Grades: 8
Subjects: Social Studies, English/Language Arts
Time Required: One to five 50-60 minute class periods
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OVERVIEW
In this lesson students will use primary sources to construct, as a class, a detailed timeline on several major events leading up to the American Revolution. Students will discuss what they have learned, in the context of the timeline, in order to understand how the legislative acts of the British parliament and the responses of the colonists contributed to the eventual outbreak of hostilities.

GOAL
Students will create detailed timelines to explain how a series of events contributed to the outbreak of the American Revolution.

OBJECTIVES
The learner will
• Analyze a set of primary sources for details about the causes of the Revolution.
• Draw conclusions based on analysis of the sources.
• Synthesize information in small groups to present what they have learned to the class as part of a discussion of a timeline.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION
How did the actions taken by the British Parliament and the responses of the colonists to these actions contribute to the outbreak of the American Revolution?

CURRICULUM STANDARDS
Social Studies:

English/Language Arts:
• 8.SL.CC.1 Prepare for collaborative discussions on 8th grade level topics and texts; engage effectively with varied partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing one’s own ideas clearly.
PROCEDURE

Day 1:

Step 1: Before class begins, divide the students into small groups. Assign each group one of the sources from the Stamp Act set (or—on subsequent days—whichever set has been chosen for use) and print out enough copies for each student to have a copy of their group’s source. Determine how to share the overview timeline with the class. For example, it could be assigned as a pre-activity reading, or a period could be set aside for the teacher to discuss it with the class. Choose a method for students to construct their class timeline of the Stamp Act (e.g. writing on the board or creating a poster). Review the first three topic sections of “The American Revolution—For Teachers” for historical context.

Step 2: Share the investigative question with the class. Lead a class discussion to brainstorm what the students already know about events leading up to the American Revolution. Record any terms, concepts, or events they recall on a whiteboard or overhead projector.

Step 3: Review the overview timeline with the class. Identify where the information they recalled in Step 2 would fit on the timeline.

Step 4: Show students the Primary Source Analysis Tool. Explain to students that they will be using the tool to analyze a primary source about the Stamp Act. It may be helpful to suggest some of the prompt questions included in the Teacher’s Guide. Discuss that some of the language used in the sources may be difficult.

Step 5: Pass out copies of the sources and Primary Source Analysis Tool to each small group. (Each student gets a copy of their group’s source and the analysis tool.) As students are filling out the analysis tools, circulate among the groups to assist with unfamiliar vocabulary, answer questions, and guide discussion. Again, the suggestions in the Teacher’s Guide may be helpful with prompting students.

Step 6: Tell the groups they will now be using their sources and the information they have gathered to help the class create a new timeline. Ask them to consider how their sources can help answer the investigative question, and decide what about their sources is most important for their classmates to know. Give the groups time to plan presentations on their sources to share with the class. Circulate among groups to guide planning.

Step 7: According to the chronological order of the sources, call on each group to share what it has learned with the class. Have each group record its key information on the new timeline in the method determined in Step 1. Guide students to consider how each group’s source relates to the previous one.

Step 8: Discuss with the class how the new completed timeline can be used to answer the investigative question. What have students learned that they did not know before this lesson? How have the primary sources changed what they thought they knew? What would they like to learn more about? Refer back to the overview timeline. How does what they have learned about the Stamp Act change how they see the rest of the period?

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MATERIALS

- “The American Revolution—For Teachers”
- America During the Age of Revolution, 1764-1775 (Overview timeline)
- Primary Source Analysis Tool
- Teacher’s Guide: Analyzing Primary Sources
- Primary source sets (Stamp Act, Townshend Acts, Boston Massacre, Tea Act and the Boston Tea Party, Coercive Acts) Provided within the lesson

“Tea destroyed by Indians.” [1773]
PROCEDURE (CONT.)

Day 2, etc.:

Step 1: Briefly review the timeline and the work from the previous class(es).

Step 2: Repeat steps 4-8 using a different primary source set.

