

# What Was All the Fuss About Representation?

Unit 6, Lesson 6

# Essential Questions

Why did the topic of representation help create conflict between the colonists and their “mother country”?

What did the colonists mean when they said, “taxation without representation is tyranny”?

# Warm Up... what's the difference?

Things that 4th Graders *Do*

Things that Adults *Do*

# Warm Up... what's the difference?

Things that 4th Graders *Like*

Things that Adults *Like*

Warm Up... what's your conclusion?

Adults and  
4th graders  
are mostly  
**alike**

Adults and  
4th graders  
are mostly  
**different**

# Discussion

Suppose that a decision had to be made. The decision involved what you would do during your free time.

Given your responses to the warm-up brainstorming, do you think that an adult would be a good person to make the decision for you?

Explain why or why not.

# Introduction

In this lesson, we are going to explore the concept of representation -

- thinking mostly about what it means to represent someone, and
- what is required to be considered represented

# Good Representatives

- Follow along with me as I read
- When I'm finished, complete Task 1 and Task 2 on your paper
- Be prepared to share your ideas about each response in Task 1

## Resource 2: Good Representatives

A **representative** is someone who is chosen or appointed to speak and make decisions for other people. Representatives should understand the problems facing the people they represent and what those people want.

**Task 1:** Circle Agree or Disagree after reading the following six statements. Be prepared to share and explain your conclusion i.e., why you agreed or disagreed.

1. **Agree or Disagree:** An adult could represent you and other 4th grade students well.
2. **Agree or Disagree:** Any 4th grade student in your school could represent any other 4th graders in your school well.
3. **Agree or Disagree:** Any 4th grade student in Delaware could represent any other 4th grader in Delaware well.
4. **Agree or Disagree:** Any 4th grade student in our country could represent any other 4th grader in our country well.
5. **Agree or Disagree:** Any 4th grade student in England could represent any other 4th grader in our country well.
6. **Agree or Disagree:** A person could represent you well even though you never voted for that person to represent you.

**Task 2:** Draw a conclusion: what would make someone a good representative?

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# “Taxation Without Representation”?

Follow along with me as I read the text aloud

## Resource 3: Understanding the “Taxation Without Representation” Argument

Governments make lots of decisions that affect our lives. They decide who has to go to school and for how long. They decide who has to wear bike helmets. They decide how the mattresses that

you sleep on have to be made. They decide where electrical outlets in buildings are placed. They decide the place in which you live. They decide who is allowed to get married. They decide how much water and the water you drink. They decide how many amusement parks. They decide how much a person can work. They decide how many hours each day. They decide every aspect of our lives.

In fact, if you created a list of people who can tell you how your government works.

Wouldn't it be nice if you

### How Do Governments Make Decisions?

Governments around the world make different kinds of decisions. The average person

Other governments are structured differently and influence decisions.

One way to do this is simple. The problem is that if we did that, it would be too hard to play. Why, because there would be too many decisions to make. We would have to vote on every decision.

So, another option is to allow a few people to make the kinds of decisions that the government needs to make. These representatives would be chosen by the people. If the representatives would be chosen by the people, they would be able to make the decisions that the people wanted before making them. If the people could vote

This structure of government just described is called representative government. In a representative government, the people vote for who they want to represent their interests and make the laws that they have to obey.



and discuss: what is representative government?

### How Did Our Country Get This Idea?

The idea for representative government came about right now. Great Britain moved from England to the colonies. The government in the United States borrowed the idea.



### So, What is this “Taxation without Representation”?

You may remember that people in Parliament made laws that all colonies were not allowed to vote on. Englishmen were guaranteed the right to make the colonists pay taxes. The colonists asked, “can we be represented if we

### Were there Different Points of View About Representation?

Yes there were. The colonists believed that in order for there to be a representative government, they had to be able to VOTE for people who

shared the same interests as they. This was called “real representation.” In England’s 13 colonies, the people were their lawmakers in Parliament.

And remember the “rights of Englishmen.” If their property would be taken away without the consent of the people, that was not fair.

So, when Parliament passed laws that would take away their property (like taxes), the colonists

According to the colonists, this was TYRANNY or the abuse of power.



and discuss: what is tyranny?

### What was the Point of View of the Colonists?

The King and members of Parliament had a different way. Their reason for taxing the colonists was

1. Colonists in America were not represented in Parliament.
2. Englishmen anywhere in the world were represented in Parliament.
3. Therefore, the Englishmen were guaranteed the right to make the colonists pay taxes.

People in England called this “taxation without representation” because of the fact that many colonists interests as fellow Englishmen.



and discuss: what is taxation without representation?



### Were the Colonists Satisfied with Britain's Response?

Not even a little bit! Many colonists argued that there was no way that someone who lived or worked 3,000 miles away from colonies such as Delaware could possibly understand what the people of the colonies wanted. Nor could they understand the problems that the people in the colonies faced.

Colonists insisted that Parliament should not be allowed to tax the colonists unless the colonies were able to vote for members of Parliament. They argued that “virtual representation” was not “real representation.” Real representation only existed if people actually voted for the people who they wanted to be their representatives.



Taxation without representation is tyranny.

