

▲ American colonists protest taxes levied by the Stamp Act.



### WITNESS HISTORY

#### A Voice for Freedom

In March 1775, the 13 colonies were on the brink of war with England. Delegates from across Virginia met to debate their options. Should they give Britain another chance to resolve the problem peacefully? Or were the colonists ready to fight for their freedom? Then, Patrick Henry urged the Virginia convention to prepare for war in a speech that roused the delegates. Based on recollections of men like Thomas Jefferson, Henry's biographer, William Wirt, included the text of the speech that is attributed to Patrick Henry.

“Gentlemen may cry peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! . . . Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? . . . Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? . . . I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!”

—Patrick Henry, March 23, 1775

## The American Revolution

### Objectives

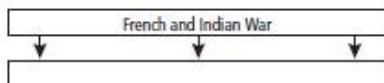
- Describe the European colonial presence in North America.
- Trace the development of democratic ideals in Europe and America.
- Identify the causes of the American Revolution.
- Discuss the results of the American Revolution.

### Terms and People

House of Burgesses	Enlightenment
Mayflower Compact	Great Awakening
Magna Carta	Thomas Jefferson
English Bill of Rights	George Washington

### NoteTaking

**Reading Skill: Recognize Sequence** Note the sequence of events that led to the American Revolution by making a series-of-events chain.



**Why It Matters** European nations explored the Americas and began establishing colonies. England established 13 colonies along the mid-Atlantic coast of North America. Eventually, these colonies would declare their independence from England and become a new nation: the United States of America. **Section Focus Question:** What important ideas and major events led to the American Revolution?

### European Colonies in the Americas

Wealth flowed into Spain from its colonies in Mexico, Central America, and South America. The population was thin and life was hard in the borderland regions in the present-day Southwest and in Florida. To encourage settlements and protect these outposts, Spain established presidios, or forts. Priests and nuns established dozens of missions to convert Native Americans to Christianity.

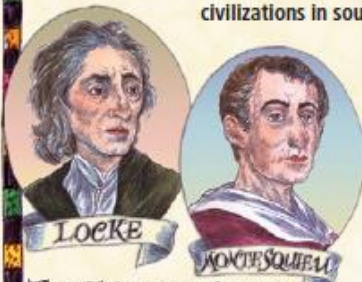
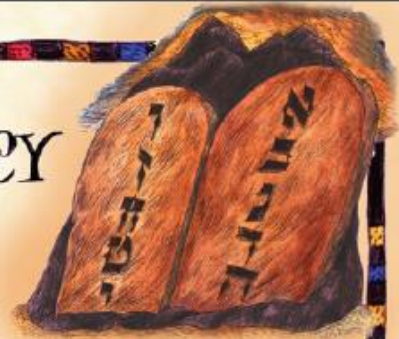
The French established colonies in Canada along the coast of Nova Scotia and the St. Lawrence River. Besides exploiting rich fishing off the coast, they found a fortune in furs. American Indians were eager to exchange beaver pelts for European-made metal axes, knives, and kettles. During the 1690s, the French founded Louisiana, along the Mississippi River valley and the Gulf Coast.

**England Establishes Colonies in Virginia** In 1607, the English established their first enduring settlement, Jamestown, in Virginia.

● INFOGRAPHIC

# ROOTS of DEMOCRACY

Although the United States is more than 200 years old, the ideas of democracy and representative government are far older. The roots of democracy reach back to civilizations in southwest Asia and Europe.



## THE ENLIGHTENMENT ▲

Two Enlightenment philosophers who influenced American ideas about government were John Locke and Baron de Montesquieu. Locke stated that all people have natural rights and that if a monarch violates those rights, then the people have the right to overthrow the monarch. Montesquieu declared that the powers of government should be clearly defined and limited.



## JUDEO-CHRISTIAN ROOTS ▲

The values found in the Bible, including the Ten Commandments and the teachings of Jesus, inspired American ideas about government and morality.



## ENGLISH PARLIAMENTARY TRADITIONS ▼

Two key English documents inspired Americans. The Magna Carta (1215) and the English Bill of Rights (1689) guaranteed certain rights to citizens, including the right to trial by jury. The ideas of a two-house lawmaking body and voting rights also influenced Americans.

## GRECO-ROMAN ROOTS ▶

Ancient Greek democracy and Roman republicanism have influenced American government.



### Thinking Critically

- 1. Draw Conclusions** How does government in the United States reflect English Parliamentary traditions?
- 2. Make Inferences** How might John Locke's ideas about natural rights lead to revolution?

### History Interactive\*

For: More about the roots of democracy  
[www.pearsonschool.com/ushist](http://www.pearsonschool.com/ushist)

Despite enormous losses from disease, starvation, and war with the Indians, the English expanded around the Chesapeake Bay. The colonists prospered by raising tobacco for export. Claiming the political rights of Englishmen, the Virginia planters elected a legislature, known as the **House of Burgesses**. It governed the colony in partnership with a royal governor appointed by the king of England.

**New England Colonies** To the north, the English established more colonies, which they called New England. The first colonists were devout Protestants called “Puritans,” who hoped to create model moral communities. They settled first in 1620 at Plymouth, where they adopted the **Mayflower Compact**, which provided a framework for self-government. By 1700, New England had four colonies: Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Hampshire.