RESOURCES:

Stamp Act:
- Great Britain: Parliament - The Stamp Act, March 22, 1765 (see excerpted version)
- The Pennsylvania journal and weekly advertiser - expiring: in hopes of a resurrection to life again / William Bradford, [1765 October 31]
- Resolutions of Merchants, New York, October 31, 1765
- The repeal or the funeral of Miss Ame=Stamp [1766 March 18 or later]
- Glorious News, May 19, 1766
- Great Britain: Parliament - The Declaratory Act, March 18, 1766

Townshend Act:
- Great Britain: Parliament - The Townshend Act, November 20, 1767 (see excerpted version)
- Boston Non-Importation Agreement, August 1, 1768
- Boston Merchants, December 6, 1769
- To the Merchants and Traders of Philadelphia, 1770
- Repeal of the Townshend Duties, New York, June 20, 1770

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Resources (cont.):

**Boston Massacre:**
- Account of the Late Military Massacre at Boston, March 5, 1770
- The massacre perpetrated in King Street Boston on March 5th 1770, . . . [1770]
- [Four coffins of men killed in the Boston Massacre] [1770 March 12]
- [The coffin of Patrick Carr] [1770 March 19]

**Coercive Acts:**
- Great Britain: Parliament - The Boston Port Act; March 31, 1774 (see excerpted version)
- Boston, May 12, 1774. Gentlemen, by the last advices from London we learn that an Act has been passed by the British Parliament for blocking up the Harbour of Boston . . .
- We the subscribers, inhabitants of the town of having taken into our serious consideration, the precarious state of the liberties of North-America, and more especially the present distressed condition of our Sister Colony of the Massachusetts-Ba [1774]
- Great Britain: Parliament - The Quartering Act; June 2, 1774
- Proceedings of the Committee of Correspondence, July 19, 1774
- Declaration of Rights and Grievances, October 14, 1774

**The Tea Act and the Boston Tea Party:**
- To The Freemen of America, 1773.
- New-York, November 5, 1773. To the friends of liberty, and commerce . . .
- Association of the Sons of Liberty in New York; December 15, 1773
- Announcement of the Boston Tea Party, December 20, 1773
- Tea destroyed by Indians, [1773].

The massacre perpetrated in King Street Boston on March 5th 1770, . . . [1770]

Four coffins of men killed in the Boston Massacre] [1770 March 12]
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Committee-Chamber, July 19, 1774. Proceedings of the Committee of correspondence. The resolves proposed by the Board to the inhabitants of this City, having been published and dispersed through the town several days previous to this meeting... [1774]

EVALUATION

Use the following rubric to evaluate student participation in group work and discussion.

90-100  Thoroughly fills out the Primary Source Analysis Tool, frequently participates in group discussions, group presentations, and class discussions, and makes specific contributions to the class timeline.

80-89  Fills out most of the Primary Source Analysis Tool, participates in group discussions, the group presentation, and class discussions several times, and contributes actively to the class timeline.

70-79  Fills out some of the Primary Source Analysis Tool, participates at least once in group discussion, the group presentation, and class discussions, and makes some contribution to the class timeline.

69 and below  Only writes one or two items under each category on the Primary Source Analysis Tool, does not participate in group discussions, the group presentation or class discussions, and does not make any contribution to the class timeline.

EXTENSIONS

• If each day’s timeline has been recorded as a poster (or in another permanent form), create a classroom display linking each day’s work into an overall timeline which can serve as a resource for further study of the period.

• Have students consider how the colonists’ objections to the various Acts of Parliament correspond to those rights later included in the Bill of Rights.

• Have students analyze the colonists’ language for references to slavery. How does the colonists’ characterization of the British as attempting to “enslave” them conflict with the colonists’ own practices in regard to slavery?
Great Britain: Parliament - The Stamp Act, March 22, 1765

An act for granting and applying certain stamp duties, and other duties, in the British colonies and plantations in America, towards further defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing the same; and for amending such parts of the several acts of parliament relating to the trade and revenues of the said colonies and plantations, as direct the manner of determining and recovering the penalties and forfeitures therein mentioned.

WHEREAS by an act made in the last session of parliament, several duties were granted, continued, and appropriated, towards defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing, the British colonies and plantations in America: and whereas it is just and necessary, that provision be made for raising a further revenue within your Majesty's dominions in America, towards defraying the said expences: we, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Great Britain in parliament assembled, have therefore resolved to give and grant unto your Majesty the several rates and duties herein after mentioned; . . . That from and after the first day of November, one thousand seven hundred and sixty five, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid unto his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, throughout the colonies and plantations in America which now are, or hereafter may be, under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs and successors,

For every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper, on which shall be ingrossed, written or printed, any declaration, plea, replication, rejoinder, demurrer, or other pleading, or any copy thereof, in any court of law within the British colonies and plantations in America, a stamp duty of three pence. . . .

And for and upon every pack of playing cards, and all dice, which shall be sold or used within the said colonies and plantations, the several stamp duties following . . .

