

## UNIT 2 UNITED STATES HISTORY LESSON 1

### Summary

- In this lesson, students will read pages 24-34 of Chapter 2, "A Revolutionary Age: Birth of a Nation," in their Readers. They will understand how conflicts between colonists and the British government led to the creation of a new nation.

### Social Studies Background

In 1763, having helped the British win the French and Indian War, most people in the 13 Colonies were content with British rule. That would soon change.

Colonists wanted to expand westward across the Appalachian Mountains. The British, mostly to keep peace with Native Americans, sent soldiers to keep the colonists in their place. Then the British started imposing taxes on the colonists to support those British troops.

The first tax was the Revenue Act, or Sugar Act. Then came the 1765 Stamp Act, which incited cries of "taxation without representation."

The colonists rebelled, but the British persisted with more new taxes. Then, in 1773 the British passed the Tea Act. In Boston, a few dozen men dressed as Native Americans and dumped 45 tons of British tea into Boston Harbor. The British reacted with the Coercive Acts, known in America as the Intolerable Acts, to restore order in Boston. They shut down trade in and out of the city and closed Boston's port.

After hearing about Boston's fate, people in other colonies took action. Delegates assembled in Philadelphia as the First Continental Congress. Colonists, who now identified themselves as Americans, were ready to fight for their freedom.

### ENGAGE

Encourage students to flip through the assigned pages and turn and talk with a partner to discuss what they see. Invite students to ask questions or share what they already know about events that led up to the Revolutionary War.

### EXPLORE

Instruct students to read the chapter title and George Washington's quote on page 24. **Ask:** *What do you think this quote means and how does it apply to the American Revolution?* Invite students to share their ideas.

### EXPLAIN

Point out to students that just 12 years before the Revolutionary War, most American colonists were content to be ruled by a British king. **Ask:** *Why did this begin to change after the French and Indian War?* (The British sent soldiers to keep Americans from moving west, across the Appalachians. They started imposing taxes on Americans to pay for the soldiers.) Have students turn and talk as they identify the various taxes the British Parliament imposed and the colonists' reactions to each one. Encourage them to discuss what "taxation without representation" means. Challenge them to analyze pivotal events that took place in Philadelphia and Boston to recognize their significance in bringing about the Revolutionary War.

### ELABORATE

Invite students to read the National Geographic article "The Letter That Won the American Revolution" ([www.nationalgeographic.com/2017/07/george-washington-spy-letter/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/2017/07/george-washington-spy-letter/)) to learn how George Washington created America's first espionage operation in 1777. Discuss how the spy ring helped America win the Revolutionary War.

### EVALUATE

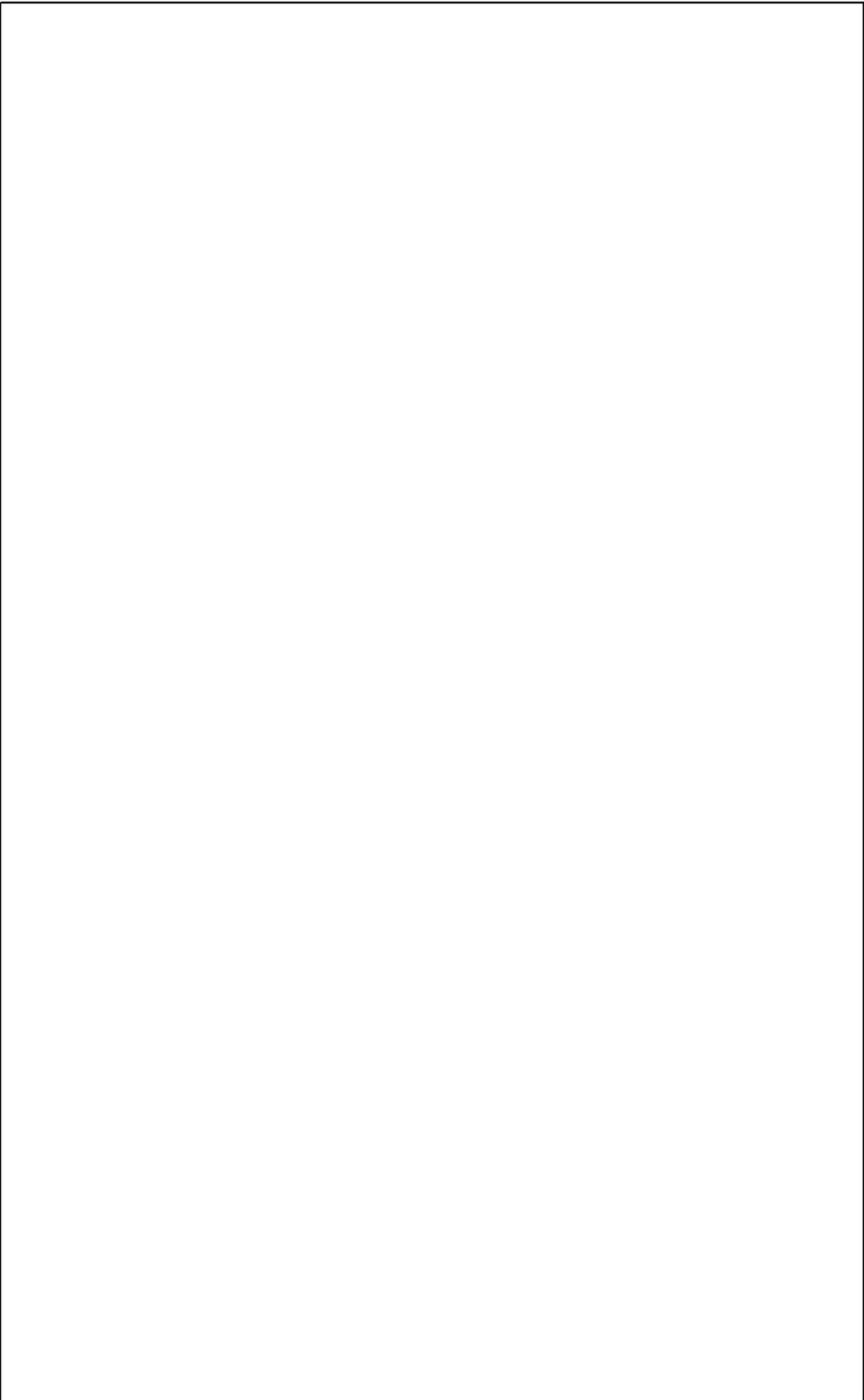
Have students complete the **Content Assessment** for this lesson. Encourage them to share and compare their results in small groups.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**CONTENT ASSESSMENT: The American Revolution**

Create a timeline of events that led up to the American Revolution.



**CONTENT ASSESSMENT: The Declaration of Independence**

Read these words from the Declaration of Independence. Then answer the questions.

*"We should hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness."*

Why has this statement resonated throughout world history?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Did the statement, and the Declaration of Independence as a whole, bring about true equality in colonial America? Why or why not?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---