



Defining the Issues



The American Revolution began as an argument over the application of British law to colonial American citizens. The disagreement started over a need for money. Great Britain had spent large sums fighting the Seven Years' War and others to protect its colonial interests, and the King and Parliament believed it only fair that the colonists should pay their share of the costs. Therefore the Americans were taxed as English citizens.

Many colonials saw the situation differently. They hated the new taxes and questioned the authority of Parliament to tax them without representation, believing that only colonial legislatures could pass laws affecting them. A growing group of patriots fought the laws by both legal and "illegal" means. Declarations, petitions, and articles were written against the hated Parliamentary acts, while violent and non-violent demonstrations were held to rally support for their position.

Still, many colonists did not agree with the patriot point of view. Loyalists or Tories supported King George and the mother country, arguing that colonists were no different from other British citizens and were, in some ways, treated even better. Colonial taxes, for example, were lower than those paid by people in England. Loyalists were grateful for Britain's defense against the French and Indians and considered taxation a small price to pay for security.

The issue, the patriots argued, was not one of money but of freedom. The fact that people have "inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" was not supported by the reality of British troops stationed in their towns and homes watching their every move. The harder the British were on the colonists, the stronger the patriot argument became, increasingly calling for revolution. Some loyalists feared the patriots, believing a revolution would replace British rule with a more oppressive government.

As tensions grew and erupted into war with the fighting at Lexington, Concord, and elsewhere, colonials were forced to make an important decision. Should they fight with their king and country or alongside their friends and neighbors?

According to the passage, the Revolution was fought MAINLY over

- A. money. B. rights. C. support. D. legislatures.

Tories __ but patriots __ control by Great Britain.

- A. feared ... questioned
B. disagreed ... supported
C. appreciated ... defied
D. considered ... originated

An ANTONYM for the word "oppressive" in the fourth paragraph is

- A. fair. B. powerful. C. strict. D. different.

Classify each quote as MOSTLY LIKELY being a P - patriot or L - loyalist statement:

- "I refuse to pay that tax!" _____ "War is now a necessary evil." _____
"The king is a good man." _____ "We cannot succeed on our own." _____
"Let us boycott their goods." _____ "It pains me to fight against friends." _____
"We have no representation." _____ "We have certain inalienable rights." _____

★ ★ PATRIOTS AND LOYALISTS ★ ★

During the American Revolution, Patriots were men and women who wanted to break away from Great Britain. More than half of the colonists were Patriots. Loyalists were men and women who refused to fight against Great Britain. About 500,000 colonists were Loyalists. The Loyalists and Patriots lived side by side in the same colonies and even in the same families. Benjamin Franklin, for example, was a Patriot. His son, William, was a Loyalist.



Directions: Pretend you are a Patriot living in 1776. You are talking with a Loyalist. Use the lines below to respond to each statement that the Loyalist makes. Make sure you answer like a Patriot would. Base your responses on what you have learned from reading about Patriots and Loyalists. Use the back of this paper if you need more room.

Loyalist "We should stay loyal to Great Britain. Great Britain gave us the chance to come to America."

Patriot _____

Loyalist "The leaders in Great Britain know what's best for us. They would never make any rules that would make us unhappy."

Patriot _____

Loyalist "It's important for the colonists in America to pay taxes and support Great Britain. Without Great Britain we wouldn't have any supplies or soldiers to protect us."

Patriot _____

Loyalist "Without Great Britain's help, America will fall apart. We're too weak. We don't have any strong men or women in America to lead us."

Patriot _____



Patriots and Loyalists

Name: _____

Date: _____

Many colonists, called *patriots*, wanted independence from England. They did not want to obey British laws and pay taxes to the king. Patriots thought it was time for the colonies to work together like a team to break free from England. The differences "between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New Yorkers, and New Englanders are no more," Patrick Henry of Virginia said. "I am not a Virginian, but an American."

Other colonists, however, wanted to get along with England. These colonists, called *loyalists*, still considered themselves loyal British subjects. After all, most of the colonists were either born in England, Scotland, or Ireland or had ancestors from there. The colonies had the same language, culture, and government as the British. Some colonists went to school in England, and many still had friends and family there.

Many colonists also had close business connections with England (largely because of British laws that required the colonies to trade with England). The colonies sent products such as sugar, tobacco, cotton, and wool to England. England sent manufactured products such as furniture, glass, paper, and clothes to the colonies. Many colonists depended on this trade.

