

1607 – 1789

Major change over time: Although the United States of America began as a group of scattered colonies tied to England, general dissatisfaction with England and government united the colonies in a fight for independence to become a separate nation of unified states.

Sub Theme 1 - Colonization

During of the 17th century, businessmen and religious groups, with charters from the King of England began to colonize America for economic and social reasons under England's semi-watchful eye.

Specific Factual Information:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Joint-stock companies | 6. Overcrowding in England |
| 2. Religious Persecution | 7. Competition for World Power (against France, Spain, etc) |
| 3. Business Opportunities | 8. New Trade Opportunities |
| 4. Crops | 9. Opportunities for Peasants to own land |
| 5. Search for Precious Metals | 10. Charters from the King |

Interpretive Commentary (1- 2 sentences interpreting what it means- impact, etc)

1. The emerging joint-stock companies in England saw new business opportunities in the New World and believed they could make safe money by sending men over to search for precious metals and new trade routes, which led to the first colonies in America.
2. Religious persecution of the Puritans and Catholics by the Anglican Church in England led to migration of some of these peoples to the New World in order to govern themselves and live as they wished – the beginning ideas of freedom of religion.
3. England's population had grown larger than the land that supported it and peasants could not own land and many times could not feed themselves and the idea of free land and new crops in the New World appealed to many who then made the trip into the first colonies and fostered the idea that the resources and land of America were inexhaustible.
4. The competition between France, Spain, and England to become the single World Power prompted the kings and queens of England to bestow charters to companies and groups to colonize the New World.
5. During this time period, Americans began to taste independence of religion, trade, and land and play with the idea that these things should be theirs by right.

Sub Theme 2 - Dissatisfaction

Dissatisfaction in America erupted after the French and Indian war, when Europe ended its practice of Salutary Neglect and began taxes, laws, and other regulations of America.

Specific Factual Information:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. House of Burgesses | 6. Mercantilism |
| 2. French & Indian War | 7. Salutary Neglect |
| 3. Triangle Trade Route | 8. Slave Trade |
| 4. Navigation Acts | 9. Sugar Act of 1764 |
| 5. The Enlightenment | 10. Currency Act of 1764 |
| 11. Quartering Act of 1765 | 12. Stamp Act of 1765 |
| 13. Virtual Representation | |

Interpretive Commentary

1. The ideas of The Enlightenment took form in the construction of the House of Burgesses in the United States as Americans enjoyed their own government rather than the English government expected. The emergence of the House of Burgesses, during the reign of Salutary Neglect, led to the seeds of Democracy in the colonies.

2. The French and Indian War sparked dissent in the colonies as England's war dragged American soldiers into the line of fire. When the Americans were asked to foot a third of the bill required to protect the Ohio-Indiana region, Americans refused and Britain ended its practice of Salutary Neglect.

3. England attempted to enforce the ideas of mercantilism – that the colonies were there for the mother country's benefit – which led to widespread dissatisfaction with England, a unifying factor for the still mostly separate colonies.

4. England drafted several acts for the disgruntled colonies in order to regain some money from the colonies – acts that the colonists ranted against and many even began to act against, leading to the development of the Sons of Liberty and the rumblings of revolution.

5. The colonists' experiences with England's government of virtual representation led to the yearning for a democracy to represent all the people truly, giving people the idea for a free government ruled by the people. The impact of this dissatisfaction with virtual representation was the development of the American democracy.

Sub Theme 3 - Independence

The Colonists began a fight for liberty from England and the ability to choose their own government, without an interfering from a king thousands of miles away.

Specific Factual Information:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sons of Liberty | 6. Declaratory Act of 1767 |
| 2. Stamp Act Congress | 7. Townshend Act of 1767 |
| 3. Boston Massacre (1770) | 8. Tea Act of 1773 |
| 4. Boston Tea Party (1773) | 9. Continental Congress |
| 5. Coercive Acts of 1774 | 10. Port Bill, Government Act, Quebec Act, New Quartering Act |
| 11. Declaration of Independence | 12. War with Britain |

Interpretive Commentary

1. The Sons of Liberty were organized as a terrorist group against the rule of England, gaining strength after the media gained control of the Boston "Massacre." Though their opinions were a minority, they went ahead with their terrorist actions of tarring and feathering and the Boston Tea Party – extremist actions that the colonists disapproved of but appropriately moved the revolutionary process forward.
2. The Coercive/Intolerable Acts, in response to the Boston Tea Party but enacted against all, caused the colonists to create a Continental Congress and invite delegates from the colonies so as to discuss grievances. The Continental Congress was one of the first organized broad discussions of options for the colonies, and the Continental Congress and their leaders became the leaders of the Independence Movement.
3. The Declaration of Independence was the culmination of dissatisfaction in the colonies, an act that propelled the United States into war. It was drafted and enacted by the wealthy and intellectual people of America and therefore did not necessarily represent all the views of the colonists, but it threw all the colonies into war with Britain.
4. The many acts of England, as it attempted to regain control of the disobedient colonies, spread dissent among the colonies and fostered ideas of independence. While many were content to grumble and hope the king would see things their way, some became extremist and joined groups such as the Sons of Liberty.
5. Though some were in disagreement about going to war with England, many fought for the colonies anyway and some became Tories or Royalists. The distance between America and the mother country, combined with extensive knowledge of the ground men fought upon, contributed to America's war effort and in the end England was forced to recognize America as a separate nation.