And for and upon every paper, commonly called a pamphlet, and upon every news paper, containing publick news, intelligence, or occurrences, which shall be printed, dispersed, and made publick, within any of the said colonies and plantations, and for and upon such advertisements as are herein after mentioned, the respective duties following . . .

For every advertisement to be contained in any gazette, news paper, or other paper, or any pamphlet which shall be so printed, a duty of two shillings.

For every almanack or calendar, for any one particular year, or for any time less than a year, which shall be written or printed on one side only of any one sheet, skin, or piece of paper parchment, or vellum, within the said colonies and plantations, a stamp duty of two pence.

Great Britain: Parliament - The Townshend Act, November 20, 1767

An act for granting certain duties in the British colonies and plantations in America; for allowing a drawback of the duties of customs upon the exportation, from this kingdom, of coffee and cocoa nuts of the produce of the said colonies or plantations; for discontinuing the drawbacks payable on china earthen ware exported to America; and for more effectually preventing the clandestine running of goods in the colonies and plantations.

WHEREAS it is expedient that a revenue should be raised in your Majesty's dominions in America, for making a more certain and adequate provision for defraying the charge of the administration of justice, and the support of civil government, in such provinces where it shall be found necessary; and towards further defraying the expenses of defending, protecting, and securing, the said dominions; we, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Great Britain, in parliament assembled, have therefore resolved to give and grant unto your Majesty the several rates and duties herein after mentioned; . . .That from and after the twentieth day of November, one thousand seven hundred and sixty seven, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid, unto his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, the several rates and duties following; that is to say,

For every hundred weight avoirdupois of crown, plate, flint, and white glass, four shillings and eight pence.
For every hundred weight avoirdupois of green glass, one shilling and two pence.
For every hundred weight avoirdupois of red lead, two shillings.
For every hundred weight avoirdupois of white lead, two shillings.
For every hundred weight avoirdupois of painters colours, two shillings.
For every pound weight avoirdupois of tea, three pence.
For every ream of paper, usually called or known by the name of Atlas Fine, twelve shillings.

Great Britain: Parliament - The Boston Port Act: March 31, 1774

An act to discontinue, in such manner, and for such time as are therein mentioned, the landing and discharging, lading or shipping, of goods, wares, and merchandise, at the town, and within the harbour, of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts’s Bay, in North America.

WHEREAS dangerous commotions and insurrections have been fomented and raised in the town of Boston, in the province of Massachusetts’s Bay, in New England, by divers ill-affected persons, to the subversion of his Majesty’s government, and to the utter destruction of the publick peace, and good order of the said town; in which commotions and insurrections certain valuable cargoes of teas, being the property of the East India Company, and on board certain vessels lying within the bay or harbour of Boston, were seized and destroyed: And whereas, in the present condition of the said town and harbour, the commerce of his Majesty’s subjects cannot be safely carried on there, nor the customs payable to his Majesty duly collected; and it is therefore expedient that the officers of his Majesty’s customs should be forthwith removed from the said town: May it please your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King’s most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the first day of June, one thousand seven hundred and seventy-four, it shall not be lawful for any person or persons whatsoever to lade put, or cause or procure to be laden or put, off or from any quay, wharf, or other place, within the said town of Boston, or in or upon any part of the shore of the bay, commonly called The Harbour of Boston, between a certain headland or point called Nahant Point, on the eastern side of the entrance into the said bay, and a certain other headland or point called Alderton Point, on the western side of the entrance into the said bay, or in or upon any island, creek, landing place, bank, or other place, within the said bay or headlands, into any ship, vessel, lighter, boat, or bottom, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, to be transported or carried into any other country, province or place whatsoever, or into any other part of the said province of the Massachuset’s Bay in New England; or to take up, discharge, or lay on land, or cause or procure to be taken up, discharged, or laid on land, within the said town, or in or upon any of the places aforesaid, out of any boat, lighter, ship, vessel, or bottom, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, to be brought from any other country, province, or place, or any other part of the said province of the Massachuset’s Bay in New England, upon pain of the forfeiture of the said goods, wares, and merchandise, and of the said boat, lighter, ship, or vessel or other bottom into which the same shall be taken, and of the guns, ammunition, tackle, furniture, and stores, in or belonging to the same: And if any such goods, wares, or merchandise, shall, within the said town, or in any the places aforesaid, be laden or taken in from the shore into any barge, hoy, lighter, wherry, or boat, to be carried on board any ship or vessel coming in and arriving from any other country or province, or other part of the said province of the Massachuset’s Bay in New England, such barge, hoy, lighter, wherry, or boat, shall be forfeited and lost.