

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. British efforts to raise taxes on colonists sparked protest.
2. The Boston Massacre caused colonial resentment toward Great Britain.
3. Colonists protested the British tax on tea with the Boston Tea Party.
4. Great Britain responded to colonial actions by passing the Intolerable Acts.

The Big Idea

Tensions developed as the British government placed tax after tax on the colonies.

Key Terms and People

Samuel Adams, *p. 99*
 Committees of Correspondence, *p. 99*
 Stamp Act of 1765, *p. 100*
 Boston Massacre, *p. 101*
 Tea Act, *p. 102*
 Boston Tea Party, *p. 102*
 Intolerable Acts, *p. 102*
 Quartering Act, *p. 102*



hmhsocialstudies.com

TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on the new laws passed by the British government.

Conflict in the Colonies

If YOU were there...

You live in the New England colonies in the 1700s. Recently, British officials have placed new taxes on tea—your favorite beverage. You’ve never been very interested in politics, but you’re beginning to think that people far across the ocean in Britain shouldn’t be able to tell you what to do. Some of your friends have joined a group that refuses to buy British tea.

Would you give up your favorite drink to join the boycott?

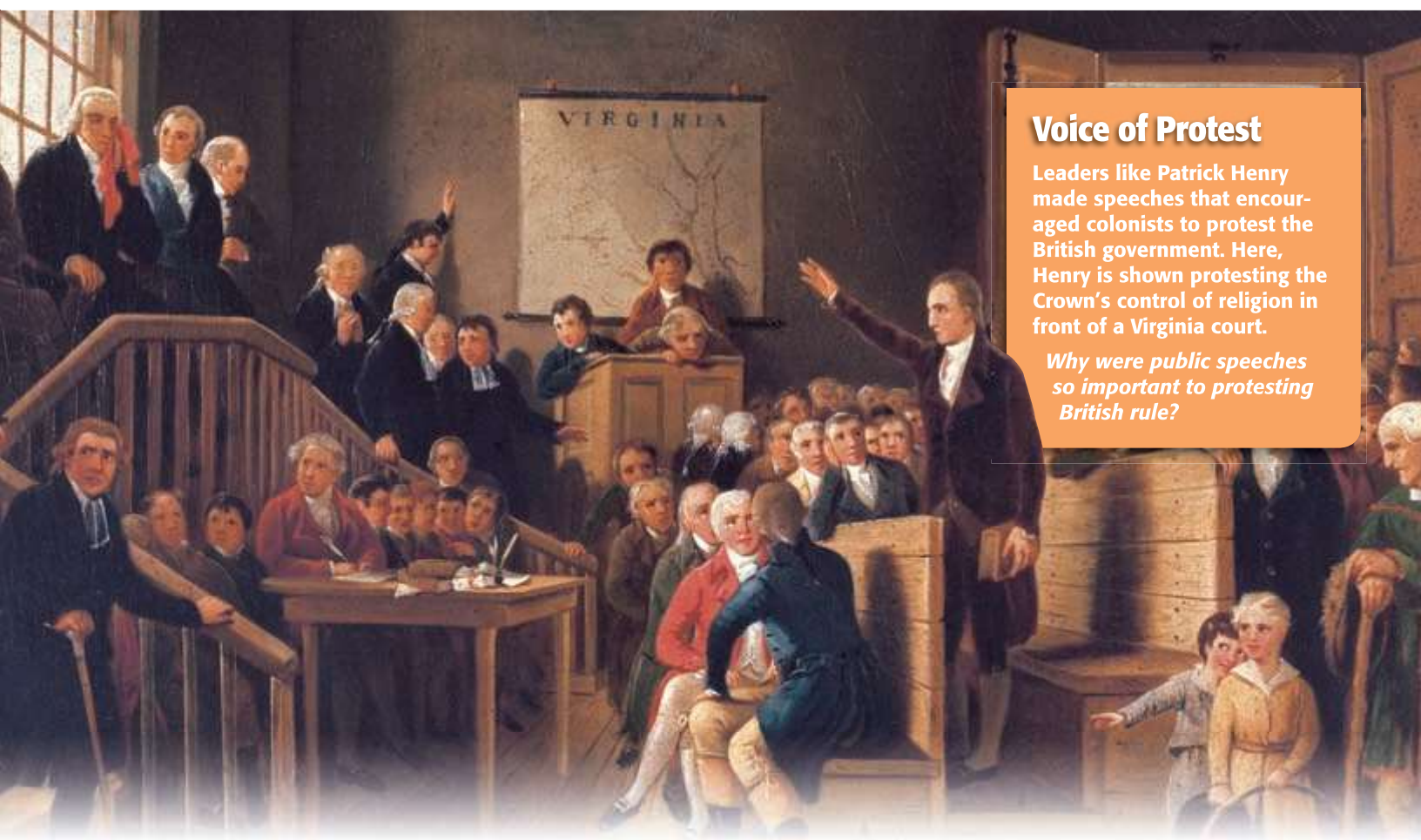
BUILDING BACKGROUND As the British colonies grew and became prosperous, the colonists got used to running their own lives. Britain began to seem very far away. At the same time, officials in Britain still expected the colonies to obey them and to earn money for Britain. Parliament passed new laws and imposed new taxes. But the colonists found various ways to challenge them.

