

1 Key words

Vocabulary

Underline the word that is spelt correctly in each group. Then skim the text below to check your answers.

- | | | |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. indeppendence | independance | independence |
| 2. religous | religious | religios |
| 3. colonist | collonist | colonistt |
| 4. massacre | masacre | masaccre |
| 5. supossed | supposed | supossed |
| 6. goverment | governmant | government |
| 7. surrender | surender | surrendder |
| 8. treety | treatty | treaty |
| 9. trapped | traped | trappedd |
| 10. controled | controlled | conttroled |

The American War of Independence 1775-1783

Who were the colonists?

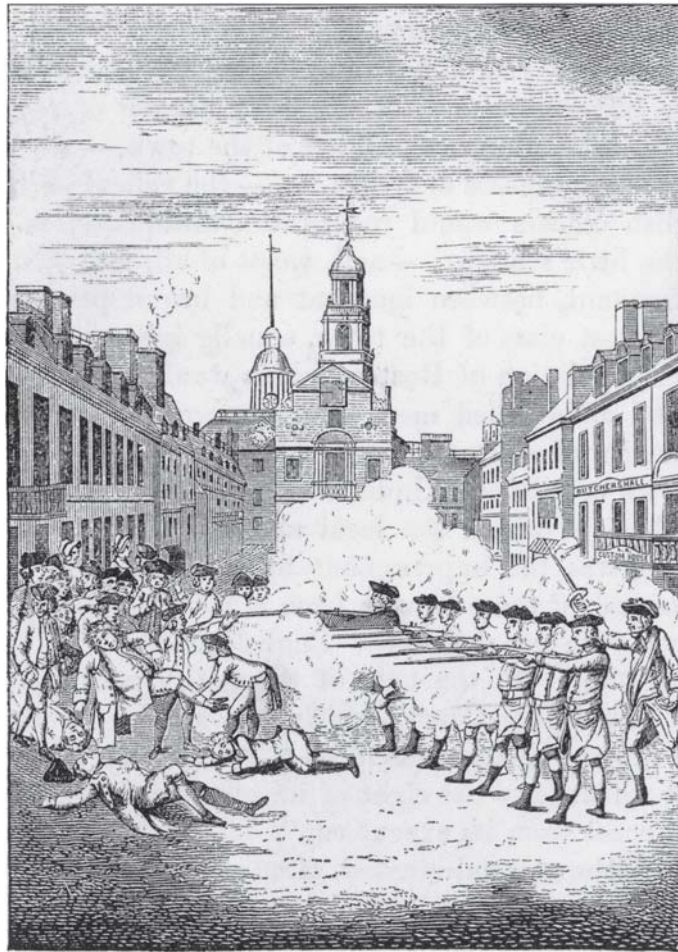


By the 1760s, Britain's Thirteen Colonies in North America were largely made up of people looking for religious, political and economic freedom from the British. Some had actually helped Britain by fighting against the French in America, during the Seven Years' War (1754-1763).

Why were they so angry?

When the Seven Years' War was over, the colonists thought that Britain would reward them in some way. Instead,

Britain used new laws and taxes to make the colonists pay for the British army in America. The colonists showed they were angry. There was a riot in Boston in 1770 and when British soldiers arrived, five people were killed. This incident became known as the Boston Massacre. In 1773, some angry anti-British colonists attacked a ship in Boston Harbour. It was carrying a cargo of tea, and they were supposed to pay the British Government a tax to import it. Rather than pay the tax they threw the tea into the sea. This event is known as the Boston Tea Party.



Boston Massacre. From an Engraving by Paul Revere.

The American War of Independence

The relationship between the colonists and the British Government had worsened over the years and each side became more determined to win. In April 1775, British soldiers were sent to seize colonists' weapons stored at Concord. Shots were exchanged at Lexington, and the war had begun. For the next six years, many battles were fought. Some were won by the British and some by the colonists, but no single battle resulted in a total defeat. In 1781 this changed.

The British surrender

In early 1781 a British force led by General Cornwallis was trapped in Yorktown. A French fleet controlled the sea and a colonial army, with French allies, blocked the land exits. Later in the year, unable to escape and worried he would lose all his men, Cornwallis surrendered. It was clear from this point that Britain could not win the war as it also had with armies busy in Europe and Asia. The war was formally ended by the Treaty of Paris in 1783. Under this treaty Britain recognized the new country, the United States of America.

A mighty effort

Americans often talk about the war with Britain that gave them their independence. There were many heroes in this conflict, as just a small group of colonies fought

a war against Britain, which was one of the most powerful countries in the world at that time. By winning the war they showed others that with enough effort almost anything was possible.

2 Definitions

Vocabulary

Read the texts again to find words or phrases that fit these definitions.