Adapting to the cold climate and short growing season, the New Englanders supplemented farming with lumber harvested from the forests and fish from the sea. By building ships, they were able to trade with the other colonies and with Europe.

**Middle and Southern Colonies** The English developed a third cluster of colonies between Maryland and New England. They conquered Dutch New Netherland and renamed it New York, then added New Jersey and Pennsylvania, a haven for Quaker immigrants. The Middle Colonies offered religious toleration and a prospering economy based on exporting wheat.

South of Virginia, the English developed a fourth cluster of colonies. The Southern Colonies consisted of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. The colonists raised rice on coastal plantations and cattle on farms in the backcountry. The plantations relied on the labor of enslaved Africans.

✓ **Checkpoint** What were the major economic activities of the English colonies in America?

## Democratic Ideals in the American Colonies

The English colonists brought ideas about democracy and republican government with them to America. Some of these ideas were from Southwest Asia while others came from Europe.

**English Traditions** As English citizens, the colonists believed that they were entitled to the same rights as English citizens in Britain. Many of these rights were contained in two important documents: the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights. The **Magna Carta**, signed by King John in 1215, limited the power of the English monarch. It protected the right of people to own private property and guaranteed the right to trial by jury. The **English Bill of Rights**, signed by King William and Queen Mary in 1688, was a written list of freedoms that the government promised to protect. The English Bill of Rights required Parliament, England’s lawmaking body, to meet regularly. It also stated that the monarch could not raise taxes or build an army without Parliament’s consent.

**The Enlightenment and the Great Awakening** During the 1700s, ideas based on the **Enlightenment** circulated among well-educated American colonists. The Enlightenment was a European intellectual movement. Enlightenment philosophers believed that all problems could be solved by human reason. Frenchman Baron de Montesquieu and Englishman John Locke were two thinkers who applied reason to government and politics.



### Colonial America

Three European nations controlled vast amounts of territory in North America in the mid-eighteenth century. *Which nation controlled territory that bordered the Pacific Ocean?*

### Vocabulary Builder

**philosophy**—(fih LAHS uh fee) *n.*  
theory or logical analysis of the  
fundamental principles of human  
conduct, thought, knowledge, and  
the nature of the universe


### Vocabulary Builder

**assert**—(uh SERT) *v.* to state  
positively; declare; affirm

Enlightenment **philosophy** affected religious beliefs in the colonies. Colonists who admired these ideas wanted a religion that was less emotional and more rational. At the same time, attendance at church services was in decline.

During the 1740s, concern about these trends led to a religious movement called the **Great Awakening**. Evangelical preachers such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield toured the colonies promoting revivals where people felt a direct and transforming contact with an overwhelming Holy Spirit. The Great Awakening led to the birth of new churches. This eventually increased tolerance of religious differences. Many colonists also came to believe that if they could decide how to worship God, they could also decide how to govern themselves.

The Enlightenment and the Great Awakening would later combine to influence the American Revolution. The Enlightenment informed the writings of political leaders, while the Great Awakening inspired the common people.

 **Checkpoint** Which democratic ideas were expressed by Enlightenment thinkers?

## Causes of the American Revolution

The tradition of a limited English monarchy, experience with self-government, and exposure to Enlightenment ideas influenced the leading American colonists. A European war and a spirit of independence in the colonies prompted the colonists to take action that would change the course of world history.


Between 1689 and 1763, the British and French fought a series of wars in Europe. These conflicts spread to America and involved the French and English colonists and their Native American allies.

The last of these wars, called the French and Indian War, erupted in 1754 and ended in 1763 with a British victory. The peace treaty gave Canada, Florida, and a portion of French Louisiana to Britain. British colonists were eager to move into Louisiana, but Britain wished to keep peace with the Indians who lived on this territory. British limits on westward expansion angered the colonists.

**Taxes and Traditional Rights** The British victory was expensive, nearly doubling Britain's national debt. During the 1760s, the British Parliament **asserted** that the colonists should pay new taxes to help the empire. The proposed taxes and tighter trade regulations shocked the colonists. Valuing the prosperity and protection of the empire, they did not immediately seek independence. Instead, they wanted to remain part of the empire that for so long had produced so many benefits at so little cost to them.

In resisting the taxes, colonists cited the traditional rights of Englishmen. They cited the Magna Carta and the English Bill of Rights, which blocked the king from levying taxes without the permission of Parliament. During the 1760s, their problem was with Parliament, rather than with King George III. Professing loyalty to the king, the colonists hoped to be free from Parliament's efforts to tax them. They would pay taxes levied only by their own elected assemblies in the colonies.

**Colonial Resistance** To pressure Parliament, colonists boycotted British goods. Local committees enforced this boycott, which threatened the British economy. Angry crowds harassed colonists who helped to collect the new taxes. Colonists who refused to honor the boycotts or who spoke out in favor of the taxes were considered Loyalists. Representing a large minority, the Loyalists preferred to pay the taxes and honor Parliament and the king. They also feared that the resistance would lead to a war that Britain seemed certain to win.

 **Checkpoint** Why did many American colonists object to paying taxes imposed by Parliament?