Great Britain Raises Taxes

Great Britain had won the French and Indian War, but Parliament still had to pay for it. The British continued to keep a standing, or permanent, army in North America to protect the colonists against Indian attacks. To help pay for this army, Prime Minister George Grenville asked Parliament to tax the colonists. In 1764 Parliament passed the Sugar Act, which set duties on molasses and sugar imported by colonists. This was the first act passed specifically to raise money in the colonies.

British officials also tried harder to arrest smugglers. Colonial merchants were required to list all the trade goods they carried aboard their ships. These lists had to be approved before ships could leave colonial ports. This made it difficult for traders to avoid paying duties. The British navy also began to stop and search ships for smuggled goods.





Voice of Protest

Leaders like Patrick Henry made speeches that encouraged colonists to protest the British government. Here, Henry is shown protesting the Crown's control of religion in front of a Virginia court.

Why were public speeches so important to protesting British rule?

Parliament also changed the colonies' legal system by giving greater powers to the vice-admiralty courts. These courts had no juries, and the judges treated suspected smugglers as guilty until proven innocent. In regular British courts, accused persons were treated as innocent until proven guilty.

Taxation without Representation

Parliament's actions upset many colonists who had grown used to being independent. The rising merchant class thought the taxes were unfair and hurt business. Many believed that Great Britain had no right to tax the colonies at all without popular consent.

James Otis argued that the power of the Crown and Parliament was limited. Otis said they could not "take from any man any part of his property, without his consent in person or by representation." Colonial assemblies had little influence on Parliament's decisions. In addition, the colonists had no

direct representatives in Parliament. The colonists were subjects of the Crown instead of citizens of England.

At a Boston town meeting in May 1764, local leader **Samuel Adams** agreed with Otis. He believed that Parliament could not tax the colonists without their permission. The ideas of Otis and Adams were summed up in the slogan "No Taxation without Representation," which spread throughout the colonies.

Adams helped found the **Committees of Correspondence**. Each committee got in touch with other towns and colonies. Its members shared ideas and information about the new British laws and ways to challenge them.

A popular method of protest was the boycott, in which people refused to buy British goods. The first colonial boycott started in New York in 1765. It soon spread to other colonies. Colonists hoped that their efforts would hurt the British economy and might convince Parliament to end the new taxes.

Stamp Act

The British government continued to search for new ways to tax the American colonies, further angering many colonists. For example, Prime Minister Grenville proposed the **Stamp Act of 1765**. This act required colonists to pay for an official stamp, or seal, when they bought paper items. The tax had to be paid on legal documents, licenses, newspapers, pamphlets, and even playing cards. Colonists who refused to buy stamps could be fined or sent to jail.

Grenville did not expect this tax to spark protest. After all, in Britain people already paid similar taxes. But colonists saw it differently. The Stamp Act was Parliament's first attempt to raise money by taxing the colonists directly, rather than by taxing imported goods.

Protests against the Stamp Act began almost immediately. Colonists formed a secret society called the Sons of Liberty. Samuel Adams helped organize the group in Boston. This group sometimes used violence to frighten tax collectors. Many colonial courts shut down because people refused to buy the stamps required for legal documents. Businesses openly ignored the law by refusing to buy stamps.

In May 1765 a Virginia lawyer named Patrick Henry presented a series of resolutions to the Virginia House of Burgesses. These resolutions stated that the Stamp Act violated colonists' rights. In addition to taxation without representation, the Stamp Act denied the accused a trial by jury. Henry's speech in support of the resolutions convinced the assembly to support some of his ideas.

