**American Revolution 2.1**

**SSUSH3 Analyze the causes of the American Revolution.**

**a. Explain how the French and Indian War and the 1763 Treaty of Paris laid the groundwork for the American Revolution.**

**French and Indian War**

The desire for territory produced by mercantilism also meant that nations ended up fighting over land and resources. As British colonists moved west, they found themselves fighting French settlers and Native Americans. In 1754, this tension between French and British colonials resulted in the **French and Indian War**. It was so named because Britain fought the war against France and its Native American allies (some Native Americans helped the British). After nine years of fighting, France, Great Britain, and Spain (a French ally) signed the **Treaty of Paris in 1763**. France gave up its claims in Canada and all lands east of the Mississippi River. In addition, Spain ceded Florida to the British as well. Great Britain now stood alone as the one, true colonial power in eastern North America. The British claimed they were protecting the Colonist during the War and therefor the Colonist need to repay the British for protection.

**b. Explain colonial response to the Proclamation of 1763, the Stamp Act, and the Intolerable Acts as seen in the Sons and Daughters of Liberty and the Committees of Correspondence.**

**Document Analysis 1**



**Tensions Rise between Great Britain and the Colonies**

Soon after the French and Indian War, relations between England and its colonies deteriorated. After fighting beside the British against the French, many colonists lost respect for Britain's military. They viewed it as ill prepared and unsuited for fighting on the American terrain. Meanwhile, Great Britain was heavily in debt after fighting to defend its colonies and felt that the Americans should help pay for the expense. It also possessed vast new territories and felt that it needed to find a way to control them. As a result, it took a number of steps the colonists found offensive. The first was the king's **Proclamation of 1763**. It forbade colonists from settling west of the Appalachian Mountains and put the territory under British military control. The proclamation was intended to manage Britain's new territories and ensure peace with Native Americans.

**Document Analysis 2**



**Acts by the British and the Colonist Reactions**

Beginning in the mid 1760s, Parliament passed a series of laws and taxes that infuriated the Americans. One of the most offensive was the **Stamp Act**. Under this law, the British government taxed nearly all printed material by requiring that it bear a government stamp. Many printers protested the new law. In response, a delegation of colonists met in what came to be known as the Stamp Act Congress. One of its leaders, James Otis, protested the tax proclaiming, "**No taxation without representation!**" Under British law, no tax could be imposed except one approved by Parliament. Since the colonies had no representation in Parliament, Otis and others believed that they should not be subject to new taxes. In protest, the colonies imposed a boycott of British goods. A boycott simply means that they refused to buy them, thereby withholding money that would otherwise go to English businesses. Groups known as the Sons of Liberty and Daughters of Liberty sprang up throughout the colonies to support and enforce the boycotts.

The **Sons of Liberty** often used violence to intimidate any merchant or royal official who might otherwise use the stamps. Meanwhile, the **Daughters of Liberty** often used their skills to weave fabric and other products that were usually bought from Britain. Of all the colonies, only Georgia ever issued any of the stamps, prompting angry South Carolinians to threaten an invasion of Savannah. The boycotts, along with violent responses to the **Stamp Act**, eventually led England to repeal (cancel) the law. However, on the same day that it repealed the Stamp Act, Parliament passed the Declaratory Act. This act stated that Parliament had the authority to impose laws on the colonies. In effect, England was telling the colonies that it expected them to comply with British laws whether they felt represented or not. As a result of the Intolerable Acts, many the 13 colonies organized against the British laws. They were known as **committees of correspondence**, and they made sure that the thirteen colonies were working together to resist British rule.

One such group took bold action in December 1773. Recent British laws enabled British traders to gain an unfair advantage in the trade of tea (a popular colonial drink). In protest, Massachusetts's committee of correspondence led a group of radicals who dressed as Mohawk Indians and marched to Boston Harbor. There, in what became known as the "Boston Tea Party," the group raided ships hauling British tea and threw the crates overboard. In response, Parliament passed the Coercive Acts (because of their harshness, the colonists labeled them the **Intolerable Acts**). These acts closed Boston Harbor and placed a military governor over Massachusetts. In addition, England expanded the Canadian border, thereby taking land away from certain colonies.

