

TOWARD INDEPENDENCE

Essential Questions:

1. When is it necessary for citizens to rise up against their government?
2. What are the ways the United States upholds the principles of the DOI?

IMPORTANT VOCABULARY WORDS

- **Siege:** the surrounding and blocking of a city, town, or fortress by an army attempting to capture it
- **Artillery:** large-caliber weapons such as cannons, howitzers, and missile launchers which are operated by crews
- **Tyranny:** a government where one ruler is granted absolute power and misuses it
- **Natural Rights:** rights common to everyone as opposed to those given by laws

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- **Olive Branch Petition:** July 1775; Sent by Second Continental Congress to King George III as a symbol of peace and end fight; By the time it reached London, King says that the colonists are traitors who need to be brought to justice!
- **Common Sense:** a pamphlet written in 1776 by Thomas Paine to argue for complete independence from Britain
- **Declaration of Independence:** document written in 1776 which says that the colonies are now free and do not need to be loyal to Britain or King George III

IMPORTANT PEOPLE

- **Thomas Jefferson:** 3rd president of the United States and lead writer of the Declaration of Independence; also a champion of human rights
- **Thomas Paine:** Emigrated from England to Philadelphia in 1774; became a strong voice for those seeking independence and revolution with pamphlet *Common Sense*
- **Patrick Henry:** speaker who urged colonists to take up arms (fight) against the British; “I know not what course others may take; but as for me...give me liberty or give me death.”
- **John Locke:**
- **George Washington:** Chosen as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, later became 1st president of the United States

IMPORTANT EVENTS

■ Lexington

- April 1775, spies tell British General Gage that the colonists are hiding gunpowder in Concord, Massachusetts
- British army sneaks out of Boston, but Minutemen (colonial militia) are waiting for them when they get to Lexington.
- Shots are fired and 8 colonists lose lives

■ Concord

- British soldiers keep walking to find gunpowder, but colonists had hidden it
- British soldiers set fire to various objects
- Minutemen gather and fight again and refuse to back down
- Redcoats retreat to Boston and were shot at by Minutemen the whole way back, 74 dead and 200 wounded or missing

IMPORTANT EVENTS

■ 2nd Continental Congress

- Meets in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775
- Proposed to make “a continental army” made of troops from all colonies
- George Washington chosen to lead army

■ Battle of Bunker Hill

- June 1775
- Colonial Militia tried to fortify two hills that overlook Boston
- Stopped Redcoat advances for 2 tries
- On third try Redcoats succeed only when Americans used up all ammunition
- British losses= 1000 and American losses= 500+

IMPORTANT EVENTS

■ Siege of Boston

- Spring 1776
- Washington's army was undisciplined and disordered
- Low on gunpowder, but Washington spreads rumors that he has tons
- Before attacking Boston, takes Fort Ticonderoga and 59 cannons
- G. Washington turns cannons on Boston and loyalists flee

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

- **Signing of Declaration of Independence**
 - Signed July 4, 1776 by 39 men
 - Justifies why colonies could revolt and cut ties with Great Britain
 - “all men are created equal”
 - Uses principle of Natural Rights which cannot be taken by government (life, liberty, pursuit of happiness)
 - If government does not uphold rights, then citizens can create a new government that protects “safety and happiness”
 - Jefferson included a section on slavery which was taken out of the final version