

Maryland Tea Parties

Teacher's Guide

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Objectives:

At the completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain the causes of the Boston Tea Party and the Chester Town Tea Party.
- Explain how the actions of the colonists to protest the unfair taxes unified the colonies.
- Read and interpret primary sources.
- Interpret the importance of tea and associated tea ceremonies and customs in the British colonies.
- Explain the role of women in the protest of the Tea Tax.
- Demonstrate the importance of a “social tea party.”

Maryland Learning Outcomes:

Social Studies Skills:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of historical and current events using chronological and spatial thinking, develop historical interpretations, and frame questions that include collecting and evaluating information from primary and secondary sources.

- Find, interpret, and organize primary and secondary sources of information including pictures, graphics, maps, atlases, artifacts, timelines, political cartoons, videotapes, journals, and government documents.
- Identify and analyze the causes and effects of historical events.
- Make decisions and analyze decisions of individuals, groups, and institutions.

United States History:

Students will examine significant ideas, beliefs, and themes; organize patterns and events; and analyze how individuals and societies have changed over time in Maryland and the United States.

- Analyze views, lives, and contributions of significant people of the Revolutionary period.

Political Systems:

Students will understand the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the founding documents of the United States and the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens.

- Give examples of how the rule of law has impacted the rights and responsibilities of people.

Geography:

Students will use geographic concepts and processes to examine the role of culture, technology, and the environment in the location and distribution of human activities and spatial connections throughout time.

- Explain how people in Maryland and the United States are linked by transportation and communication.

Economics:

Students will develop economic reasoning to understand the historical development and current status of economic principles, institutions, and processes needed to be effective citizens, consumers, and workers participating in local communities, the nation, and the world.

- Explain how taxes finance government operations and provide public goods and services.

Student Worksheets Used in This Lesson:

- Tea Parties Worksheet
- Tea Party Planning Worksheet

Key Web Sites Referenced in This Lesson:

- Think Quest Timeline, Event Leading to the American Revolution:
<http://library.thinkquest.org/11683/events.html>
- Boston Tea Party web site:
<http://www.multied.com/revolt/Tea.html>
- Boston Tea Party web site by Braden Giacobazzi:
<http://www.kirtland.cc.mi.us/honors/braden/teaparty.htm>
- Chester Town Party web site (from Kent Co, MD):
<http://www.chestertown.com/events/teaparty/>
- Log of *Chasseur's* trade voyage to China, 1815-16:
http://www.intandem.com/NewPrideSite/Asia/Chasseur_Log.html
- Maritime Heritage Visual Archives: *Flying Cloud* and other Clipper Ships:
[http://pc-78-120.udac.se:8001/WWW/Nautica/Ships/Clippers/Flying_Cloud\(1851\).html](http://pc-78-120.udac.se:8001/WWW/Nautica/Ships/Clippers/Flying_Cloud(1851).html)
- Same Old Grind history of tea drinking:
<http://sameoldgrind.com/teahist.htm>
- Historic Oakland Inn, Columbia, MD
<http://sameoldgrind.com/teahist.htm>
- Village Tea Room, New Market, MD
http://newmarketmd.com/vill_tea.htm
- White Swan Tavern, Chestertown, MD
<http://www.chestertown.com/whiteswan/>

Primary Sources Included in this Lesson:

These sources have been transcribed but retain their original language and punctuation. They have been included in the lesson as separate resource pages. Students will need help in reading and interpreting these important historical documents.

- Letter from Ben Franklin to Lord Kames, 1767:
<http://www.intandem.com/NewPrideSite/MD/Lesson18/Franklin.html>
- Letter of Robert Sessions, participant in the Boston Tea Party, to his family, 1774:
<http://www.intandem.com/NewPrideSite/MD/Lesson18/Session.html>
- Chester Town Resolves, from the *Gazette*, May 21, 1774:
<http://www.intandem.com/NewPrideSite/MD/Lesson18/Resolves.html>

Teacher Background:

Familiarity with events that led up to American Revolution will be helpful to put this lesson in the proper context of American history. Although the Boston Tea Party was “the straw that broke the camel's back,” many events and developments had brought the colonies to that decisive moment.

The following concepts serve as a general background for the events taught in this lesson:

- 1) People in the thirteen British colonies still depended on Britain for many goods that they could either not grow or produce themselves.
- 2) The first point of contention between the colonies and England occurred over the issue of imports and exports.
- 3) Parliament decided that the colonists should help pay the cost of the Seven Years War, which was known as the French and Indian War in America. Additionally, Parliament also decided how the payment should be made.

In 1764, the first tax law imposed to raise money to pay for the recently concluded wars was called the Sugar Act. This law mandated that the colonists pay a tax on many manufactured goods coming to the colonies from other places. This tax or tariff especially angered the colonists because they had no part in imposing it. The King and Parliament had taxed the colonists without their consent. Not all of the colonists were angry. Some people, the Loyalists or Tories, approved of the King’s decision.

