut off all trade with Great Britain unless Parliament abolished the hated Intolerable Acts; at the same time, they petitioned the king for help in dealing with an unreasonable Parliament which passed such unpopular measures. The king was not only unsympathetic to the colonial requests, he was furious, determining that “blows must decide” the conflict.

Following the “shot heard round the world” at Concord in 1775, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. Despite one final attempt at reconciliation with Great Britain, colonial leaders, sparked by the influential words of Thomas Paine, determined that independence was the only option. Thomas Jefferson was appointed the responsibility of writing a declaration of independence that would announce the final break with Great Britain and set the course for war.

## Time Line

**1774** — Thomas Jefferson writes “A Summary View of the Rights of British America.”

**1774** — The First Continental Congress meets in Philadelphia.

**1775** — The Battles of Lexington and Concord take place.

**1775** — The Battle of Bunker Hill occurs.

**1775** — The colonies send King George III the Olive Branch Petition.

**1775** — King George III issues a Proclamation of Rebellion.

**1775** — Lord Dunmore’s Proclamation promises freedom to enslaved Africans who fight for the British.

**1776** — Thomas Paine publishes “Common Sense.”

**1776** — The Committee of Five is appointed to prepare a Declaration of Independence.

**1776** — The Second Continental Congress approves the final version of the Declaration.

## Vocabulary

**Lexington and Concord** — Two towns outside of Boston, Massachusetts where fighting between British troops and colonial militiamen took place in April 1775. Concord became known as the place where the “shot heard round the world” was fired.

**Boston Tea Party** — An organized colonial protest against the Tea Act in which Massachusetts colonists destroyed thousands of dollars worth of British tea in 1773. *(Continued)*

**Parliament** — The legislative body of Great Britain, consisting of a king or queen, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Other countries also have legislatures called parliaments.

**The Intolerable Acts** — Measures passed by Parliament that were intended to punish Boston for destruction of British tea during the Boston Tea Party.

**First Continental Congress** — A meeting held in Philadelphia in 1774 in which representatives from the colonies spoke about their problems with the British.

**Minutemen** — Volunteer forces in Massachusetts who were ready to act at “a minute’s warning.”

**Sons of Liberty** — A secret society of colonial patriots originally formed in 1765 to oppose the Stamp Act.

**Second Continental Congress** — A group of colonial representatives who gathered in Philadelphia in 1775 to talk about their problems with the British. The group voted to form a committee to write the Declaration of Independence.

**Continental Army** — The name of the army of colonists led by George Washington which fought in the Revolutionary War.

**French and Indian War** — An 18th century struggle between Great Britain and France for control of North America.

**Olive Branch Petition** — A July 1775 document sent by the Second Continental Congress to King George III pleading for a peaceful solution to the colonial crisis.

**Proclamation of Rebellion** — A statement issued by King George III in August 1775 that accused the Americans of being traitors.

**militia** — A group of citizens that protects its area in times of conflict.

**“Common Sense”** — The title of a pamphlet published by Thomas Paine in 1776 that became highly influential in persuading Americans to join in the move toward independence.

**Declaration of Independence** — A document issued on July 4, 1776, which declared that the American colonies were free and independent states.

**“A Summary View of the Rights of British America”** — An important document written by Thomas Jefferson in 1774 to argue that the British had no right to rule the colonies.

**Committee of Five** — A group selected by the Second Continental Congress to prepare a declaration of independence. The group chose Thomas Jefferson to write the document.

## Pre-viewing Discussion

- Ask students about the significance of the date July 4, 1776. What do Americans celebrate on July 4th? *(Continued)*

- Define in your own words terms that are used in the Declaration of Independence such as “unalienable rights,” “all men are created equal,” and “pursuit of happiness.”
- Who are the people known for their roles in declaring independence from Great Britain? What were their roles during the American Revolution?

## Focus Questions

1. What was the purpose and effect of the Intolerable Acts on the city of Boston?
2. Describe the attitude of the First Continental Congress towards Parliament and King George III.
3. Who were the “minutemen”?
4. How did King George respond to the petition sent to him by the First Continental Congress?
5. What roles did Paul Revere, William Dawes and Dr. Samuel Prescott play at Lexington and Concord?
6. Why was George Washington considered the obvious choice to lead the Continental Army?
7. What was the result of the Battle of Bunker Hill? How did King George III respond?
8. Describe the military force George Washington had when he arrived in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
9. Why is “Common Sense” considered to be such a groundbreaking pamphlet?
10. What did Lord Dunmore propose to enslaved Africans?
11. Why was Thomas Jefferson chosen to write the Declaration of Independence?
12. Why did Jefferson’s references to slavery not appear in the final version of the Declaration?

## Follow-up Discussion

- Benjamin Franklin wrote that he would do anything to prevent war with such “near relations” across the ocean. What would your opinion have been if you were an American colonist at the time? Would you have been a loyalist or a patriot? Why?
- Ask students to consider the difficult situation that existed between the colonies and Great Britain. Were the hostilities that occurred at Lexington and Concord unavoidable? What could either side have done to prevent war?
- The British reacted to the Boston Tea Party by passing several laws that threatened to cripple the city of Boston. Were these laws justified? Explain the effect the Intolerable Acts had on Massachusetts and describe their role in sparking the colonial desire for independence.