

HISTORY ON TRIAL: THE REVOLUTION

BE *the* JURY



250th: The Trial of King George III - Activity Sheet

LESSON 1: SETTING THE STAGE

Key Terms:

Taxation
Conflict

Essential Questions:

How does a decrease in communication increase conflict over time?

Procedures:

The teacher posts 'New Rules' (below) on the board for students to read as they come in.

NEW RULES

1. *Every student must pay their teacher a lunch tax every day.*
2. *Anyone can accuse you of anything without investigation or questions asked and you can get detention or be expelled without discussion or explanation.*
3. *Your teacher can show up to your house unannounced for dinner anytime and if you or your family say no, you will go straight to detention.*
4. *You must pay \$5 to submit an assignment, and if you fail to do so, right to detention.*

WARM UP: THINK/PAIR/SHARE (5-10min)

If these rules were to suddenly come into effect, what would your first reaction/thoughts be?

- What would you/your family/your classmates do?
- Organize? Protest?
- What steps would you take?

Explain how this is similar to what the colonists did prior to the American Revolution.

ACTIVITY: Communication and Timeline (30-40min)

For each event below, make 4 sets of notecards to go over the 5 w's (who/what/where/when/why/how). Briefly discuss each event with students. Have students go into 4 groups. Distribute one set of cards to a group. Then ask students to label/sort them into 3 categories: **abuse of power, reaction, escalation to war.**

- French and Indian War
- Stamp Act
- Townshend Acts
- Boston Massacre
- Boston Tea Party
- Intolerable Acts
- First Continental Congress
- Battles of Lexington and Concord
- Second Continental Congress
- The Fairfield Resolves
- The Olive Branch Petition
- Quartering Act
- Suspending trial by jury
- Troop movements in Boston

Mix up the notecards and hand them out at random to small groups of students.

Have students report their final sort of the cards defending their choices for each category. Have students discuss and explain any differences in their sort results.

Lastly, have students arrange the cards in a timeline from the first event to the last event.

EXIT TICKET: (5min) *This can be a class discussion or in their notes.*

- At what point in the timeline do you believe the war was unavoidable?
- Was one event more 'inflammatory' than others?
- Explain that when conversations decreased, conflict increased.





LESSON 2: THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK

Key Terms:

Perspective

Essential Questions:

How does a person's perspective determine whether an action is remembered as positive or negative?

Procedures:

WARM UP: THINK/PAIR/SHARE (5min)

- Why do you think the colonists thought they were 'right' as they prepared for independence/war?
- What do you think King George III and his advisors in England were thinking?

ACTIVITY: BRITAIN WAS RIGHT (15-20min)

Split the class into groups of 3-4 and assign each group a witness from the mock trial.

Using their assigned witness and the following prompts, have the groups discuss and prepare to argue in defense of the crown. Encourage them to include **2 pieces of evidence** that help prove their claims:

- Were the different taxation acts fair?
- Did Britain have the right to enforce laws?
- Were colonists overreacting?
- Was the king acting within his belief of caring for his empire?



Depending on how much time is allotted, teachers can use the following sentence starters to help kickstart discussion:

TAXES: *Running and protecting a global empire is very expensive...*

(Especially after the French and Indian War, Britain is in massive debt and the colonists benefit from British protection)

QUARTERING ACT: *Protecting the soldiers - they deserve a safe place to sleep...*

(It would be impossible to adequately house the thousands of soldiers sent across the sea to protect the colonists. It is only fair to ask them to open up their homes to help them.)

MAINTAINING ORDER: *The Crown must protect their people and property...*

(The colonists were ungrateful and childish with their resistance, especially the Boston Tea Party which led to the destruction of over a million dollars worth of property.)

Have one student be the spokesperson for each group and make their case to the class.

ACTIVITY: TEMPERATURE GAUGE (10min)

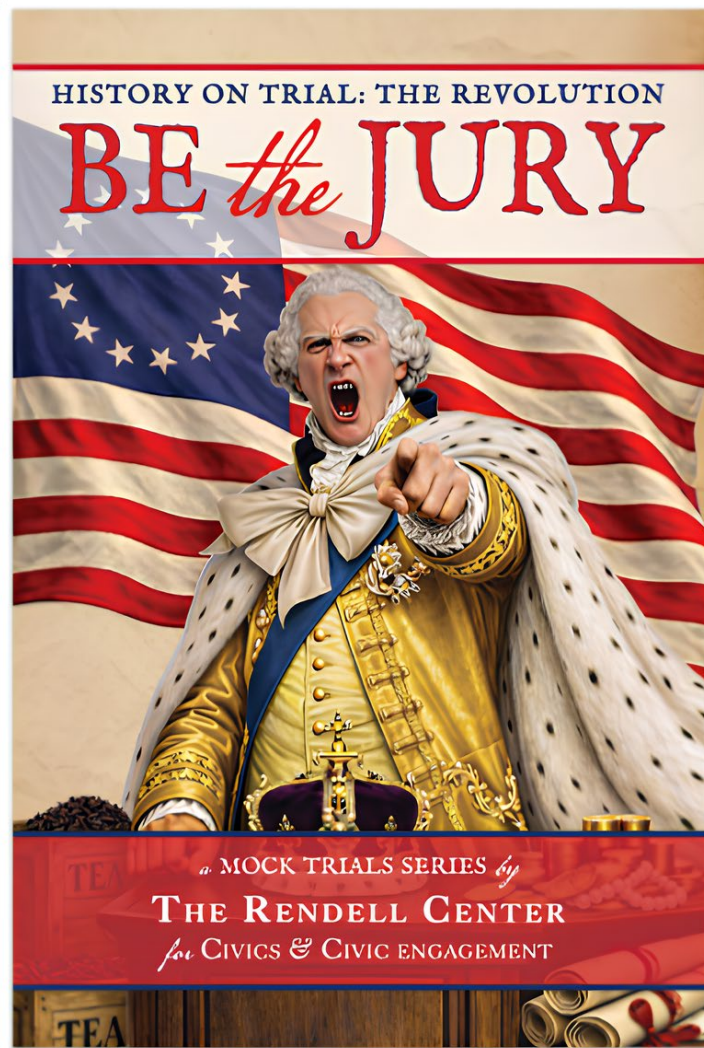
Direct students to stand on one side of the room if they agree more with the colonists' perspective, in the middle if they understand/agree with both sides, and on the opposite side of the room if they agree with the crown.

Have each student explain their position and encourage them to move around the room if other students make them change their perspective.

EXIT TICKET: (5min) *Can be run as a class discussion or in their notes.*

- After considering the British perspective, has your opinion about the Revolution changed? Why/why not?
- Why is history not always as simple as good vs bad?





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