

# Study Guide



## Chapter 2, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 33–38

### The Birth of a Democratic Nation



#### KEY TERMS

**mercantilism** the theory that a country should sell more goods to other countries than it buys  
(page 33)

**boycott** refuse to buy (page 34)

**repeal** to cancel (page 34)

**delegate** a representative (page 35)

**independence** self-reliance and freedom from outside control (page 36)

#### DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

How do you celebrate the Fourth of July? What does that day celebrate?

The last section described the development of colonial governments in America. This section discusses the reasons that the colonies declared their independence from Great Britain.

#### ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the time line below to help you take notes. Several events led to the colonists' declaring independence from Great Britain. List these events in order on the time line.

1. _____	2. _____	3. _____
4. _____	5. _____	6. _____

**Study Guide****Chapter 2, Section 2 (continued)****READ TO LEARN****• Colonial Resistance and Rebellion** *(page 33)*

With the British government involved in matters at home, the American colonists managed more of their own affairs. They enjoyed having this control. However, by the mid-1700s, the British government began tightening its control over the colonies. Around that time, the British began supporting a policy called **mercantilism**. This was the theory that a country should sell more goods to other countries than it buys. For the theory to be successful, Great Britain needed the colonies to produce cheap, raw materials. Parliament wanted the American colonies to sell raw materials to Great Britain at low prices. Parliament also wanted the colonists to buy British goods at high prices. **Colonial businesses suffered** under mercantilism.

In 1763, **Great Britain won the French and Indian War**. The victory gave them the French territory in North America. As a result of the war, **Britain was heavily in debt**. To pay these debts, it placed high taxes on the American colonies. For example, in 1765 Parliament passed the **Stamp Act**, which made colonists **attach tax stamps on such things as newspapers and legal documents**. The colonists disliked these taxes. They had no representation in Parliament, as people living in Great Britain did. Therefore, they believed that Parliament had no right to tax them. The colonists' slogan became **"No taxation without representation."**

To protest these taxes, many colonists decided to **boycott**, or refuse to buy, British goods. The boycott worked, and Great Britain **repealed**, or canceled, the Stamp Act and other taxes. However, Parliament soon passed new tax laws. One of these became known as the **Townshend Acts**. Passed in 1767, these laws **placed taxes on items that the colonies imported such as tea, paper, and lead**. These laws angered the colonists, and they **brought back the boycott** that they had used before.

Relations between the colonists and Great Britain worsened. In 1773 Parliament passed the **Tea Act**. The law **gave the British East India Company the right to ship tea to the colonies without paying the taxes** that were usually placed on tea. The company was allowed to bypass colonial merchants and sell the tea directly to shopkeepers at low prices. This made the East India Company tea cheaper than any other tea in the colonies. It **gave the company an advantage over colonial merchants**.

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## Chapter 2, Section 2 (continued)

Colonists fought back by blocking all East India Company ships from entering colonial ports, except those arriving in Boston. In 1773 a group of colonists dressed as Native Americans dumped more than 300 chests of British tea into Boston Harbor. This protest became known as the Boston Tea Party. The British Parliament responded by passing the Coercive Acts, which the colonists called the Intolerable Acts. The new laws limited the colonists' rights. The laws limited the colonists' right to trial by jury. The laws also allowed British soldiers to search and move into colonists' homes.

7. How did the colonists respond to the Tea Act?

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### • Movement Toward Independence (page 35)

The colonial governments came together to fight the Intolerable Acts. In September 1774, 12 of the colonies sent delegates, or representatives, to Philadelphia to talk about their concerns. This meeting was known as the First Continental Congress. The delegates sent a document to King George III demanding that the colonists' rights be restored. The delegates also decided to continue the boycott of British goods. In addition, they promised to hold another meeting if Britain did not meet their demands.

King George responded with force. In April 1775, the British and colonial soldiers fought two battles in Massachusetts, at Lexington and Concord. These battles were the first battles of the Revolutionary War. Before these battles, most colonists thought of themselves as British citizens. However, with British soldiers fighting the colonial soldiers, many colonists began talking about independence, or freedom from outside control.

In May 1775, colonial leaders met in Philadelphia at the Second Continental Congress. Some delegates favored independence. Other colonists feared that the colonists could never win a war against Britain. Others were still loyal to Britain. While the delegates were debating

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what to do, support for independence grew among the colonists. In January 1776, colonist Thomas Paine published a pamphlet titled *Common Sense*. In it Paine called for complete independence from Britain. More than half of the delegates at the Second Continental Congress agreed with Paine.

8. What effect did Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* have on the colonists?

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### • The Declaration of Independence (page 36)

The Second Continental Congress was now acting as the colonies’ government. It set up a committee to write a document that announced America’s independence. Thomas Jefferson wrote most of the Declaration of Independence. The document explained why the United States wanted independence. It said that the British government was not interested in the colonies. It listed abuses by King George III.

The Declaration of Independence also included the colonists’ beliefs about the rights of individuals. It said that the purpose of government is to protect people’s rights. Government is based on the consent of the people. If a government ignores people’s rights, then the people have the right to overthrow the government. John Locke, an English philosopher, influenced the ideas that Thomas Jefferson stated in the Declaration of Independence.

The Second Continental Congress approved the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. However, freedom for the colonies would not come until the Revolutionary War ended and Great Britain recognized the United States as an independent nation.

9. Whose ideas influenced Thomas Jefferson in writing the Declaration of Independence?

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