

Name: _____ Date: _____ Pd _____

The colonists decided to meet in Philadelphia to decide what they will do about challenging the control of the British. This was a meeting in Philadelphia of 55 delegates, or representatives called the Continental Congress. They ultimately decided to take action against the British.

A Meeting in Philadelphia

In September 1774, a group of 55 delegates known as the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia. Their goal was to set up a political body to represent Americans who wanted to challenge British control. Delegates from all of the colonies except Georgia attended the meeting. They included Samuel Adams and John Adams from Massachusetts, John Jay from New York, and George Washington, Richard Henry Lee, and Patrick Henry from Virginia.

The Delegates Vote

During the Continental Congress, the delegates voted to take actions against the British. • They issued a statement of grievances calling for the repeal of 13 acts of Parliament. They said the laws violated the “laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters” of the colonies. • They voted to boycott British trade. This meant the colonies would not import or use any British goods or sell colonial goods in Great Britain. • They approved the Suffolk Resolves prepared by the people of Massachusetts. These resolutions stated that the Coercive Acts were illegal and called on colonists to arm themselves against the British.

Fighting Begins

INTERPRETING

The Continental Congress claimed that British laws violated the “laws of nature, the principles of the English constitution, and the several charters” of the colonies. What do you think they meant by the “laws of nature”?

Rink

A

C

E

Write your paragraph here



The first shots of the revolution against the British were fired at Lexington, Massachusetts, in 1775. Poet Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote that the Americans at Lexington and Concord had fired

Colonial militias were a tradition in the American colonies. They had been formed in most colonies to protect and serve the people who lived in the colonies. Militia members used their own weapons and trained with other citizen soldiers. As tensions with the British grew, more people joined militias and they began gathering and storing military supplies. Some militias were known as minutemen, because they claimed they could be ready to fight on a minute's notice. Many colonists believed that if fighting were to break out, it would happen in New England. Following the Continental Congress's call to arms, the Massachusetts militia began training and stockpiling weapons.

Great Britain Sends Troops

The British were also preparing for a fight. By April 1775, thousands of British soldiers camped in and around Boston. King George III ordered British general Thomas Gage to seize the Massachusetts militia's weapons and arrest its leaders. Gage heard that the militia stored its weapons at Concord, a town near Boston. On April 18, 1775, he sent 700 troops to destroy the weapons.

Lexington and Concord

Colonists in Boston saw the troops march out of town. Paul Revere and William Dawes, members of the Sons of Liberty, rode to Lexington, a town near Concord. They warned colonists that the British were coming. About 70 minutemen were waiting for the British when they reached Lexington. Someone fired a shot, causing both sides to begin shooting. Eight minutemen were killed. The British then moved on to Concord. They destroyed the few weapons that were

the "shot heard 'round the world."

DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

The photo caption mentions a quote from American poet Ralph Waldo Emerson. What did he mean by the "shot heard 'round the world"?

R

A

C

E

Type your paragraph here

SUMMARIZING

Summarize the results of the early battles in the colonists' fight for independence.

left there and then met a group of minutemen waiting for them. In a short battle, the British took heavy losses. They began to make their way back to Boston. As word spread about the British movement, colonists hid along the road from Concord to Boston. As British troops passed they fired on them. By the time the British reached Boston, 73 of their soldiers had been killed and at least 174 wounded.

More Military Action

The battle for independence had begun. After Lexington and Concord, many colonists were ready to join militias. Benedict Arnold of the Connecticut militia enlisted 400 men. He set out to capture Fort Ticonderoga on Lake Champlain in New York. He joined with Ethan Allen and the Vermont militia, known as the Green Mountain Boys. Together, they caught the British by surprise. Fort Ticonderoga surrendered on May 10, 1775. Later, Arnold became a traitor. He sold military information to the British. When it was discovered, he fled to New York City. There he commanded British troops and led raids against the Americans.

The Battle of Bunker Hill

Militias grew as more people heard of the fighting. Before long, the militia around Boston had 20,000 soldiers. The city was controlled by the British, but the militia camped nearby. On June 16, 1775, Colonel William Prescott set up militia posts on Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill, across the harbor from Boston. The next day, the British charged up Breed's Hill. The Americans were running out of ammunition, so Prescott is said to have shouted, "Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes." When the militia

Main Idea:

Detail 1:

Detail 2:

Detail 3:

Complete the sentence below for the Conclusion sentence:

In conclusion

DEFINING

Why was the American Revolution also considered a civil war?

R The American Revolution also considered a civil war because

A

C

E

Write your paragraph here

fired, the British retreated. Twice more the British tried but failed. Finally, the Americans ran out of gunpowder and pulled back. The British won the Battle of Bunker Hill, which was actually fought on Breed's Hill. However, more than 1,000 of their soldiers were killed or wounded. The British were learning that defeating the Americans would be neither quick nor easy.

Choosing Sides

As the fighting between the British and the Americans increased, colonists had to decide which side they were on. Would they join the rebels or stay loyal to Britain? Colonists who sided with Britain were called Loyalists. They did not think the British taxes and laws justified a rebellion. Some held offices and felt it was their job to support British rule. Others thought Britain would win the war and did not want to be on the losing side. The Patriots were colonists who supported the war. They thought that they had earned the right to govern themselves. They were determined to fight until they won independence from Britain. The American Revolution was not just a war between the British and the Americans. It was also a civil war between American Patriots and American Loyalists.

Watch the EdPuzzle video on the Loyalists and the Patriots. Use the information from the reading and from the video to record the differences between Loyalists and Patriots in the chart below.

LOYALISTS

PATRIOTS

The Loyalists were for the king.

The Patriots were led by the Son of Liberty/
and the Continental Congress.

--

--

--

--