Local and State Declarations

Lesson Support for the Material available on The Quill Project





Essential Questions

- How did some American colonists show Congress they supported breaking away from Britain?
- What is the relationship between the people and their government representatives?
- How do local and state declarations show the idea of consent of the governed?







Utah Social Studies Standards US History I

- U.S. I Standard 3.1: Students will use primary sources to identify the significant events, ideas, people, and methods used to justify or resist the Revolutionary movement.
- U.S. I Standard 3.3: Students will use primary sources to compare the contributions of key people and groups to the Revolution, such as Paul Revere, Thomas Paine, Abigail Adams, the Sons and Daughters of Liberty, and Thomas Jefferson.



What do state and local declarations show?

- Ordinary Americans across the colonies played a key role in the push for independence—not only leaders in Philadelphia.
- The people spoke up and shared their opinions with their representatives.
- Americans were withdrawing their consent to be governed by a king who violated their rights.



Vocabulary

Consent of the governed — An idea introduced by political thinker John Locke. It means that a government only has power because the people give it permission to rule.

Representative — A person chosen by the people to speak and make decisions for them in the government.

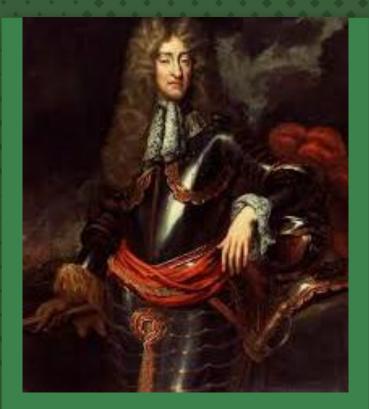
Town — A town is a small community where people live close together. During the American Revolution, towns were centers of daily life, with homes, shops, churches, and local government meetings.

County — A county is a large area that includes several towns and the land around them. During the American Revolution, counties handled government services like courts and taxes collection for both towns and rural areas.

State—A state is a large region made up of many counties. During the American Revolution, states acted like independent countries that chose to connect with a central government. Each state made its own laws and protected the rights of the people.



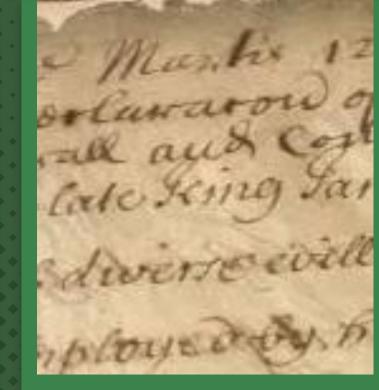
Glorious Revolution of 1688



King James II



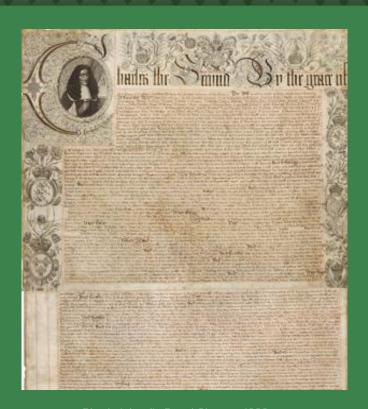
Co-monarchs William and Mary crowned in 1688



Declaration of Rights of 1689



Colonial Charters



Rhode Island's Royal Charter, 1663

- A legal document that explained the colony's government and its connection to the British Crown.
- The charters linked the colonies to the king, not to each other.
- When colonies began breaking ties with the king, it was new to connect with other colonies.



French and Indian War

- This war was called the Seven Years' War around the world. The British fought battles in many places, including India.
- In North America, the fighting took place on the western frontier of the American colonies and was called the French and Indian War.
- Kept British leaders busy, so the colonists got used to ruling themselves without much interference.
- After winning the war, Britain was deep in debt from the cost of fighting. To raise money, British leaders decided to increase taxes on the American colonies.
- British leaders believed the Americans should help pay for the cost of protecting the colonies.



Death of General Wolf, Benjamin West, 1771, Royal Collection Trust



Colonists Protest, the Empire Strikes Back



Destruction of the tea at Boston Harbor, Currier & Ives, 1846, Library of Congress

- The colonists did not want new taxes and protested. One way they protested was the Boston Tea Party. This vandalism caused about \$2 million worth of damage in today's money.
- Parliament passed laws to punish the colonists for the Boston Tea Party. These came to be known as the Intolerable Acts.
- King George sent thousands of soldiers to enforce the new laws.
- Having thousands of soldiers nearby made things more tense and helped start the Revolutionary War in April 1775 at the Battles of Lexington and Concord.



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Local Declarations

Counties in Virginia and Maryland

Towns in Massachusetts and New York



State Declarations April-July 1776

Instructions for Delegates:

North Carolina, April 12, 1776

Stand-Alone Declaration:

Rhode Island, May 4, 1776



State Declarations April-July 1776

Instructions for Delegates and Declaration in State Constitution:

Virginia,

May 15 & June 29, 1776

New Jersey,

June 22 & July 2, 1776

Instructions for Delegates:

Connecticut, June 14, 1776

New Hampshire, June 15, 1776

Delaware, June 15, 1776

Pennsylvania, June 8 & 24, 1776

Instructions for Delegates and Stand-Alone Declaration:

Maryland, June 29 & July 6, 1775



Class Discussion

- How did some American colonists show Congress they supported breaking away from Britain?
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Town Meeting Simulation

It's May 1776. We're thinking about declaring independence.

Divide into town meetings.

Discuss these questions:

- 1. Should we declare independence from Britain? Why or why not?
- 2. What should we tell our representative in Congress to do?
- 3. What kind of future do we want for our colony?



Town Meeting Simulation

Each group write a short statement about declaring independence. Use our primary sources as guides. One paragraph is enough.

Then we will vote if we should instruct our representatives to declare independence.



Town Meeting Simulation Debrief

- Why do you think local people wanted to instruct their delegates in Congress to declare independence?
- How does this show the idea of consent of the governed?
- Does this change how you see the Declaration of Independence?

