

Study Guide Social Studies Chapter 6 Massachusetts in the American Revolution

- The American Revolution is the story of how our country came to be. A **revolution** is when people fight to replace one government with a different government.
- By the 1760s, England had **13** American colonies. Massachusetts was one of them.
- The British needed money to pay for the wars they had fought. They needed to pay for the soldiers sent to America to protect the colonists from the Native Americans. To raise money, they taxed the colonists. A **tax** is money people must pay to the government.
- The British taxed foods such as sugar and tea that the colonists used almost every day. Then came the **Stamp Act**. It said that certain papers the colonists used had to have special stamps on them. The colonists had to pay for stamps to buy and use letters, newspapers, and playing cards.
- The colonists did not have a say in what laws or taxes were passed in England. They wanted to send a few people to England to speak for them. But England wouldn't let the colonists send representatives to government meetings. The colonists thought this was unfair. They said there should be **no taxation without representation**.
- The colonists were very unhappy about the high taxes. They protested by not buying British goods. The people stopped buying tea, sugar, cloth, and other items from British merchants. To get things back in control, the British sent soldiers to Boston. Most of the soldiers stayed in the homes of the colonists. The colonists did not like having the soldiers so close.
- After the protesting, the British stopped most of the taxes, except the tax on tea. A group of colonists met to talk about what they should do. They called themselves the **Sons of Liberty**. The men decided to rebel by going to the wharf and throwing the tea overboard off of British merchant ships. They ruined thousands of dollars worth of tea that night. It is known as **The Boston Tea Party**.
- The British were angry. The king punished the colonists by closing the port of Boston until the colonists paid for the spoiled tea. No ships with goods to sell could move in or out of the harbor. Boston was a busy trading city, and many peoples' jobs depended on using the port, so this was a very harsh punishment.

### **Patriots vs. Loyalists**

**Patriots** were the colonists who wanted to break from England and rule themselves as a new country. They wanted independence. They would do whatever it took to be free, including going to war against England.

**Loyalists** were the colonists who were loyal to England. They wanted the taxes to stop, but they did not want to go to war because they were loyal to England.

- People from all of the 13 colonies decided to work together. They wrote letters back and forth telling each other what was happening in their colonies. Leaders from all of the colonies met in Philadelphia to talk about their problems with England. This was called the First Continental Congress. A **congress** is a group of representatives who meet to work out a problem.

- The people of Massachusetts decided to get ready for war-just in case. They set up militia units and collected weapons that they kept in the town of Concord. They asked young men to sign up to fight. Some would be **minutemen**. The minutemen would be the first to go and fight if there was trouble. They got their name because they had to be ready in minutes.
- **Paul Revere** was working as an **express rider** for the Patriots. It was his job to carry news and messages to other places. This was an important job in the 1770s because there were no phones, radios, or computers. One April night, Revere was told to ride to Lexington. He had to warn Sam Adams and John Hancock that British troops were coming to arrest them and steal the supplies that were hidden in Concord.
- Two other riders joined Paul Revere. Their names were **William Dawes** and **Dr. Samuel Prescott**. These three men were able to warn the colonists in time that the British soldiers were coming!
- Many important battles during the American Revolution took place in Massachusetts, including the **Battles of Lexington and Concord** and the **Battle of Bunker Hill**. The first shot in Concord is known as the "*shot heard round the world.*"
- The colonists surprised the British soldiers by using a different kind of fighting. The colonists hid behind trees, barns, and stone walls. They dug trenches in hills and surprised the British troops. The **element of surprise** was an important tactic used by the colonists.
- More and more colonists wanted independence. Leaders met again in Philadelphia. This time, the meeting was called the Second Continental Congress. The leaders agreed to break away from England and officially start their own country.
- The leaders of the colonists decided to send a letter to the whole world. They called the letter a declaration. A **declaration** makes something known to everyone. It is like an announcement. Thomas Jefferson wrote the **Declaration of Independence**. This document explained why the colonists wanted to be free and what type of government their new country would use.
- The Declaration of Independence was approved on **July 4, 1776**. Every July 4<sup>th</sup>, our country celebrates **Independence Day**.
- The leaders of the colonies signed a special copy of the declaration. **John Hancock** was the first to sign it. He walked up to the table and wrote his name in very large letters. He said, "*There! Now Britain can read my name without spectacles!*"
- One by one, the rest of the leaders signed the Declaration of Independence. The states were on their way to being a new country, but it wasn't going to be easy. They still had to win the war.

- The colonists thought that other countries might help fight against the British. The country of **France** sent *ships, soldiers, and supplies* to help. With France's help, the colonists won the war.
- The British did not think the colonists could win, but the Americans won many key battles. The last important one was in **Yorktown, Virginia**. The British finally had to **surrender**, or give up.
- During the war, the leaders planned a government for the new country. They wrote rules for the new government. In 1787, the Constitution was approved. To this day, the laws of government are based on the **Constitution**. An important part of the Constitution is that the citizens have a say in the government by voting for their elected leaders.

### **Monarchy vs. Democracy**

**Monarchy** a form of government in which one person (usually a king or queen) is in charge and the power is passed on to family members.

**Democracy** a system of government in which the people take part in elections to vote for their leaders (for example: a vote is held every 4 years to elect the president)