

From Protest to Rebellion: The Growing Tensions Between Britain and the Colonies

Put this on the board:

When does protest become rebellion?

Provide the following list to students and have them independently rank these from **least to most serious**:

1. Complaining about a law
2. Writing a newspaper article criticizing the government
3. Boycotting goods
4. Organizing a protest
5. Refusing to obey an official
6. Attacking a government official
7. Destroying government property
8. Attacking military personnel

How did a series of British policies and colonial responses transform disagreements between Britain and the colonies into organized resistance?

Learning Targets

Students will:

- Analyze primary and secondary sources for **purpose, perspective, and historical context**.
- Identify **long-term causes versus immediate/triggering events**.
- Connect British policies to specific colonial responses.

Primary Source Investigation

Make copies of each document and assign one document to each group answering the following questions: Each group analyzes one source using:

S — Source

Who created it?

P — Purpose

Why was it created?

C — Context

What was happening when it was created?

E — Evidence

What does it reveal about the conflict?

P — Perspective

Whose viewpoint is represented? What perspective or information is missing from this source?

O - Outcome:

How does this source demonstrate growing tension between Britain and the colonies?

1. Proclamation of 1763 — Summary

The **Proclamation of 1763** was issued by King George III after the French and Indian War. It prohibited American colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains. Britain wanted to prevent conflicts between colonists and Native American nations and reduce the cost of defending the colonies. Many colonists were angry because they believed they had earned the right to settle western lands after fighting in the war. The Proclamation became another source of tension between Britain and the colonies.

2. Quartering Act of 1765 — Summary

The **Quartering Act of 1765** required colonial governments to provide housing and supplies for British soldiers stationed in America. Colonies were expected to provide barracks, food, transportation, and other necessities. If barracks were unavailable, soldiers could be placed in inns and other public buildings.

Many colonists objected because they believed Britain was forcing them to pay for an army they did not want stationed in their communities. The law increased resentment toward British authority and contributed to the growing belief that Britain was violating colonial rights.

3. Paul Revere's Image of the Boston Massacre



4. Newspaper Article — Pine Tree Riot of 1772

THE NEW HAMPSHIRE GAZETTE

Pine Tree Riot Erupts in Weare!

Weare, New Hampshire — April 15, 1772

Colonial Woodsmen Stand Against British Officials

A serious confrontation has taken place in Weare, New Hampshire, between local colonists and a British official attempting to enforce the Crown's laws concerning pine trees.

The conflict began when Royal authorities accused local lumbermen of cutting large white pine trees that were reserved for the British Royal Navy. The trees were considered valuable because their tall, straight trunks could be used as ship masts.

On April 14, 1772, several local men confronted **Surveyor of the King's Woods John Sherman** and **Deputy Sheriff Benjamin Whiting**, who had come to enforce the law. The colonists refused to accept the officials' authority and eventually attacked Whiting and Sherman with wooden shingles and other objects.

The officials were humiliated and forced to leave the area. The incident has quickly become known as the **Pine Tree Riot**.

Colonists say the Crown's restrictions on the use of local forests are another example of British officials interfering with colonial rights. British authorities, however, maintain that the pine-tree laws are necessary to protect timber needed for the Royal Navy.

The confrontation has raised new questions throughout New Hampshire: **How much control should British officials have over the forests and resources of the American colonies?**

As tensions between Britain and the colonies continue to grow, the Pine Tree Riot may prove to be another warning that colonial resistance is becoming stronger.

Historical note: The Pine Tree Riot occurred in April 1772 in Weare, New Hampshire. It was an early act of resistance against British enforcement of the Crown's timber laws and helped demonstrate growing colonial opposition to British authority.

5. Townshend Acts — Most Significant Portions

The **Townshend Acts**, passed by Parliament in **1767**, placed new duties on several goods imported into the American colonies.

The most important taxes and provisions included:

- **Glass** — a tax was placed on imported glass.
- **Lead** — imported lead was taxed.
- **Paint** — imported paint was taxed.
- **Paper** — imported paper was taxed.
- **Tea** — imported tea was taxed.
- **Customs enforcement** — Britain strengthened its ability to collect the taxes and combat smuggling.
- **Writs of assistance** — British customs officials were given greater power to search for smuggled goods.
- **New York government** — Parliament temporarily suspended New York's legislature because the colony had resisted the Quartering Act.

Colonists strongly objected to the Townshend duties because they viewed them as another example of **taxation without representation**. Colonial merchants organized boycotts of British goods, and the Sons of Liberty encouraged resistance. The controversy eventually contributed to increased tensions that led to the **Boston Massacre in 1770**.

6. Sons of Liberty — Warning to Shopkeepers

TO THE SHOPKEEPERS AND TRADESMEN OF BOSTON

A WARNING FROM THE SONS OF LIBERTY

Friends and Fellow Countrymen:

The enemies of American liberty continue to send goods from Great Britain into our ports while Parliament imposes taxes upon us without our consent.

We therefore call upon every merchant, shopkeeper, and tradesman to refuse the sale and purchase of goods imported from Britain until the unjust duties imposed upon the American colonies are removed.

Let no person who values the liberties of America assist those who would profit from the destruction of those liberties.

Those who continue to import and sell these goods should understand that their actions will be known to the people of Boston.

Let us stand together. Let us support American manufacturers and refuse to purchase articles that strengthen the power of those who seek to tax us without our consent.

LIBERTY AND PROPERTY!

**THE SONS OF LIBERTY
Boston, Massachusetts**

Boston Tea Party Video

Show the five-minute Boston Tea Party video.

Before viewing:

“As you watch, identify two earlier events that help explain why the Boston Tea Party happened.”

After viewing:

Think-Pair-Share:

“Was the Boston Tea Party a sudden act of anger, or the result of accumulated tensions?”

Require students to cite **two pieces of evidence** from the lesson.

Whole-Class Historical Discussion\

Ask:

- 1. Was the Boston Tea Party the beginning of colonial resistance—or the result of ten years of resistance?**
- 2. Which British policy contributed most to the growing conflict? Defend your answer.**
- 3. Which colonial response was most significant?**
- 4. Did colonists initially want independence, or were they primarily defending what they believed were their rights as British subjects?**

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Exit Ticket

Exit Ticket

To what extent did British policies between 1763 and 1773 contribute to the development of organized colonial resistance?

Use **at least three specific events or documents** in your response. Your answer must distinguish between a **long-term cause** and a **triggering event**, and it must address whether resistance was occurring outside Massachusetts.