Repealing the Stamp Act

In Boston the members of the Massachusetts legislature called for a Stamp Act Congress. In October 1765, delegates from nine colonies met in New York. They issued a declaration that the Stamp Act was a violation of their rights and liberties.

Pressure on Parliament to repeal, or do away with, the Stamp Act grew quickly. A group of London merchants complained that their trade suffered from the colonial boycott. Parliament repealed the Stamp Act in 1766.

Members of Parliament were upset that colonists had challenged their authority. Thus, Parliament issued the Declaratory Act, which stated that Parliament had the power to make laws for the colonies "in all cases whatsoever." The Declaratory Act further worried the colonists. The act stripped away much of their independence.

Townshend Acts

In June 1767 Parliament passed the Townshend Acts. These acts placed duties on glass, lead, paints, paper, and tea. To enforce the Townshend Acts, British officials used writs of assistance. These allowed tax collectors to search for smuggled goods. Colonists hated the new laws because they took power away from colonial governments.

The colonists responded to the Townshend Acts by once again boycotting many British goods. Women calling themselves the Daughters of Liberty supported the boycott. In February 1768 Samuel Adams wrote a letter arguing that the laws violated the legal rights of the colonists. The Massachusetts legislature sent the letter to other colonies' legislatures, who voted to join the protest.

At the same time, tax collectors in Massachusetts seized the ship *Liberty* on suspicion of smuggling. This action angered the ship's owner and the Sons of Liberty. They attacked the houses of customs officials in protest. In response, the governor broke up the Massachusetts legislature. He also asked troops to restore order. British soldiers arrived in Boston in October 1768.

READING CHECK **Sequencing** What series of events led to the arrival of British troops in Boston in 1768?

Primary Source

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

The Boston Massacre

An account of the Boston Massacre appeared in the Boston Gazette and Country Journal soon after the event.

"The People were immediately alarmed with the Report of this horrid Massacre, the Bells were set a Ringing, and great Numbers soon assembled at the Place where this tragical Scene had been acted; their Feelings may be better conceived than expressed; and while some were taking Care of the Dead and Wounded, the Rest were in Consultation what to do in these dreadful Circumstances.

But so little intimidated were they [Bostonians], notwithstanding their being within a few Yards of the Main Guard, and seeing the 29th Regiment under Arms, and drawn up in King street; that they kept their Station and appeared, as an Officer of Rank expressed it, ready to run upon the very Muzzles of their Muskets."

—*Boston Gazette and Country Journal*, March 12, 1770



ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES

Why do you think the people described were not intimidated by the soldiers?

Boston Massacre

Many Bostonians saw the presence of British troops as a threat by the British government against its critics in Massachusetts. Some colonists agreed with Samuel Adams, who said, "I look upon [British soldiers] as foreign enemies." The soldiers knew that they were not welcome. Both sides resented each other, and name-calling, arguments, and fights between Bostonians and the soldiers were common.

The tension exploded on March 5, 1770. A lone British soldier standing guard had an argument with a colonist and struck him. A crowd gathered around the soldier, throwing snowballs and shouting insults. Soon a small number of troops arrived. The crowd grew louder and angrier by the moment. Some yelled, "Come on you rascals . . . Fire if you dare!" Suddenly, the soldiers fired into the crowd, instantly killing three men, including sailor Crispus Attucks. "Half Indian, half negro, and altogether rowdy," as he was called, Attucks is the best-remembered casualty of the incident. Two others died within a few days.

Samuel Adams and other protesters quickly spread the story of the shootings. They used it as propaganda—a story giving only one side in an argument—against the British. Colonists called the shootings the **Boston Massacre**. Paul Revere created an elaborate color print titled "The Bloody Massacre perpetrated in King Street" (above).

The soldiers and their officer, Thomas Preston, were charged with murder. Two Boston lawyers, Josiah Quincy and John Adams—Samuel Adams's cousin—agreed to defend the soldiers. They argued that the troops had acted in self-defense. The Boston jury agreed, finding Preston and six soldiers not guilty. Two soldiers were convicted of killing people in the crowd by accident. These men were branded on the hand and released. The trial helped calm people down, but many were still angry at the British.

READING CHECK Analyzing What was the significance of the Boston Massacre?

The Road to Revolution

Colonists reacted to British laws with anger and violence. Parliament continued to pass tax after tax.



