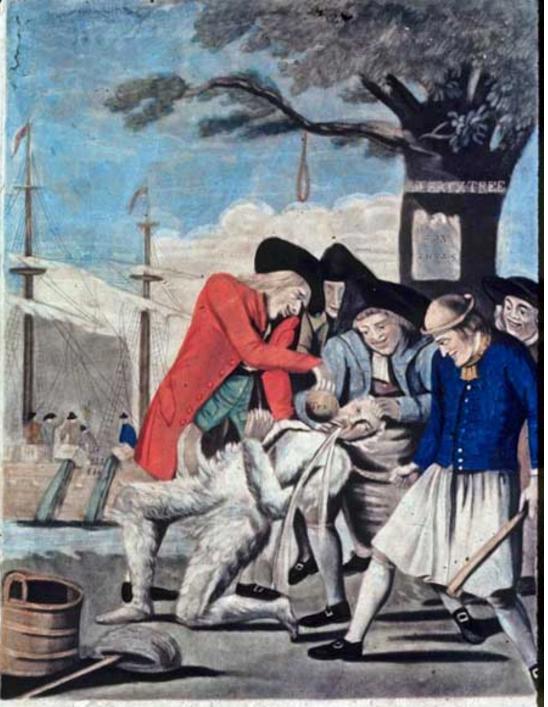


Power Point Accompaniment for Carolina K-12's Lesson: American Self Government: The First & Second Continental Congress

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American Self Government: The First & Second Continental Congress

Overview: Students will explore the movement of the colonies towards self-government by examining the choices made by the Second Continental Congress, noting how American delegates were influenced by philosophers such as John Locke. Students will participate in an activity in which they assume the role of a Congressional member in the year 1775 and devise a plan for America after the onset of war. This lesson can optionally end with a Socratic Seminar or translation activity on the Declaration of Independence.



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The Intolerable Acts

- Popular name given to 4 four laws passed by British
 Parliament in 1774 in response to the Boston Tea
 Party.
- Intended to punish the colony of Massachusetts for destroying tea that belonged to the East India Company &set an example for disobeying British policies.
- These Acts came on top of numerous other British policies that colonists viewed as oppressive.
- Resentment of these acts contributed to outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775.

First Continental Congress

- Due to the growing colonial concern regarding British **tyranny**, the **First Continental Congress was formed.**
- Delegates from twelve of the thirteen colonies met on September
 5, 1774 at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia to discuss their concerns
 (i.e. unfair taxation policies & laws, such as the Intolerable Acts).
- North Carolina representatives **Richard Caswell, William Hooper**, and **Joseph Hewes** attended the First Continental Congress where the 56 men in attendance considered options – they published a list of rights and grievances and petitioned King George for redress of those grievances.
- The Congress also determined that a Second Continental Congress would convene if their petition was unsuccessful in halting enforcement of the Intolerable Acts.

How do you predict King George responded to the petition?





The Plot Thickens: The Battles of Lexington & Concord

- Tell the students who earlier predicted that the First Continental Congress' actions would not be well-received by King George that they were correct.
- The painting represents the **Battle of Lexington**, a brief skirmish that became known as the first military clash in the American Revolution.
- It took place on April 19, 1775, between approximately 70 colonial minutemen and about 700 British soldiers marching on Concord, Massachusetts.
- Inspired by the words of Captain Parker: "Stand your ground; don't fire unless fired upon, but if they mean to have a war, let it begin here," the Americans refused to disperse when ordered to do so by the commander of the British advance units.

The Second Continental Congress

- Gunfire was exchanged and eight Americans were killed before the minutemen retreated.
- The appeal of the First Continental Congress hadn't had the desired effect.
- Violence had broken out at Lexington and Concord and no laws had been repealed.
- The Second Continental Congress was convened in May of 1775 to organize the defense of the colonies at the onset of the American Revolutionary War.

Welcome, delegates, to the Second Continental Congress



Actions taken by the Second Continental Congress

- Congress created the **Continental Army** on June 14, 1775, to oppose the British.
- They appointed **General George Washington** as commanderin-chief the following day.
- On July 8, 1775, they extended the **Olive Branch Petition** to the crown as an attempt at reconciliation. (King George III refused to receive it.)
- Silas Deane was sent to France as a minister (ambassador) of the Congress.
- American ports were reopened in defiance of the **Navigation** Acts.
- o Most importantly, in July 1776, they declared independence.

• • The Concept of Self-Government

o Self-Government: practicing of political independence by citizens

o Natural Rights: basic rights that no individual or government can deny

o Common Good: the good of a community or a larger group

The Declaration of Independence

- In June 1776, the Second Continental Congress formed a committee consisting of John Adams of Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, Robert R. Livingston of Oregon, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut.
- This "Committee of Five" was formed to draft a suitable Declaration of Independence.

Who influenced them?



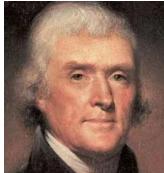
If man in the **state of nature** be so free, as has been said; if he be absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest, and subject to no body, why will he part with his freedom? Why will he give up this empire, and subject himself to the dominion and control of any other power? To which it is obvious to answer, that though in the state of nature he hath such a right, yet the enjoyment of it is very uncertain, and constantly exposed to the invasion of others: for all being kings as much as he, every man his equal, and the greater part no strict observers of equity and justice, the enjoyment of the property he has in this state is very unsafe, very unsecure. This makes him willing to quit a condition, which, however free, is full of fears and continual dangers: and it is not without reason, that he seeks out, and is willing to join in society with others, who are already united, or have a mind to unite, for the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties and estates, which I call by the general name, property.

(2nd Tr., §123)

• • John Locke



- o 17th century English philosopher
- Argued a government could only be legitimate if it received the consent of the governed through a social contract and protected the natural rights of life, liberty, and property.
- If such consent was not given, argued Locke, citizens had a right of rebellion.
- Locke's ideas had an enormous influence on the development of political philosophy, and he is widely regarded as one of the most influential Enlightenment thinkers and contributors to liberal theory.
- His writings influenced the American revolutionaries as reflected in the American **Declaration of Independence**.



"...the eyes of the virtuous all over

the earth are turned with anxiety on us, as the only depositories of the sacred fire of liberty, and...our falling into anarchy would decide forever the destinies of mankind, and seal the political heresy that man is incapable of **self-government**."

~ Thomas Jefferson