A year later, the Stamp Act was passed. This was a tax on anything that was printed or written on paper. Again the colonists were angry, but mostly because they had no representation in Parliament. Many colonists began forming committees to organize and speak about their concerns. James Otis, Patrick Henry, Mercy Otis Warren, and Samuel Adams began speaking out against the British government. Their words began to spread around the colonies. People protested in many ways: some people wrote up petitions and gathered long lists of signatures; others printed angry broadsides. Organizations such as the Sons of Liberty and the Daughters of Liberty formed. Still others began boycotting or refusing to buy British goods. Many colonial women began replacing British-made cloth with homespun cloth and grew herbs in their garden to replace imported tea.

Some of the Sons of Liberty protested in more violent ways, such as breaking into the homes of British tax collectors and destroying their property and chasing them out of town. When Parliament heard about the violent response from the colonists, they repealed the Stamp Act. While they repealed most of the taxes, except the tax on tea, they added other laws that affected trade. To demonstrate their authority more clearly, they sent additional soldiers to the colonies. The presence of the British soldiers further angered the people who thought they were being bullied. The most violent of the demonstrations was later referred to as the Boston Massacre.

During this time, the colonists began uniting and thinking of themselves as one country instead of thirteen separate colonies. Samuel Adams suggested that they form Committees of Correspondence to keep one another informed about the actions that were being taken to protest against the British. Letters were delivered by horseback throughout the colonies. A famous letter written by Ben Franklin to Lord Kames describing the political atmosphere at the time is an important primary source to use with the students. It is included in this lesson.

In 1773, Parliament passed another new law. This law allowed a British company, the East India Company, to sell tea in the colonies for a very low price. This would hurt the colonial merchants and the colonists still would have to pay a tax on tea. People everywhere throughout the colonies began to boycott British tea. Many of the port cities refused to allow ships carrying British tea to enter their ports. However, the captains in Massachusetts refused to be turned away. The British ships arrived in Boston Harbor in December, 1773, and shortly after the Sons of Liberty met and decided what action should be taken. They decided to destroy the tea by dumping it into Boston Harbor. Men dressed as Indians dumped over 300 crates of tea into the harbor. This became known later as the Boston Tea Party. A witness involved with this protest, Robert Sessions, wrote the primary source document in this lesson that best exemplifies this action.

To punish the citizens in Boston, the British sent more troops to Massachusetts and closed the port of Boston until the colonists had paid for all the tea destroyed. The Committees of Correspondence quickly spread the word around, and the colonies united and sent goods to the citizens of Boston by the wagonload.

In Chester Town, Maryland, the people held a town meeting to discuss the issue. They passed a set of Resolves (resolutions) not to buy, sell, or use tea until the British repealed the Tea Tax. These Resolves were printed in the *Gazette*, the colonial newspaper. The Resolves are included in this lesson. At this time William Geddes, the tax collector for the port of Chester Town, had a brig, the *Geddes*, lying in harbor with a load of tea aboard. On May 23, 1774, the townspeople, undisguised and in broad daylight, dumped the load of tea into the Chester River.

Another incident that occurred in Edenton, North Carolina, actually became the first political act by a women's group in America. Penelope Craven Barker, wife of the port collector, decided to have her own "tea party." She invited over 40 ladies to enjoy her own special blend of raspberry and mulberry leaves and discuss the situation. Before the tea party ended, the ladies signed a petition to protest the tax on tea. The women pledged, "to drink only apple cider, sweet buttermilk, or cool spring water as long as the King insists on his special tax upon tea from India."

The news of this event and the letter reached Parliament. Ladies taking political action appalled them. An unflattering political cartoon was printed in both the *London Advertiser* and the *Morning Chronicle*. To support the action of Mrs. Penelope Barker and the Edenton activists, hundreds of patriots in Georgia and the Carolinas swore off tea and began ousting the royal agents and tax officials.

Lesson Introduction and Motivation:

1. Ask the students to tell you what they think about when they hear the words, “tea party” (i.e. social event, Alice in Wonderland, Boston Tea Party, Chester Town Tea Party, etc). Show different images from the site or other sources to stimulate thinking. Look at the section on additional sources if you need more suggestions. Explain how the King of England taxed manufactured goods from England to help pay for the Seven Years War. Remind the students that colonists were British and, as citizens, they were still under the protection and authority of England even though the King in many ways had ignored them for a long time. The colonist still considered themselves British and still held on to many British traditions and customs, such as drinking tea. Taxes had been imposed and repealed several times during this period, but the most hated and dreaded was the tax on tea. Making this connection is extremely important for students, since a tax on tea would not be important to them now.
2. Colonists believed they should have more voice in their own governing. They wanted to be represented in the British Parliament. How could the King and Parliament alone decide their fate? The battle cry was “no taxation without representation.” Tensions in the colonies were mounting. Perhaps John Adams said it best after the first shots at Lexington and Concord were heard, “The Revolution was effected before the war commenced - the Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people.”

Lesson Development:

The lesson may be completed as a whole class activity, or by individual students, pairs, or small groups working at a computer.

Activities:

1. Events leading to the American Revolution.

Students first study the historic map of the 13 original colonies on Page 3 of the lesson. Guide them to think of the great distances between the colonies and wonder about the modes of transportation. Using the Thinkquest web site, the students can review a very concise online timeline of events leading up to the Revolution. On their Worksheets, they select and list those which they think are the most important.

