

Stamp Act - Lexile 800

Name _____

The Expensive War

The French and Indian War cost a lot of money. Prime Minister William Pitt almost caused Parliament to run out of money trying to pay for the war.

The Sugar Act

In 1764, Parliament made a new law called the Sugar Act. This law added taxes on things like sugar, molasses, coffee, and textiles. Unlike other taxes before, this one was strictly enforced, and smugglers were punished. The colonists were very upset about this because they didn't think they should be taxed the same way people in Britain were. They started saying, "No taxation without representation," meaning they shouldn't be taxed unless they had someone in Parliament to represent them.

The Stamp Act

On March 22, 1765, Parliament passed another law called the Stamp Act. This law made people in the colonies buy special tax stamps for things like newspapers, legal papers, and even marriage licenses. A few days later, on March 24, 1765, they also passed the Quartering Act. This law said Americans had to let British soldiers stay in their homes. Colonists didn't understand why the soldiers were still in America after the war ended. Some thought the soldiers were sent to take away their freedoms.

Fighting Back Against the Taxes

Many colonists didn't like the Stamp Act. In 1765, leaders from nine colonies came together to ask Parliament to cancel the law. In places like Massachusetts and New York, groups of people, known as the Sons of Liberty, protested by destroying government buildings. By November 1, 1765, all the people sent to enforce the Stamp Act in America had been scared into quitting. Many colonists started buying goods illegally, which hurt British businesses.

Repeal of the Stamp Act

As more people began to call for independence, Parliament finally decided to cancel the Stamp Act in March 1766. However, they also passed the Declaratory Act, which said they still had the right to make laws for the colonies whenever they wanted.

1. Why did the Sugar Act anger American colonists?

- A) They wanted to control the sugar trade
- B) They felt the tax was too small to matter
- C) They believed they shouldn't be taxed without representation in Parliament
- D) They supported the British government

2. What did the Virginia House of Burgesses mean by "no taxation without representation"?

- A) The colonists should not be taxed unless they had representatives in Parliament
- B) Taxes were necessary for the colonies to stay strong
- C) Only British citizens should pay taxes
- D) Colonial taxes should be lower than British taxes

3. How did the colonists' response to the Sugar Act and the Stamp Act set the stage for future conflict with Britain?

- A) They accepted the taxes but wanted better enforcement
- B) They formed a stronger relationship with the British government
- C) They began to question the legitimacy of British rule and demand more rights
- D) They worked together to find ways to avoid paying the taxes without protesting

4. How did the colonists respond to the Stamp Act?

- A) They ignored the law and continued business as usual
- B) They celebrated it as a way to support Britain
- C) They organized protests and called for the law to be repealed
- D) They sent letters of support to Parliament

5. The repeal of the Stamp Act was seen as a victory for the colonists. How did the passage of the Declaratory Act show that Britain was still asserting control over the colonies?

- A) The Declaratory Act promised to lower taxes in the colonies
- B) The Declaratory Act gave the colonies more independence in local governance
- C) The Declaratory Act reinforced Parliament's authority to make laws for the colonies, despite the repeal
- D) The Declaratory Act allowed colonists to choose their own leaders

Answers

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. C
5. C