1. people living in a colony _____
2. to do with religion _____
3. to do with how a country is governed _____
4. to do with business or money _____
5. to give something as payment for good service _____
6. an angry meeting of people that leads to violence _____
7. the killing of many people _____
8. against _____
9. expected _____
10. each giving to the other _____
11. a group of ships _____
12. freedom, not relying on someone else _____
13. very brave people, especially in war _____
14. areas of land belonging to another country _____
15. hard work _____

3 Key facts

Vocabulary

Complete the following sentences by writing a suitable word from the text in each gap.

1. You often hear Americans talking about the war that gave them _____.
2. It took a lot of _____ to win the war.
3. Some colonists _____ Britain fight against France.
4. The colonists thought Britain would _____ them.
5. Britain wanted the _____ to pay for the British army in America.
6. In 1770 there was a _____ in Boston.
7. At the Boston Tea Party colonists _____ tea into the sea.
8. The war began in _____ when shots were fired.
9. General _____ decided to surrender at Yorktown.
10. The war was ended by _____ in 1783.

4 The life of Benjamin Franklin

Writing

Complete the paragraph about Benjamin Franklin, writer, inventor and statesman, from the notes below.

Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

- b. 1706 Boston - part of a family of 17 children - had 2 years' formal education
- became apprentice printer for brother - ran away to Philadelphia when not allowed to write - became newspaper owner and journalist
- inventor - bifocal spectacles - lightning conductor.
- although lived England, agreed with independence for colonies - signed Declaration of Independence 1776
- ambassador to Fr. - secured Fr. support for USA - negotiator Treaty of Paris
- returned to USA in 1785, died 1790.

Benjamin Franklin was (1) _____ in 1706 into a family with 17 children.

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He had only two years of (2) _____. He became an (3) _____
 _____ for his brother, but when he was not (4) _____ to write, he ran away
 to Philadelphia, where he (5) _____ a (6) _____ and journalist.
 Franklin was also an inventor. He (7) _____ bifocal spectacles and
 the lightning conductor. Although he (7) _____ in England, he (8) _____
 _____ with (9) _____ for the colonies. In 1776, he signed
 the (10) _____ and became (11) _____ to France,
 where he secured French (12) _____ for the USA. He was a negotiator
 of the (13) _____. In 1785, he (14) _____ to the United States,
 where he (15) _____ in 1790.

5 The life of George Washington

Writing

Write a paragraph about George Washington, the first President of the United States of America, from the notes below.

George Washington (1732 – 1799)

- b. 1732 - born and educated in Virginia - no college education - mother stopped him joining British navy.
- surveyor - in the military 1752-1758 - fought v Fr. in 7 years' war as part of Virginia Militia
- from 1759 to outbreak of War of Independence managed his lands - spoke against tighter Brit. control.
- member of Continental Congress - commanded America forces in Rev. War
- 1st President 1789 - re-elected 1792 - established two-term presidential limit
- died 1799 - less than 3 years after retiring

George Washington was born _____

ANSWER KEY

1 Key words

Vocabulary

1. independence
2. religious
3. colonist
4. massacre
5. supposed
6. government
7. surrender
8. treaty
9. trapped
10. controlled

2 Definitions

Vocabulary

1. colonists
2. religious
3. political
4. economic
5. reward
6. riot
7. massacre
8. anti-
9. supposed
10. exchanging
11. fleet
12. independence
13. heroes
14. colonies
15. effort

3 Key facts

Vocabulary

1. independence
2. effort
3. helped
4. reward
5. colonists
6. riot
7. threw
8. 1775
9. Cornwallis
10. the Treaty of Paris

4 The life of Benjamin Franklin

Writing

Possible answer:

Benjamin Franklin was (1) **born in Boston** in 1706 into a family with 17 children. He had only two years of (2) **formal education**. He became an (3) **apprentice printer** for his brother, but when he was not (4) **allowed** to write, he ran away to Philadelphia, where he (5) **became** a (6) **newspaper owner** and journalist. Franklin was also an inventor. He (7) **invented** bifocal spectacles and the lightning conductor. Although he (7) **lived** in England, he (8) **agreed** with (9) **independence** for the colonies. In 1776, he signed the (10) **Declaration of Independence** and became (11) **Ambassador** to France, where he secured French (12) **support** for the USA. He was a negotiator of the (13) **Treaty of Paris**. In 1785, he (14) **returned** to the United States, where he (15) **died** in 1790.

5 The life of George Washington

Writing

Possible answer:

George Washington was born in 1732. He went to school in Virginia but had no college education. His mother stopped him joining the British navy. After working as a surveyor, he served in the military from 1752 to 1758 and fought against France in the Seven Years' War as part of the Virginia Militia. From 1759 to the outbreak of the War of Independence, he managed his lands in Virginia where he spoke against tighter British control. He was a member of the Continental Congress and commanded American forces in the Revolutionary War. Washington was elected the first American President in 1789 and he was re-elected in 1792. He established the limit of two terms of office for the president. He died in 1799 less than three years after retiring.