1764 The Sugar Act

The Sugar Act is passed to raise money from the colonies for Britain.

Samuel Adams founds the Committees of Correspondence to improve communication among the colonies.



1765 The Stamp Act

The Stamp Act taxes newspapers, licenses, and colonial paper products.

A series of resolutions is published stating that the Stamp Act violates the rights of colonists.

British Actions

Colonists' Reactions

The Boston Tea Party

To reduce tensions in the colonies, Parliament repealed almost all of the Townshend Acts. However, it kept the tax on tea. British officials knew that the colonial demand for tea was high despite the boycott. But colonial merchants were smuggling most of this imported tea and paying no duty on it.

The British East India Company offered Parliament a solution. The company had huge amounts of tea but was not allowed to sell it directly to the colonists. If the company could sell directly to the colonists, it could charge low prices and still make money. Cheaper tea might encourage colonists to stop smuggling. Less smuggling would result in more tax money.

Parliament agreed and passed the **Tea Act** in 1773, which allowed the British East India Company to sell tea directly to the colonists. Many colonial merchants and smugglers feared that the British East India Company's cheap tea would put them out of business.

Three ships loaded with tea from the British East India Company arrived in Boston Harbor in 1773. Members of the Sons of Liberty demanded that the ships leave. But the governor of Massachusetts would not let the ships leave without paying the duty. Unsure of what to do, the captains waited in the harbor.

On the night of December 16, 1773, colonists disguised as Indians sneaked onto the three tea-filled ships and dumped over 340 tea chests into Boston Harbor. This event became known as the **Boston Tea Party**. Soon the streets echoed with shouts of "Boston harbour is a teapot tonight!"

READING CHECK Summarizing What factors led to the Boston Tea Party?

The Intolerable Acts

Lord North, the new British prime minister, was furious when he heard the news. Parliament decided to punish Boston. In the spring of 1774 it passed the Coercive Acts. Colonists called these laws the **Intolerable Acts**. The acts had several effects.

1. Boston Harbor was closed until Boston paid for the ruined tea.
2. Massachusetts's charter was canceled. The governor decided if and when the legislature could meet.
3. Royal officials accused of crimes were sent to Britain for trial. This let them face a more friendly judge and jury.
4. A new **Quartering Act** required colonists to house British soldiers.
5. The Quebec Act gave a large amount of land to the colony of Quebec.



1770 The Boston Massacre

British soldiers fire into a crowd of colonists, killing five men.

Colonists protest and bring the soldiers to trial.



1773 The Boston Tea Party

The Tea Act is passed, making British tea cheaper than colonial tea.

Colonists protest by dumping shipments of British tea into Boston Harbor.

1774 The Intolerable Acts

Boston Harbor is closed, and British troops are quartered.

Colonists' resentment toward Britain builds.

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING VISUALS

In what year did the conflict between Britain and the colonists turn violent?

6. General Thomas Gage became the new governor of Massachusetts.

The British hoped that these steps would bring back order in the colonies. Instead they simply increased people's anger at Britain.

READING CHECK **Analyzing** What was the purpose of the Intolerable Acts?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW In this section you learned about the increasing dissatisfaction between the colonists and Great Britain. In the next chapter you'll learn about the result of these conflicts—the American Revolution.

Section 5 Assessment



hmhsocialstudies.com
ONLINE QUIZ

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

1. **a. Explain** Why did Great Britain raise taxes in its American colonies?
b. Evaluate Which method of protesting taxes do you think was most successful for colonists? Why?
2. **a. Describe** What events led to the **Boston Massacre**?
b. Elaborate Why do you think John Adams and Josiah Quincy agreed to defend the British soldiers that were involved in the Boston Massacre?
3. **a. Recall** What was the purpose of the **Tea Act**?
b. Draw Conclusions What message did the **Boston Tea Party** send to the British government?
4. **a. Explain** Why did Parliament pass the **Intolerable Acts**?
b. Draw Conclusions Why do you think the colonists believed that these laws were "intolerable"?

Critical Thinking

5. **Identifying Cause and Effect** Review your notes on the laws passed by the British government.

Then add a new column to your chart and identify the laws' results.

Law	Result
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

FOCUS ON WRITING

6. **Gathering Information** Now you have some information about the political situation in Boston in the late 1700s. Why might someone from Britain want to immigrate to Boston at this time? Would you consider the city of Boston, rather than a whole colony, for the subject of your infomercial?