

Causes of the American Revolution

Directions: Read the causes that led to the American Revolution. You will then create a storyboard. Draw a DETAILED picture for each one of the causes. Your pictures should let me know that you read and understand the information.

1. Cost of the French and Indian War

The French and Indian War was a seven-year war between England and the American colonies, against the French and some of the Native Americans in North America. The war ended in 1763 when France finally ceded all of its holdings in North America, west of Mississippi. The most long lasting effect of the war was not negotiated between the parties. Rather, it was the effect the war had on the American colonies. The cost of the war and of controlling the newly acquired territories was high. The British looked to the colonies to help pay those costs. That began the long spiral of events that led to the Revolution.

2. Proclamation of 1763

On October 7, 1763, King George III issued a royal proclamation which forbade American colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains. This was intended to stabilize relations with the Native American population, most of which had sided with France in the recent conflict, as well as reduce the cost of colonial defense. In America, the proclamation was met with outrage as many colonists had either purchased land west of the mountains or had received land grants for services rendered during the war. The colonists felt there was no way any proclamation could stop the natural movement of the Colonists westward.

3. Taxation without Representation

As the British government assessed methods for generating funds, it was decided to levy new taxes on the colonies with the goal of offsetting some of the cost for their defense. Passed on April 5, 1764, the Sugar Act placed a tax of three pence per gallon on molasses as well as listed specific goods which could be exported to Britain. The new Sugar Act hit the colonists during an economic downturn. The passage of the Sugar Act led to outcries from colonial leaders who claimed "taxation without representation," as they had no members of Parliament to represent their interests.

4. Quartering Act

In 1765 the British further angered the colonist by passing the Quartering Act. The act forced American colonists to house and feed British forces who were serving in North America. The act inflamed tensions between colonists and the British. The colonists were angered at having their homes forced open. The subsequent close contact with the British soldiers did not create good feelings between the sides.

5. Stamp Act

The Stamp Act was a tax imposed by the British Parliament requiring that many printed materials in the colonies be produced on stamped paper produced in London, and carrying an embossed revenue stamp. This included legal documents, magazines, newspapers and many other types of paper used throughout the colonies. Like previous taxes, the stamp tax had to be paid in valid British currency, not in colonial paper money. The Stamp Act met great resistance in the colonies. The Stamp Act Congress held in New York City, petitioned Parliament and the King, and local protest groups organized boycotts and demonstrations that spread across the colonies through Committees of Correspondence. Protests and demonstrations often turned violent and destructive. Very soon all stamp tax distributors were intimidated into resigning their commissions, and the tax was never effectively collected.

6. Boston Massacre

In response to colonial protest and boycotting 4,000 British soldiers were sent to Boston to restore order. The daily contact between British soldiers and colonists served to worsen relations. On March 5, 1770, a crowd of 60 town's people surrounded British patrols. Colonists began throwing snowballs at the guards. Suddenly a shot rang out, followed by several others. Ultimately, 11 colonists were hit, five were dead.

7. Boston Tea Party

Protests in the colonies against the Stamp Acts had died down when Parliament passed the Tea Act. The new act granted a monopoly on tea trade in the Americas to the East India Tea Company. On the evening of December 16th, thousands of Bostonians and farmers from the surrounding countryside packed into the Old South Meeting house to hear Samuel Adams. Adams denounced the Governor for denying clearance for vessels wishing to leave with tea still on board. After his speech the crowd headed for the waterfront. From the crowd, 50 individuals emerged dressed as Indians. They boarded three vessels docked in the harbor and threw 90,000 pounds of tea overboard.

8. Enlightenment

The writers of our Constitution more than likely looked at the ideas of Locke, Montesquieu, and Rousseau. They used the Enlightenment ideas of social contract to set up the government, to be governed by the people to preserve their natural rights and for the good of the whole. Federal government was separated into three branches which according to Montesquieu would provide checks and balances to govern them. The Bill of Rights contained the first 10 amendments to the US Constitution recognized that people had basic civil rights that government must protect. The US Constitution set up a representative government with elected legislature to do the will of the people. It is believed that without the age of Enlightenment the Revolution may never have taken place.