

Teacher Introduction

These Common Core History Assessments have been designed to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they learn about the Colonial era. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

Similar sets of assessments are available (or planned) for each unit in a typical American history class.

★ *Historical Thinking and the Challenge of the Common Core*

This set includes nine assessments aligned with the first nine Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. We have left out the tenth Common Core History/Social Studies Reading standard, which does not lend itself to assessments of the sort provided here. The set also includes two writing tasks aligned with two key Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards.

These Common Core standards challenge history teachers to develop in students the complex literacy skills they need in today's world and the ability to master the unique demands of working with historical primary and secondary source texts. The Common Core standards are supportive of the best practices in teaching historical thinking. Such practices include close reading, attending to a source's point of view and purpose, corroborating sources, and placing sources in their historical context. These are the skills needed to make history less about rote learning and more about an active effort to investigate and interpret the past.

These assessments are also useful in many ways for ELA teachers. They assess many of the skills specified in the College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards, which put a good deal of emphasis on the reading of informational texts. The Anchor Standards form the basis for all of the various Common Core standards for English Language Arts.

★ *What Are These Assessments Like?*

- *A group of nine reading skills assessments and two writing tasks for each major era of American History*

Each reading skills assessment is based on one of the key Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standards. Two writing tasks are based on the first two College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing, which are the basis for the Common Core History/Social Studies Writing Standards. The two writing standards focus on writing arguments to support claims and writing informative/explanatory texts.

- *Based on primary or secondary sources*

In most cases, one primary source is used. In some cases, an assessment is based on more than one primary source or on a primary and a secondary source. The sources are brief. In most cases, texts have been slightly altered to improve readability, but without changing meaning or tone.

- *Brief tasks promoting historical literacy*

For each assessment, students write brief answers to one or two questions. The questions are not tests of simple factual recall. They assess the student's mastery of the skills addressed by that assessment's Common Core History/Social Studies Standard.

- *Two versions of each of the nine reading standards assessments*

A *Basic* and an *Advanced* version of each assessment are provided. The *Basic* Assessment addresses the Common Core Standard for grades 6–8. The *Advanced* Assessment is based on the Common Core Standard for grades 9–10 and grades 11–12 combined. Each version uses the same source or sources. In some cases, sources have been somewhat shortened for the *Basic* version.

- *Easy to use both as learning and assessment tools*

These assessments do not take valuable time away from instruction. The primary sources and background information on each source make them useful mini-lessons as well as tools to assess student historical thinking skills. The sources all deal with themes and trends normally covered when teaching the relevant historical era.

- *Evaluating student responses*

Brief but specific suggestions are provided defining acceptable and best responses to each question asked in the assessment. The suggestions are meant to aid in evaluating students, but even more importantly they are a way for teachers to help students better understand and master the skills on which the assessment is focused.

The American Revolution Assessment 1

Basic Level

Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8

★ Key Ideas and Details

1. (6–8) Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

★ Using this Assessment

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

The American Revolution: Assessment 1 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 1 for grades 6–8. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence from two documents. It also challenges students to adapt that reading skill to the unique demands of thinking historically as they carefully interpret textual evidence in a primary source from a time in the past and a secondary source account of that same time in the past.

★ Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment

[This section is not available for review on sample pages]

The American Revolution: Assessment 1

Directions: This exercise asks you to read a primary source document and a secondary source document carefully and answer questions about specific details in the documents. In order to better understand the documents, read and make use of the source information located just below each document. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 1: Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

Document 1: A Primary Source

The sad story of colonial oppression began in the year 1764. Great Britain then adopted new regulations for her colonies. Immediately after the Treaty of Paris, 1763, a new scene was opened. The national debt of Great Britain then amounted to 148 million pounds sterling, for which an interest of nearly 5 million was annually paid. As British Prime Minister George Grenville considered plans to reduce this amazing load of debt, he had the idea of raising substantial revenue in the British colonies from taxes laid by the British Parliament. British officials claimed that the late war originated on account of the colonies. Thus they said it was reasonable that the colonies should help pay its expenses, especially as the war ended in a manner so favorable to the colonists.