**c. Explain the importance of Thomas Paine’s Common Senseto the movement for independence.**

**Document Analysis 3**

**… Small islands not capable of protecting themselves, are the proper objects for kingdoms to take under their care; but there is something very absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an island. In no instance hath nature made the satellite larger than its primary planet, and as England and America, with respect to each other, reverses the common order of nature, it is evident that they belong to different systems: England to Europe, America to itself…**

**Source: Common Sense, written by Thomas Paine, January 10, 1775**

**Importance of Thomas Paine**

To deal with the crisis, representatives from nearly every colony (only Georgia did not attend) gathered for the **First Continental Congress** in September 1774. In a statement to the king, the Congress wrote that the colonists had a right to be represented in their government. Since the colonies were not represented in Parliament, they were entitled to govern themselves. Then, in April 1775, all hope of a peaceful resolution was lost when fighting broke out at Lexington and Concord. As British troops were on their way to seize arms and ammunition stored by colonists at Concord, Massachusetts, they were met at Lexington by colonial militia (voluntary, local military units consisting of private citizens rather than full-time soldiers). It was there that someone (to this day no one is sure who) fired the "shot heard 'round the world" that started the American Revolution. Less than a month later, following January, in 1776, **Thomas Paine** (1737-1809) published his famous pamphlet, **Common Sense**. In it, he made a compelling case for independence that won many to the cause. Due to the influence of Paine and others, the **Second Continental Congress** eventually stopped seeking resolution with England and chose, instead, to declare independence.

**SSUSH4 Analyze the ideological, military, social, and diplomatic aspects of the American Revolution. endeavors**

**a. Investigate the intellectual sources, organization, and argument of the Declaration of Independence including the role of Thomas Jefferson and the Committee of Five.**

**Declaration of Independence**

Beginning in the late 1600s, Europe experienced the **Enlightenment**. The Enlightenment was a time that featured revolutionary ideas in philosophy and political thought. During this time, a number of philosophers introduced concepts that later helped form American ideas about government. England's **John Locke** was one of the most influential figures of this period. John Locke challenged the old view that monarchs possess a God-given right to rule with citizens obligated to obey. Locke believed that people were born with certain **natural rights** that no government could morally take away. These rights include life, liberty, and property. He also advocated **social contract theory**. According to this philosophy, there is an implied contract between government and citizens. Citizens are born with freedom and rights. However, for the good of society, people agree to give up certain freedoms and empower governments to maintain order. In other words, citizens submit themselves to laws and governments in order to serve the common good and cultivate civic virtue (behavior geared towards the betterment of society rather than simply one's own interests). Locke taught that citizens have the right to replace any government that fails to serve the public good.

**Document Analysis 4**

 **“That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of those ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government….”**

 **Source: Declaration of Independence**

In June 1776, the delegates to the Second Continental Congress decided to declare independence from Great Britain. They appointed a committee to prepare a **Declaration of Independence** that would outline the reasons the colonist wanted to separate from British rule. The **Committee of Five** was made up of Thomas Jefferson, John Livingston, Ben Franklin, John Adams and Roger Sherman. One of the committee's members, a young delegate named **Thomas Jefferson**, drafted the statement. Strongly influenced by the ideas of the Enlightenment, Jefferson asserted the principle of egalitarianism (the idea that all men are created equal) and proclaimed that men are born with certain inalienable rights (natural rights that government cannot take away). Among these rights are "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." The document became known as the Declaration of Independence and was formally adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776. The Declaration of Independence begins by echoing the theories of John Locke and asserting the "natural rights" to which all men are entitled. It proclaims that governments obtain their power to rule from the free consent of the people and that if the government fails to serve its citizens, those citizens have the right to resist and/or replace it with a new system (remember the Social Contract). The document then lists the many ways in which the colonies believe England failed to rule properly and states why the colonies have the right to rule themselves. It concludes with a formal declaration of independence and the signatures of those in attendance at the Second Continental Congress.