2. **Ben Franklin's Prophecy to Lord Kames.**

After reading the letter of Ben Franklin to Lord Kames, students are asked to relate Franklin's prophecy to the colonists' reaction to the Tea Tax Act. Help students to understand this letter. It is a powerful and insightful prophecy.

3&4. **Boston Tea Party and Samuel Adams.**

After reviewing a web site, students are asked to summarize the events of the Boston Tea Party and the role Samuel Adams played in these events.

5, 6, & 7. **Chestertown Tea Party.**

By completing these Worksheet activities, students learn about the Chester Town Tea Party. They will need assistance in reading the Chester Town Resolves, included in the lesson, that were printed in the *Gazette* just days before the incident. This is a very powerful piece, so take the time to use it. Students then go to a site that briefly describes the scene aboard the *Geddes*. Also, make sure the students take the time to download and listen to the voices of the men goading one another before the event and the more sober voices of the women trying to calm the scene. These voices were taped at the annual Chester Town Tea Party reenactment and have been carefully researched.

8. **Comparing of Boston Tea Party and Chester Town Tea Party.**

In this activity, the students compare the Boston Tea Party with the Chester Town Tea Party using a Venn diagram.

9. **Comparing Baltimore Clippers and Yankee Clippers.**

In this activity, students complete a chart comparing Baltimore Clippers and Yankee Clippers. The information needed to complete this chart is contained in the lesson and the linked web sites. In brief, Baltimore Clippers were two-masted schooners that had their zenith before and during the War of 1812 (1800-1815.) Yankee Clipper Ships, on the other hand, were designed and built for the China tea trade a whole generation later (1840-1880). They were larger, three-masted, full rigged ships. Both Baltimore Clippers and the China Clippers (or Clipper Ships) were beautiful, sleek, and fast. They were called "clippers" because they "clipped" time from the voyage it normally took to transit from Britain or America to China.

Thoughtful Application:

As the mother country, Great Britain felt it had the right to tax the colonies and control their trade. Since the people of Britain were paying taxes to support and defend the American colonies, they felt the colonists should have to pay their share. If the colonists received the benefits of being part of Great Britain, they should pay for these benefits. However, many colonists were angry about the new trade laws and taxes passed by the British government. The American Revolution began over tax issues, among other issues. Then, as now, citizens paid taxes for the benefits they yielded

Today we pay taxes for many reasons.

In the Thoughtful Application, students are asked to think about the main idea of this Exploration and combine it with their prior knowledge. They are directed to use this information to design a poster that shows four reasons why citizens continue to pay taxes today.

Scoring Key for Thoughtful Application:

The response demonstrates the ability to examine uses of taxes	
3 Points	Correctly identifies four ways taxes are used.
2 Points	Correctly identifies three ways taxes are used.
1 Point	Correctly identifies two ways taxes are used.
0 Points	All other responses.

Extension Activity:

Encourage your students to plan a tea party. The Tea Party Planning Worksheet is a good guide. Planning the tea party brings many skills to the fore including the opportunity: to design and write invitations, to think about social interactions, to make artistic decisions about arrangements, and to play the role of good host or hostess. Consider inviting members of the community and your administration to the tea party. The students can demonstrate their understanding of colonial customs by following the proper etiquette. Play 18th century music for the event. Tapes are available at your local library or at historic homes, such as the Charles Carroll House. Have the students volunteer to bake some of the scones, cookies, or other refreshments suggested in the lesson. Resource people working as docents in colonial homes in Maryland are available for information or guidance. Your tea party can be a wonderful culminating activity to this lesson.

Additional Extension Activities:

1. If students want to find out more about Chestertown and Kent County, visit the Kent County web site: <http://kentcounty.com/>
2. A great field trip for this lesson is visiting Chestertown where the Tea Party was held. An excellent place to visit while you are in Chestertown is the White Swan Tavern. It is an old inn that still serves afternoon tea.
3. Another excellent field trip destination is the Charles Carroll House in Annapolis. Docents there will teach students proper tea etiquette. Lesson plans are available with the tour.
4. Read the story *The Chester Town Tea Party* by Brenda Seabrooke and have the students determine how much of the story is fiction and how much is fact.
5. To further students' understanding of "taxation without representation," have the principal impose a high tax on ice cream in the lunchroom for your class only, without any discussion or warning.

Additional Teacher Resources:

- Seabrooke, Brenda, *The Chester Town Tea Party*, Tidewater Publishers, 1991.
- Garrison, Webb, *Great Stories of the American Revolution*, Rutledge Hill Press, 1990.
- Knight, James, F., *Boston Tea Party, Rebellion in the Colonies*, Troll Publishers, 1982.
- Meltzer, Milton, *The American Revolutionaries, A History in Their Own Words*, Harper Trophy, 1993.
- Levy, Elizabeth, *If You Were There When They Signed the Constitution*, Scholastic, 1992.
- McGovern, Ann, *If You Lived in Colonial Times*, Scholastic, 1992.