The common people in America reasoned on this subject this way: "If a British Parliament in which we are unrepresented, and over which we have no control, can take from us any part of our property by direct taxation, they may take as much as they please. We will have no security for anything that remains." On the other hand, the people of Great Britain reacted against the claims of the colonists. They said, "What? Shall we, who just defeated France and Spain, be dictated to by our own colonists? Shall our subjects, educated by our care and defended by our arms, be able to question the rights of Parliament, to which we must submit?" The love of power and property, on the one side of the Atlantic, were opposed by the same powerful passions on the other.

Source Information: South Carolina physician David Ramsay served as a surgeon in the Revolutionary Army. After the war, he served in the Continental Congress. He wrote a history of the American Revolution in the late 1780s. This excerpt is adapted from his history. It summarizes colonial views of British efforts to tax the colonies after 1763, the year when Great Britain defeated France in the Seven Years' War (also called The French and Indian War). In that war, the British won control of France's territories in Canada. This ended the danger to the American colonies from France and its Indian allies. The taxes Great Britain imposed were meant to force the colonies to help pay the costs of that war. This document is a history of the revolution, but it is also a primary source. That is, it offers evidence about past events by someone who experienced or took part in those events.

Source: "Colonists Respond to the Sugar Act & Currency Act of 1764." *National Humanities Center*. Accessed August 1, 2013. <http://www.national-humanitiescenter.org/pds/makingrev/crisis/text2/sugaractresponse1764.pdf>.

Document 2: A Secondary Source

For many decades, colonists in British North America benefitted from what is often called “salutary neglect.” That is, British officials did little to enforce trade restrictions, and they allowed the colonists to govern themselves in many ways. The Seven Years’ War (also called the French and Indian War) put a sudden end to that. Britain’s victory in that war in 1763 was a real turning point. Britain won control over most of North America east of the Mississippi River, including all of what had been French Canada. But it came out of the war with huge debts.

The Sugar Act of 1764 taxed sugar (molasses, actually) imported from Dutch, French and Spanish colonies in the Caribbean. To the colonists, the tax seemed completely unfair. But to Great Britain, it was money badly needed to pay the huge cost of the Seven Years’ War. Was this new form of taxation justified? In many ways, yes, it was. The act did not set a huge new tax on molasses. In fact, it lowered that tax. However, it provided for much greater control to stop colonial smuggling. Smuggling was very common among the colonists. The British were determined to stop it. The British also felt they needed to keep troops in America. Those troops were to protect the colonists, so the British felt the colonists should help care for them. As a result, the British reasonably set up a program to collect from the colonists about half of the expense of maintaining the troops among them.

Source Information: This document is a secondary source account of colonial protests against the British in the 1760s. A secondary source is an account of past events written later by someone who did not experience or take part in those events. As a secondary source, this document is not evidence from the time of the American Revolution. It is a later account by someone writing about that time. This particular historical account was written in 2013 specifically for use as part of this activity.

Assessment Questions

1. Both of these accounts describe the same time period in American history. List at least three specific details about which both accounts agree.

2. Unlike Document 1, Document 2 claims that British taxation policies in 1764 were reasonable. Describe two key details Document 2 uses to back up this claim.

The American Revolution Assessment 7

Advanced Level

Teacher Instructions

Based on Common Core Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–12

★ *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*

- 7. (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.
- 7. (11–12) Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

★ *Using this Assessment*

These Common Core History Assessments are intended to help your students develop key literacy and history thinking skills as they study and master the content covered in their American History coursework. The assessments are intended to be *formative* more than *summative*. That is, they are meant to be part of the instructional process itself, providing you and your students with information at a point when timely adjustments in teaching and learning can be made.

The American Revolution: Assessment 7 is designed to measure students' ability to master the skills described in Common Core History/Social Studies Reading Standard 7 for grades 9–10 and 11–12 combined. It asks students to do something historians must do all the time—integrate evidence found in a wide variety of primary sources presented in many visual and textual formats. It also asks them to judge the relative strengths and weaknesses of visual as compared with written sources.

