

Grade(s): 3-5

Module: 5



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Topic: Boston's Geography & The American Revolution			
Task #1	Task #2	Task #3	Task #4
Essential Question and Task Focus Question: How do maps tell us stories about people and places? What can we learn about life in Boston in the 1700s from a map?	Essential Question and Task Focus Question: How can we study how people interact in a place to better understand history? What was it like for Bostonians and British soldiers living closely together in 1700s Boston?	Essential Question and Task Focus Question: How did Boston's geography play a role in the events of the American Revolution? How can we use a GIS map to understand the first battles of the Revolution?	Essential Question and Task Focus Questions: How did Boston's geography play a role in the events of the American Revolution? How can a 1775 map help us explore Boston's Revolutionary landscape?
Student Task(s): Students explore a 1769 map of Boston in two different ways: first taking a map story tour and then exploring on their own by zooming in and finding details about life in colonial Boston.	Student Task(s): Students learn about how British soldiers were sent in large numbers to inhabit Boston after riots and unrest following the Townshend Acts. They look closely at a view of troops landing in Boston and consider what life would have been like with thousands of British soldiers and their families living in close quarters.	Student Task(s) Students will use a modern GIS map to explore where Lexington and Concord are in relation to Boston. They will learn a few basic skills, including how to turn on map layers and how to measure distance on the map and brainstorm other layers of information to add.	Student Task(s): Students study a 1775 British map of Boston, looking for map tools, key locations and symbols. They consider how the mapmaker's choice of details on the map gives us a view of the siege of Boston and the battle of Bunker Hill.
Map 1: Map Story of 1769 Boston Map 2: 1769 Bonner/Price map of Boston Process Materials: Task #1: Worksheet	Source: 1768 View of Boston Process Materials: Task #2 Worksheet	Map: The War Before Independence map Process Materials: Task #3 Worksheet	Map 1: 1775 Williams Map of Boston Map 2: Map story about 1775 Boston Process Materials: Task #4 Worksheet



Boston's Geography & the American Revolution

Task #1

Essential Question: How do maps tell us stories about people and places?

Task Focus Question: What can we learn about life in Boston in the 1700s from a map?

You will explore the same map of Boston in two different ways.

Step 1:

Take a tour of 1769 Boston. [Open this link](#) and click to follow the stops on the tour.

Step 2:

Open the map link below to explore and zoom on your own and answer the **Task Focus Questions** questions. *You can make a copy of this document to edit and add your answers.*

Open the [1769 Boston Map Link](#)

Question 1:

List 5 details the mapmaker has added to show you what it might be like to walk around the streets in 1769. Which of these details are made or caused by humans and which of these are natural features?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Question 2:

What are places or things you see that show us the culture of the people of Boston? For example, do you see places that are connected to education or religion?

Question 3:

Create a mini tour for a visitor in 1769

Start at the Boston Common. Pick another location on the map to walk to and write the directions for your visitor. Which streets will they need to walk down and cross over? Describe the sights they will see along the way based on what you see on the map. What do you imagine you would hear and smell?



Boston's Geography & the American Revolution

Task #2

Essential Question: How can we study how people interact in a place to better understand history?

Task Focus Question: What was it like for Bostonians and British soldiers living closely together in 1700s Boston?

Step 1:

Read this short description about what was happening in Boston in 1768:

This 1768 view of Boston shows British troops arriving on ships. One year before, in 1767, the British Parliament passed the **Townshend Acts**. These acts said that goods sold in the colonies such as paper, paints, glass and tea should have a tax added to them.

Many colonists in Boston as well as other cities such as New York and Philadelphia were angry about these taxes and saw them as another way that the British government had too much control over their colonies. As a result, many Town of Boston citizens voted to not buy these items if they came from Great Britain. Many merchants signed an agreement to not sell these items also. However, some kept selling British products and found angry mobs outside their doors. Rioting Bostonians harrassed shop keepers who sold British goods as well as the British customs officers who had to enforce the collection of taxes.

As a result, the British Parliament sent over 2000 soldiers to Boston to keep the peace and ensure collection of the taxes. In addition, around 1000 of the soldiers' wives and children came as well. An earlier law called the **Quartering Act** said that the colonies had to provide housing for soldiers in public buildings. If that space ran out, they were to be housed in private homes. Suddenly, British soldiers and their families were squeezed all over the tiny peninsula of Boston.

Step 2:

Open the link below to explore and zoom on your own and answer the **Task Focus Questions** questions. *You can make a copy of this document to edit and add your answers.*

Open this [view of Boston from 1768](#) made by Paul Revere

Question 1: Read this short description of a witness to the arrival of British troops on October 1, 1768.

"[they]... marched into the Common, with muskets charged, bayonets fixed, colours flying, drums beating and fifes, &c. playing, making with the train of artillery upwards of 700 men."

Zoom in on the Long Wharf (hint: you will see soldiers pictured there). How does this description above match what you see in the view of Boston? List 5 details you notice below.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Question 2: Based on the short essay you read and the image you looked at about what was happening in 1768 Boston, what are some adjectives you would use to describe how the Bostonians might have felt? What are some adjectives to describe how the British soldiers might have felt getting off of their ship in Boston for the first time?

