

Unit 6, Lesson 7: Town Meeting 1765

Lesson Overview

Now that students have learned about the new laws passed by Parliament and about the conflict involving competing theories of representation, students will be given the opportunity in this lesson to engage in a simulation in which they debate possible responses in the simulated context of an 18th Century town meeting - an authentic context in that it is one where colonists actually aired grievances and decided courses of action.

The lesson offers students an opportunity to hone their civic participation skills in the “spirit of ‘76”.

Preparation: Students and the simulation will benefit if copies of the completed Resource 6 Rights and Violations from the “A Line, A Stamp, and a Quarter” lesson are available to them as it will remind them of the laws that Parliament passed and possible reasons why colonists opposed them.

You should also have blank paper and markers or crayons available for students to create signs, fliers, petitions etc.

Delaware Standard(s)

- **History Standard 1, 4-5 [Chronology]:** Students will study historical events and persons within a given time frame in order to create a chronology and identify related cause-effect factors.
- **History Standard 2a, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will draw historical conclusions and construct historical accounts from primary and secondary source materials
- **History Standard 2b, 4-5 [Analysis]:** Students will examine historical materials relating to a particular region, society, or theme; chronologically arrange them; and analyze change over time.

Big Ideas: cause-effect, change over time

Essential Questions

- What effects did the laws passed by Parliament after the French and Indian war have on the colonists?

Enduring Understandings

- Students will understand that Britain’s new laws strained relations between the colonists and their mother country and caused colonists to perceive Parliament as a danger to their rights as Englishmen.

Resources

- [Google Slides](#)
- [Resource 1: Cartoon - Join or Die](#)
- [Resource 2: Preparing for the Simulated Town Meeting](#)

- [Resource 3: Town Meeting Rules and Flier](#)
- [Resource 4: Checks for Understanding](#)

Procedures

1. **Introduce the Lesson:** Tell students that, in reaction to the passage of the new laws by Parliament, the colonists organized two groups to communicate their displeasure toward the new laws and determine what actions should be taken. They called themselves the “Sons of Liberty” and the “Daughters of Liberty” - people who would defend freedom against tyranny - and held town meetings to decide how to respond.
 - a. In this lesson they are going to pretend that they are Sons and Daughters of Liberty. They will participate in a simulated “town meeting” at which they speak for or against what Parliament has done and propose ways to respond.
2. **Warm-Up: Image Analysis.** Tell students that one of the first, most famous and widely recognized cartoons in American history was created and circulated around the time that they are now studying about (i.e., French and Indian war era). It was created at a time when the colonists had the sense that dangers were popping up (e.g., the French, American Indians, British tyranny etc.). The cartoon was drawn by someone whose name the students might recognize - colonist Benjamin Franklin.
 - a. Think-Pair-Share: Distribute copies of [Resource 1: Cartoon - Join or Die](#) while projecting a copy of the “Join, or Die” Cartoon. Ask students to give the cartoon an independent “close read” and answer the questions on the page then turn and discuss responses with a partner.
 - b. Invite volunteers to share responses with the whole group.
3. **Town Meeting Simulation**
 - a. **Preparations:** Distribute and/or read aloud copies of [Resource 2: Preparing for the Simulated Town Meeting](#) which provides an overview of the simulation and what students need to do to prepare.
 - b. Give students time to create posters, petitions etc. to bring to the meeting. Emphasize that they can take any side that they want in the simulation e.g., supporting the colonists, supporting Parliament and the King.
 - c. Students and the simulation will benefit if copies of their completed [Resource 6 Rights and Violations](#) from the lesson entitled “A Line, A Stamp, and a Quarter” are available to them as this will remind them of the laws that Parliament passed as well as possible reasons why colonists opposed them.
4. **Town Meeting Invitation and Rules:** Distribute and project copies of [Resource 3: Town Meeting Rules and Flier](#) The flier describes the rules for the meeting. Read them aloud as students follow along, being sure to clarify and uncertainties around the rules.
5. **Begin the Town Meeting:** Teacher serves as chairperson. Open the meeting with an explanation of its purpose i.e., to discuss the new laws passed by Parliament and decide which, if any, courses of action should be taken. Open the floor to speakers.
 - a. Adjourn the meeting after the laws have been discussed and the attendees have decided on courses of action.

6. **Debrief:** Highlight the fact that town meetings served as laboratories for experiments in government “by the people” and as breeding grounds for our country’s future leaders.
7. **Preview the next lesson** - students will read about what some colonists actually did in reaction to the new laws passed by Parliament, especially the Stamp Act.
8. **Checks for Understanding:** Distribute copies of [Resource 4: Checks for Understanding](#) and have the students complete the checks for understanding.