– James Otis

From the colonists’ points of view - they were NOT represented in Parliament. Therefore, Parliament’s “taxation without representation” involved taking their property (money) and was nothing less than TYRANNY!



and discuss:

1. How did colonists explain their argument that members of Britain's Parliament could never represent them?
2. What did colonists mean when they shouted, “taxation without representation is tyranny?”

# “Taxation Without Representation”?

With your partner or in your small group, please read the text.

At each “pause” button, stop to discuss your thoughts.

## Resource 3: Understanding the “Taxation Without Representation” Argument

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you sleep on have to be made. They decide where electrical outlets in buildings are placed. They decide where the place in which you live. They decide who is allowed to get married. They decide how much water and the water you drink. They decide how many amusement parks. They decide how much a person can earn. They decide how many hours each day we can work. They decide every aspect of our lives.

In fact, if you created a list of people who can tell you how your government works.

Wouldn't it be nice if you

### How Do Governments Make Decisions?

Governments around the world make decisions. In some governments, only a few people make decisions. The average person does not influence decisions.

Other governments are structured so that everyone influences decisions.

One way to do this is simple. The problem is that if we did it that way, it would be too slow to play. Why, because there would be too many decisions to make. We would have to vote on every decision that we had to make.

So, another option is to allow a few people to make decisions for everyone. These people are called representatives. They are supposed to make decisions for the people who elected them. If the representatives would be chosen by the people, then the people would be able to influence decisions. This is called representative government.

This structure of government just described is called representative government. In a representative government, the people vote for who they want to represent their interests and make the laws that they have to obey.



and discuss: what is representative government?

### How Did Our Country Get This Idea?

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### So, What is this “Taxation without Representation”?

You may remember that people in Parliament made laws that all colonies were not allowed to vote on. Englishmen were guaranteed the right to make the colonists pay taxes. This is called “taxation without representation.”

### Were there Different Points of View About Representation?

Yes there were. The colonists believed that in order for there to be a representative government, they had to be able to VOTE for people who



shared the same interests as them. This is called “real representation.” In England's 13 colonies, the people were supposed to be their lawmakers in Parliament.

And remember the “rights of Englishmen” that the colonists believed in. A representative form of government without the consent of the people, their property would be taken away without their consent. So, when Parliament passed laws that took away their property (like taxes), the colonists felt that their rights were being violated.

According to the colonists, this was TYRANNY or the abuse of power.



and discuss: what is tyranny?

### What was the Point of View of the Colonists?

The King and members of Parliament made laws in a different way. Their reasons were:

1. Colonists in America were not represented in Parliament.
2. Englishmen anywhere in the world were represented in Parliament.
3. Therefore, the Englishmen were guaranteed the right to make the colonists pay taxes.

People in England called this “taxation without representation” because of the fact that many colonists felt that their interests were not being represented.



and discuss: what is taxation without representation?

### Were the Colonists Satisfied with Britain's Response?

Not even a little bit! Many colonists argued that there was no way that someone who lived or worked 3,000 miles away from colonies such as Delaware could possibly understand what the people of the colonies wanted. Nor could they understand the problems that the people in the colonies faced.

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and discuss:

1. How did colonists explain their argument that members of Britain's Parliament could never represent them?
2. What did colonists mean when they shouted, “taxation without representation is tyranny?”

# Debrief

Why did the topic of representation help create conflict between the colonists and their “mother country”?

What did the colonists mean when they said, “taxation without representation is tyranny”?

# Check for Understanding

Take this time to check your understanding of ***What Was All the Fuss About Representation?***

## Resource 4: Checks for Understanding

Two accounts of the causes of the conflict between England and the colonists appear below.

### Account 1

The English were to blame for the conflict between England and the colonists. Parliament took away the colonists' property when they taxed them. This angered the colonists because they were not represented in Parliament by people for whom they voted.

Written by a Colonist (1783)

### Account 2

The colonists should be blamed for starting the conflict. They claimed that they were not represented in Parliament, but they were. Their representatives were Englishmen who looked out for the interests of the colonists because they were also Englishmen. They were really complaining because they just did not want to be taxed.

Written by member of Parliament (1783)

1. How did the authors' POINTS OF VIEW explain why there are different accounts of the same conflict?

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2. How does the EVIDENCE that the authors presented help explain why there are differences in their accounts?

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Which of the following BEST explains what the colonists meant when they shouted, "taxation without representation is tyranny"?

- a. if people who are not English tax us, it is an unacceptable abuse of power
- b. if people who we did not vote for tax us, it is an unacceptable abuse of power
- c. if people who do not work in the same place as us tax us, it is an unacceptable abuse of power

if people who did not fight in the French and Indian war tax us, it is an unacceptable abuse of power

Which of the following BEST explains how "real" representative government is supposed to

- a. those who make the laws try to do what voters want them to do
- b. those who make the laws try to do what the laws say they should do
- c. those who make the laws try to do what people their age want them to do
- d. those who make the laws try to do what a king or president wants them to do

in the box below then answer Question 5.

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ed - Parliament should not be allowed to tax the colonists unless the members of Parliament.

on only existed if people actually voted for the people who they wanted

assage BEST supports the conclusion that the colonists simply did not want to be represented in Parliament?