Bostonians felt....

British soldiers felt...

Question 3: How does the information below confirm or contradict (*agree with or disagree with*) what you have studied or heard about the British soldiers in Boston? Do you think when people live closely together that they come to better understand one another? Why or why not?

Just two years after the British soldiers arrived, a fight broke out on March 5, 1770 on King Street between British soldiers and Bostonians. The Bostonians were throwing rocks and snowballs and taunting the soldiers. Five Bostonians died after being shot by British soldiers in the chaos. This event was called the Boston Massacre by the colonists.

While many people were angry the soldiers were living near them, others rented rooms to them and their families. By 1770, some Boston women had even married British soldiers thus creating new families.



Boston's Geography & the American Revolution

Task #3

Essential Question: How did Boston's geography play a role in the events of the American Revolution?

Task Focus Question: How can we use a GIS map to understand the first battles of the Revolution?

Background: On April 19, 1775 the British and American soldiers confronted one another in the towns of Lexington and Concord. Sometimes referred to as the "shot heard round the world", these first exchanges of gunfire were the first battles of the Revolution and resulted in the deaths of soldiers on both sides. You are going to use an interactive map to see where these towns are in relation to Boston where the British soldiers were stationed.

The map you will look at uses GIS, (a Geographic Information System) to show you information. The person who made this map made layers of information that show you important colonial cities in 1775, where major battles took place and other information.

You will learn how to zoom in on the map and turn on two layers to look at where major events took place in and around Boston in 1775. You will answer four questions.

You can make a copy of this document to edit and add your answers.

Step 1: Open up the [map link](#) showing the 13 colonies in 1775.

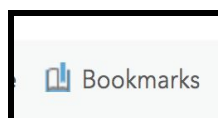
a. Click on the show contents icon that looks like this:



This will show you all the "contents" or "layers" of information that can be added to this map.

b. Click on: *Map Notes*, *Battles* and *The Regulars are Coming* to turn those three layers on.

c. Find the bookmarks button.



Click on the bookmark called "First Shots" to zoom into Boston, Lexington and Concord.

Step 2:

Click on each of the three map notes to read about events that led up to the battles at Lexington and Concord.

Click on the symbols for battles at Lexington and Concord. You will see information about who won each of those battles and how many soldiers were killed on both sides.

Question 1: From reading the map notes, what secret orders did the British troops receive? Why were they marching out to Lexington and Concord?

Step 3: Click on the measure tool. This allows you to measure distances on the map.

Click on the ruler that says “miles”. Put your cursor on Concord and then make a line to Boston (double click to stop measuring)



Question 2: How many miles is it between Lexington and Boston? Between Lexington and Concord? Today this is a pretty easy journey by car. What do you think it was like in 1775?

Using an online mapping tool (like Google maps), compare this distance with a place you know. Type in your house address and a location you travel to frequently (your school, a friend's house, etc.).

Step 4: Use the + and - to zoom in closer to Boston on the map. Click on the two red lines and the one blue line you see there.

Take another look at the [1769 map from Task 1](#). Remember how Boston was a peninsula in the 1700s? Over time, Bostonians made new land by filling in where there was water. The city looks very different today on this GIS map.

Question 3: The British soldiers were trying to make a surprise visit to Lexington and Concord. Which of the red line routes the British soldiers took do you think was better: by the land route going south or across the Charles River route going north? Why?

Question 4: What surprised you looking at this map? What is another map layer you might add to make this more useful for another student studying the Revolution?



Boston's Geography & the American Revolution

Task #4

Essential Question: How did Boston's geography play a role in the events of the American Revolution?

Task Focus Question: How can a 1775 map help us explore Boston's Revolutionary landscape?

Step 1:

Open up this link to a [1775 Map of Boston](#). Answer the task questions below. *You can make a copy of this document to edit and add your answers.*

Question 1: Let's get to know the map: cross off these map tools as you find them on the map:

Title Date Compass Legend or Key Scale

List any other details you notice:

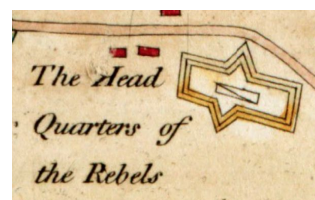
Question 2: There are many locations on this map that tell us stories about the Revolution in Boston. Cross off these locations when you find them on the map.

Cambridge Boston Common Boston Neck Castle Island

Question 3:

Zoom into Boston Common: What do you see there? What do you think the small triangles represent?
(*hint: people are inside of them*)

Can you find this detail? What do you think the yellow shape is?





Question 4:

List 3 things you think the mapmaker wanted to show people about what was happening during the Revolution in Boston. Why did you choose these details?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Step 2: Open up [this map story](#) to learn more about this map. Learn about the places you visited and compare your guesses about the triangles and yellow lines.

What surprised you? What connections did you make to a place or event you know something about?