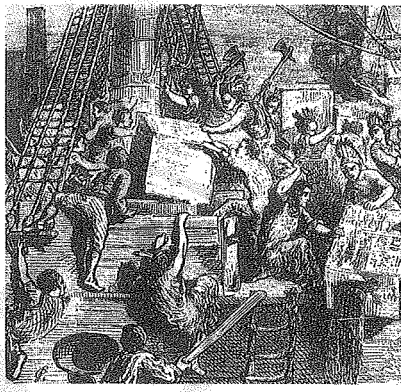


★ NONFICTION ★

The Boston Tea Party

In 1763 England celebrated a great victory. It had won its war with France and, under the peace treaty, had gained Canada as well as France's lands east of the Mississippi River. The king of England was **jubilant**, but he faced a serious problem. His country needed money! The war had been long and expensive. In addition, there would now be the cost of keeping British soldiers in America to protect England's expanded territory. With the king's encouragement, Parliament decided to raise money by passing laws that taxed the American colonies.



Colonists were outraged by these laws. They had no representation in Parliament. Why then, they argued, should Parliament have the right to pass tax laws affecting the colonies? To demonstrate their anger, many colonists stopped buying English goods.

The resentment of British rule continued. Many colonists believed that England's actions were taking away their basic rights. In 1773 the relationship between the colonies and England became even worse. In May of that year Parliament passed the Tea Act, a law designed to help the British East India Company gain control of all tea sales in the American colonies. To avoid the tax on tea shipped from England, colonial merchants had been selling tea smuggled in from Holland. Now they would lose business to agents for the East India Company, and the hated tea tax would have to be paid.

In the fall of 1773 seven ships loaded with tea from the East India Company set sail for America. The ships that arrived in New York and Philadelphia were met by protesting colonists who forced them to return to England. In Boston, three tea ships arrived. The colonists were determined to send them back, but Thomas Hutchinson, royal governor of the Massachusetts colony, refused to allow this. "The tea must be unloaded," he declared.

Day after day the ships remained in Boston, tied up at Griffin's Wharf. The colonists wouldn't let the ships be unloaded. The governor wouldn't permit the ships to leave. With no acceptable resolution in sight, a group of colonists held secret meetings and hatched a plan. "If the ships aren't sent back, we'll turn Boston Harbor into a teapot," they whispered.

On the evening of December 16, 1773, a large group of men dressed as Mohawk Indians rushed down to Griffin's Wharf. To further hide their identities, they had smeared soot and red paint on their faces. Split into three groups, they boarded each of the ships. The men then hauled the 342 tea chests onto the decks, broke them open with axes, and dumped all of the tea into the water. The ships were left clean and undamaged. Only their cargo was destroyed.

This daring act of **defiance** helped set off a series of events that eventually resulted in America's independence from England. Just 16 months after this "tea party," the Revolutionary War began.

POP #3

COMPREHENSION CHECK

1. What is the main purpose of the first paragraph of this passage?
- A. to tell who had won the war between England and France.
 - B. to explain why England decided to tax the American colonists.
 - C. to tell what lands were gained by England in its peace treaty with France.
 - D. to explain why the war between France and England was so expensive.
2. In the first paragraph, it says that "the king of England was jubilant." Which of these is the best antonym for *jubilant*?
- A. miserable
 - B. comfortable
 - C. alarmed
 - D. happy
3. The colonists felt that Parliament's laws that taxed the American colonists were
- A. complicated.
 - B. necessary.
 - C. unfair.
 - D. old-fashioned.
4. Why was tea smuggled into the colonies from Holland?
- A. The British had stopped selling English goods to the colonies.
 - B. The colonists thought that the tea from Holland tasted better.
 - C. The tea shipped from England was being sent back by angry colonists.
 - D. The colonists didn't want to pay taxes on the tea shipped from England.
5. Based on what you read in this passage, you can conclude that Thomas Hutchinson
- A. took part in dumping the tea into Boston Harbor.
 - B. was a member of the British Parliament.
 - C. didn't like to drink tea.
 - D. was a supporter of England and its laws.
6. Why did many of the men who took part in the Boston Tea Party wear Indian blankets over their clothes?
- A. They wanted to get the Mohawk Indians into trouble.
 - B. They wanted to stay warm on that cold December night.
 - C. They wanted to help hide their identities by dressing as Mohawk Indians.
 - D. They thought it would make them look powerful.
7. In the last paragraph, the Boston Tea Party is described as a "daring act of defiance." The word *defiance* means
- A. a violent attack on an enemy.
 - B. a resistance or challenge to authority.
 - C. a celebration of an important event.
 - D. an expedition to a dangerous place.
8. In what year did the Revolutionary War begin?
- A. 1775
 - B. 1773
 - C. 1776
 - D. 1763

R
O
D

3