

Name _____



The Boston Tea Party

By Jane Runyon

The colonists decided to boycott British products when Lord Townshend put a tax on glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea that was imported into the colonies. The boycott was successful because the British merchants began losing money, and they demanded that the taxes be repealed. In 1770, all but one of the taxes was repealed. This was a small tax on tea, but it was a very important point to the colonists. In the mind of the colonists having any kind of tax at all on goods brought to the new colonies was an example of taxation without representation. They had no voice in authorizing these taxes, so they should not have to pay them.



The colonists were not buying the British goods due to the boycott, so they had to think of a plan to bring their point home even more. They decided to dump the tea that had been shipped by Davison Newman of London into the harbor at Boston. In 1773, a group of colonists disguised themselves as Indians, boarded the English ship anchored in the harbor, with their tomahawks split open the 342 trunks containing tea, and dumped the entire cargo into the water. Because of the disguises, none of the colonists could be identified, and the British governor could not charge any of the culprits.

King George III was particularly angered at this insult to his authority. It so angered him that he ordered the Boston harbor closed to all ships until the colonists paid for the tea which they had destroyed. An order like this meant that no ship could sail into or out of the harbor. The result was that merchant ships were unable to bring their wares to Boston, and colonists who made their living by fishing the waters of the Atlantic were no longer able to ply their trade. The people of Boston began to fear that they would not be able to feed themselves or their families. Amazingly, the residents of the other colonies around Massachusetts began to send supplies and money to

the citizens of Boston. This act of reaching out to help a colony in distress became the beginning of a unification of the people. The seeds of an idea called independence had been planted.

The Boston Tea Party

Questions

- _____ 1. The Townshend taxes were repealed on everything but what?
- A. wood
 - B. tea
 - C. fish
 - D. paper
- _____ 2. The colonists disguised themselves as what to board the English ships?
- A. Englishmen
 - B. fishermen
 - C. Native Americans
 - D. sailors
- _____ 3. What caused the colonists to boycott English goods?
- A. the rudeness of the sailors
 - B. the high price charged
 - C. a storm in the Atlantic
 - D. taxation without representation
4. Put the following events in order as they happened.
- _____
- A. The colonists "hosted" the Boston Tea Party.
 - B. England taxed glass, paint, tea, and other goods.
 - C. The Townshend Acts are repealed.
 - D. The colonists boycott British goods.

