

## **Lesson Topic**

Mapping Boston and the American Revolution

### **Essential Question**

How can maps reveal different aspects of the American Revolution?

**Grades: 4-8**

### **Standard/s**

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economy and Government:

Early Exploration to Westward Movement

Concepts and Skills: History and Geography

3. Observe and identify details in charts and graphs
4. Use maps and globes to identify absolute locations
6. Distinguish between types of maps
7. Compare modern maps and historic maps

The Political, Intellectual and Intellectual Growth of the Colonies, 1700-1775

5.11 Explain the importance of maritime commerce to colonial Massachusetts

5.15 Explain the impact of the French and Indian war on British colonial policy

The Revolution and the Formation of a Federal Government 1775-1789

5.17 Major Battles

US History I: The Revolution Through Reconstruction, 1763-1877

The Political and Intellectual Origins of the American Nation: the Revolution and the Constitution, 1763-1789

US1.4 Analyze how Americans resisted British policies before 1775

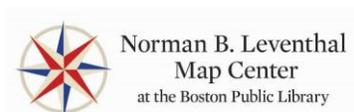
US1.5 Explain the role of Massachusetts in the revolution

### **Content Objective/s**

Students will get to relive key moments on the path to Revolution.

Students will gain a firm knowledge of the geography of Boston and how the physical landscape affected the key events that occurred there during this crucial time in our nation's history.

Students will explore language and symbols to enrich their understanding of the American Revolution.



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**Materials**

- [1723 Bonner Map of Boston](#)
- [1774 Hinton Map of Boston and Boston Harbor](#)
- [1775 D'Auvergne Map of Boston](#)
- [1776 Williams Map of Boston](#)

**Preview**

Maps tell stories both based on the information they include and the details they omit. For our nation's founding story, the American Revolution, maps reveal many interesting aspects of this narrative. Maps of Boston in particular are central to this tale as so many important events occurred there. Understanding the landscape in which these events unfolded helps to convey the intensity of the experience for the colonists who lived and worked closely among one another and the British soldiers.

**Activity Procedure**

**Step 1:** Set the stage for the coming of the Revolution. What were some of the key concerns of the colonists? Why was Boston a central location of many of these protests?

**Step 2:** Have Students look at the 1723 Map of Boston and complete Part I of the Student Sheet. They may work individually, in small groups or as a class. Discuss their results.

**Step 3:** Discuss the importance of the harbor and maritime commerce. Does this map provide a context for the city? Show the Students the 1774 Map. How does it provide a context for the Shawmut Peninsula? Have them complete Part II of the Student Sheet. Discuss their results.

**Step 4:** The remainder of the lesson deals with perspective. Maps show point of view in lots of ways. Literally, they indicate position and a way to see something. There are more subtle aspects to this notion as well. What a cartographer includes or omits also indicates perspective. Show Students the D'Auvergne Map. Have them compare the orientation of the Shawmut Peninsula to its appearance in Maps 1 and 2. Which do they find easiest to read? Hardest? Why?

**Step 5:** Have them complete Part III of the Student Sheet using the D'Auvergne map. Discuss their results.

**Step 6:** Finally show students the 1776 Williams Map. How can language shape our understanding of the past? What is the title of this map? How does it reveal the



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cartographer's point of view? What other evidence do they have of his bias? Have them complete Part IV of the Student Sheet. Discuss their results.

The American Revolution was an important time in our nation's history. The colonists lived and worked closely among one another and the soldiers. Understanding the landscape in which these events unfolded helps to convey the intensity of the experience for contemporaries.

## PART I

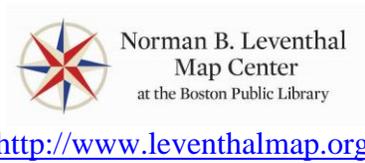
1. What is the date of this map?
  2. The harbor was key to the city. How does its presence dominate the map?
  3. What are the various uses of the Common? How do they show what was important to the people of Boston?
  4. Which areas of the city were the most densely populated? Why do you think they were so crowded?
5. The Seven Years War was fought between the British and the French in North America from 1756 to 1763. The conflict cost the British and the colonists dearly, both in terms of resources and human life. To cover the financial costs of war, the British placed many new taxes on the colonies. One that was particularly troubling was the Stamp Act of 1765 which increased the cost of almost every item that the colonists had to purchase. Anger was directed towards representatives of the King's government. On the evening of August 14<sup>th</sup>, a crowd gathered to protest this law. Using this map, trace their steps.
- a. On the morning of August 14<sup>th</sup>, residents of Boston saw effigies of the local stamp officer, Andrew Oliver and King's former tutor, Lord Bute, hanging from the Liberty Tree (crossing of Essex and Newbury Streets).
  - b. Farmers bringing produce in from the interior on the Boston 'Neck' (Orange/Marlborough St) had 'mock' stamps placed on their cargo.
  - c. Crowds gathered at the Liberty Tree. The effigies were cut down and then a mock funeral processed through the city, passing the Town House.
  - d. Then the crowd destroyed the Stamp Office on Kilby Street at Oliver's Dock.
  - e. Afterwards, the crowd set a bonfire at Fort Hill.
  - f. British officials stored the remaining stamps on Castle William.



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Imagine you were part of the crowd. How might your mood have changed during the day and evening?



Part II

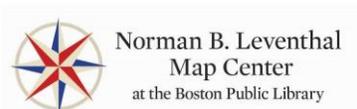
1. There are two maps here. What does the map on the left show?
2. What information do you get from the map on the right?
3. What do you learn about Boston by looking at both maps?
4. Could you learn this information by looking at only one of the maps?
5. What are the numbers on the map on the right? Why do you think they were important during the Revolutionary War?

PART III

1. Why is it so difficult to find Boston on this map?
2. What names did the map maker think it was important to include?
3. According to the mapmaker, what has happened to Charlestown? Do you think a ‘rebel’ would have used the same words to describe Charlestown?
4. Find Cambridge on the map. What are two ways a person could go from Cambridge to the Boston Neck?
5. Why is the Boston Neck so important?
6. Who would have an easier time using this map—a British soldier or someone who lived in Boston?

PART IV

1. What is the title of this map? Who are the rebels?
2. Locate the Boston Common. How is the space being used when this map was made?
3. Find Point K on the map. Read the description in the Key/Reference/Legend. From whose point of view is this comment?
4. This map shows how Boston looked at low tide. How might the city have looked at high tide? Why was this important to those preparing for battle?
5. Locate Points G and I. Why are they so important?



BONUS: What is the exact date of this map? See if you can find out if anything else important happened around that time.