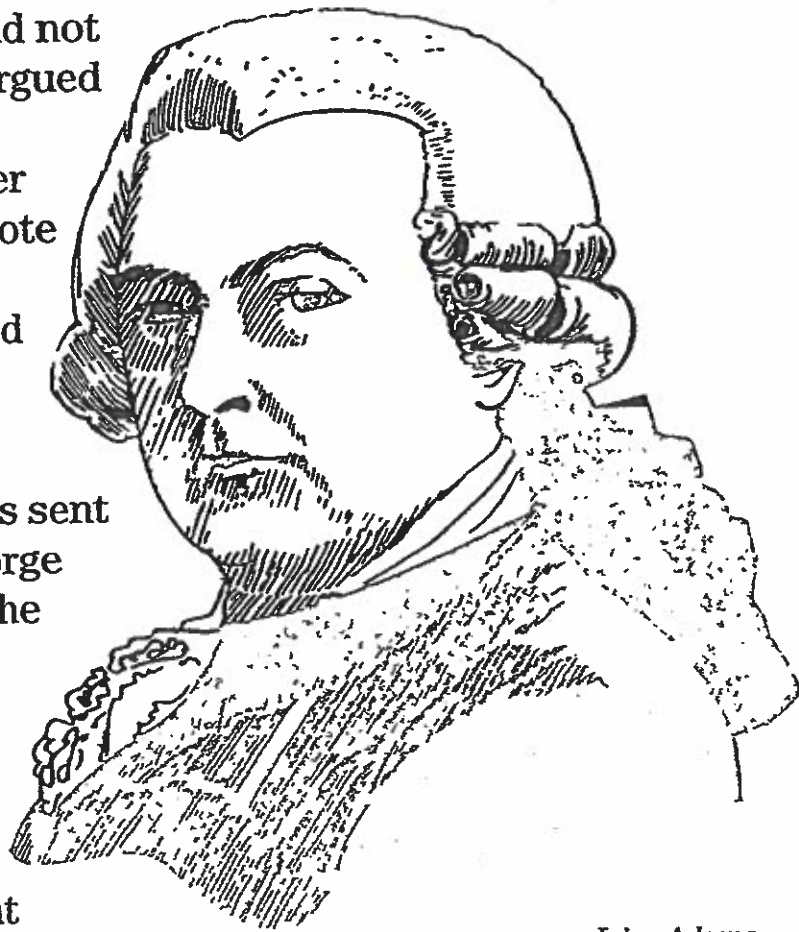
Loyalists also liked the protection of the British Empire. England was the most powerful country in the world. Many colonists wanted the British army and navy to protect them

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from Native Americans and from French and Spanish settlers in other parts of North America.

Because of all these differences, this first Congress could not agree on much. They argued a lot. John Adams of Massachusetts, a lawyer and leading patriot, wrote in his diary that there was much "nibbling and quibbling" among the members of Congress.

Eventually, Congress sent a message to King George demanding an end to the unpopular laws. The king refused. The colonists must show "obedience to the Mother Country," he said, even if that meant war.



John Adams

2

POINT OF VIEW

Loyalists, Neutralists, & Patriots

Read the text and fill in the graphic organizer by writing three opinion statements from the point of view of each colonist. An example has been provided.

The American Revolutionary War began in 1775, but that did not mean that all colonists were in agreement about declaring independence from Great Britain—they weren't! In fact, almost one-third of all colonists did not want independence at all!

Colonists who were loyal to King George III and against declaring independence were called loyalists. Loyalists had many reasons to remain faithful to Great Britain. Some loyalists wanted to keep British military protection. Other loyalists were still connected to Britain by family and history. Some colonists felt a strong sense of duty toward King George III. In fact, many colonists considered themselves British citizens instead of "American colonists."

Many colonists wished to remain neutral. Neutralists often valued independence but understood that Britain offered protection, government, and trade. They also were unsure about waging war.

Patriots, colonists who wanted independence, had many reasons to be unhappy with British rule. Many patriots were influenced by the writings of John Locke, who stated that men have the right to oppose unjust governments. The Sons of Liberty were the most famous group of patriots. They were not content with British taxes and longed for freedom from British rule. Patriots saw King George III as a tyrant who ruled unfairly, imposed unfair taxes, and used deadly violence against colonists in the Boston Massacre.

Loyalist	Neutralist	Patriot
1. King George III is our beloved king!	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

11



Loyalist

Define:

- three facts
-
-

Neutralist

Define:

- three facts
-
-

Patriot

Define:

- three facts
-
-

1) King George III is our beloved King! We must obey his every command!!

2)

3)

1)

2)

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