★ *Evaluating Student Responses to this Assessment*

[This section is not available for review on sample pages]

The American Revolution: Assessment 7

Directions: This exercise asks you to study three primary source documents carefully and answer questions focused on what the sources have in common. In order to better understand these documents and their importance as historical evidence, read and make use of the source information just below or next to each document itself. When you have studied the documents and the source information, answer the two assessment questions that follow.

CCS Standard 7: (9–10) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text. **(11–12)** Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

Document 1: A Visual Primary Source



Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, Reproduction No: LC-USZ62-21637.

Source Information: This print shows the masthead for *The Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser* for October 31, 1765, during the Stamp Act crisis. The Stamp Act required colonists to pay for and affix stamps to all sorts of printed documents. The skull and crossbones in the upper right are where the official stamp required by the Stamp Act was supposed to go. The words there read, “An emblem of the effects of the STAMP—O! the fatal Stamp.” In the upper left corner, readers are told, “The TIMES are Dreadful, Dismal, Doleful, Dolorous, and Dollar-less.” A statement by the publisher William Bradford says, “I am sorry to be obliged to acquaint my Readers, that as the STAMP Act, is feared to be obligatory upon us after the First of November ensuing, (the fatal Tomorrow) the Publisher of this Paper unable to bear the Burden, has thought it expedient to STOP awhile.”

Source: Bradford, William. *The Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser—Expiring: In Hopes of a Resurrection to Life Again*. Woodcut print. 1765. From Library of Congress, *Miscellaneous Items in High Demand*. Accessed August 4, 2013. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004672607/>.

Student Handout

Document 2: A Written Primary Source

At a general meeting of the merchants of the city of New York, trading to Great Britain ... to consider what was necessary to be done in the present situation of affairs with respect to the Stamp Act, and the melancholy state of the North American commerce, so greatly restricted by the duties established by the late acts of trade, they came to the following resolutions:

First: That in all orders to Great Britain for goods or merchandise of any nature, kind, or quality whatsoever, usually imported from Great Britain, they will direct their correspondents not to ship them unless the Stamp Act be repealed. It is nevertheless agreed that all such merchants as have vessels already gone and now cleared out for Great Britain, shall be at liberty to bring back in them, on their own accounts, crates and casks of earthen ware, grindstones, pipes, and such other bulky articles as owners usually fill up their vessels with.

Secondly: It is further unanimously agreed that all orders already sent here from Great Britain shall be cancelled and the goods and merchandise ordered shall not be sent unless upon the condition mentioned in the first resolution.

Thirdly: It is further unanimously agreed that no merchant will sell any goods or merchandise sent ... from Great Britain after the first day of January next unless upon the condition mentioned in the first resolution.

Fourthly: It is further unanimously agreed that these resolutions shall be binding until they are cancelled at a general meeting later to be held for that purpose. In witness whereof we have respectively subscribed our names. This was signed by upwards of two hundred principal merchants. In consequence of the foregoing resolutions the retailers of goods of the city of New York signed a paper which said the following:

"We, the underwritten, retailers of goods, promise and oblige ourselves not to buy any goods, wares, or merchandises of any person or persons whatsoever that shall be shipped from Great Britain after the first day of January next unless the Stamp Act shall be repealed-as witness our hands."

Source Information: This is an announcement of the "New York Merchants Non-importation Agreement; October 31, 1765." The announcement appeared in the *New York Mercury*, November 7, 1765.

Source: New York Mercury. "New York Merchants Non-importation Agreement." *Avalon Project*. Accessed August 4, 2013. http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/newyork_non_importation_1765.asp.



Document 3: A Bar Graph

Source Information: This table shows imports into the thirteen colonies from Great Britain. It is based on actual estimated figures for colonial imports from Britain, in pounds, from *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, Part 2*, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1975, page 1176.

Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970*. Bicentennial edition. Washington: U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1975.

